Content of today's lecture

1st half: • From no man’s land to part of Norway
  – Terra nullius: no man’s land
  – The Swedish initiative to annex Spitsbergen
  – The Norwegian quest for sovereignty
  – The Svalbard Treaty

2nd half: • Hot war, cold war, post war
  – Svalbard during World War II
  – Svalbard in the shadow of the cold war
  – The strategic importance of Svalbard

Problem: • How has the legal, political and strategic situation changed over time, and why?

Today’s Cultural Heritage Quiz

What is this?
© Svalbard Museum
Terra nullius: No man’s land

- The law of the sea: Hugo Grotius and “De Mare Liberum” (1609)
- “King James His New Land” (1613)
- Danish-Norwegian pretensions 1614–16
- Peaceful co-existence after 1618
- Svalbard recognized as no man’s land
- The notion of an international commons (terra communis)
  - Joint resource exploitation by many actors
  - Customary law, codes of behaviour

An international Spitsbergen treaty?

- The Swedish initiative 1871–72
- Norwegian aspirations in the 1890s
- Norway’s divorce from Sweden in 1905; an independent foreign policy
- The “Spitsbergen question”; need for an administrative arrangement
- Three Spitsbergen conferences 1910–14
- The “small steps” policy of Norway
- World War I; new opportunities
- The Svalbard Treaty of 9 February 1920

The Treaty: Limited sovereignty?

- § 1: “Full and absolute sovereignty”
- § 2: Equal rights to hunting and fishing; environmental protection
- § 3: Equal rights of access and to commercial activities
- §§ 4 & 5: On radiostations and science
- §§ 6 & 7: Recognition of property rights
- § 8: Mining Code; limits to taxation
- § 9: Peaceful utilization (non-militarized)
- § 10: Securing Russian and others’ rights

- Norwegian sovereignty
- Equal treatment and non-discrimination
- Peaceful utilization
- Rights of citizens, not states
15 minutes break

Svalbard between the world wars

- Why Norway? Or, why not?
- Making the best of it: Norwegian maneuvers 1920–1925
  - Securing relations to Germany and Soviet Russia
  - The Mining Code
  - The Spitsbergen Commissioner and arrangement of property rights 1925–27
- 1925: Spitsbergen becomes Svalbard
- “Bilateralization”: Soviet-Norwegian relations in the inter-war period

World War II: a turning point

- Svalbard and the outbreak of the war in 1940
- Evacuation in August–September 1941
- The “Fritham” expedition 1942: Establishing a Norwegian garrison
- The “weather war”: Svalbard’s strategic significance
- The German attack on 8 September 1943
- The “Spitsbergen Crisis”: The Soviet proposition in November 1944 and the aftermath
Svalbard in the squeeze

- Norwegian NATO membership 1949, including Svalbard 1951
- The Soviet North Fleet build-up after 1962
- The low-tension policy of Norway
- Small scale crises:
  - The airport issue 1958-1975
  - The Caltex/Arktikugol issue 1961-1965
  - The ERSO issue 1964-1969
- Kapp Heer and the Hopen accident 1978
- Development of local relations: Arctic glasnost in the 1980-90s, more tension in 2000s

New developments

- Delimitation of the continental shelves
  - UNCLOS (1982): Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf
- Barents Sea delimitation agreement between Russia and Norway in 2010
- Global warming affects the Arctic
  - New opportunities and threats
- Increased Russian activity in the north; “new” nations present in the Arctic
  - Is Svalbard becoming more exposed?

So, what about Svalbard?

- Until World War II: no or little military strategic significance
- The Cold War: nuclear arm's technology increased the importance of the Polar Sea and Arctic areas
- The Treaty and the low-tension policy have worked reasonably well
- Svalbard’s strategic importance today:
  - Environmental research and monitoring
  - Ownership and management of resources
  - New transport routes and SAR capabilities
Next (and last) time on HOS...

Meet the locals!

Has Svalbard become a normal society?

End of 9th lecture