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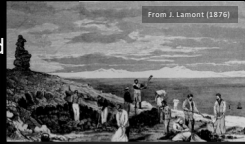
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Mining pioneers

- Coal deposits were known and exploited in the 19th Century; «Diana» coal mine 1869
- A.E. Nordenskiöld and AB «Isfjorden» 1872–1873
- Søren Zakariassen: Arctic pilot, skipper, sealer – and industrial entrepreneur
- The first mining companies established in 1900–1902



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“Coal-rush” 1900–1914

- The Spitsbergen Coal & Trading Co. and “Advent City” 1905–08
- Numerous claims taken before World War I
- Mostly exploration, little actual production
- Pure speculation or serious business?
- Ernest Mansfield and The Northern Exploration Co.
- Territorial ambitions and national policies



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Slow industrialization

- First serious contender: the Arctic Coal Company, from 1906
- 1915: \$ 1 million invested, 2–300 employed, capacity 50,000 tons/year
- World War I curbed mining activities; ACC sold to Norwegian interests in 1916
- 1920s: coal mines in Adventfjorden, Svea, Ny-Ålesund, Barentsburg, Grumant and on Bjørnøya
- Post-war economic crisis. 1930s: only Norwegian and Soviet activity



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Mining on Spitsbergen

Some important locations:

- Test pits, shafts
- Coal mines

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15 minutes break

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A new legal framework

- Land and labour conflicts initiated a political process: the administration question
- The outbreak of the war halted legal development; Norwegian interests grew
- Consequences of the Svalbard Treaty (1920) and Norwegian sovereignty (1925)
- The Mining Code (1925)
- The Svalbard Commissioner: property rights cleared 1925–27

Spitsbergen Green Harbour: «A protest»

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Rebuilding after WW2 and new crises

- Mines quickly rebuilt after the war:
 - Longyearbyen, Ny-Ålesund and Sveagruva
 - Barentsburg, Grumant and Pyramiden
- International crisis in the coal industry in the late 1950s
- 1960s: dismantling the coal mines?
 - Svea closed in 1949
 - Grumant and Ny-Ålesund closed in 1962–63
- Why was Store Norske kept alive?
 - Norwegian sovereignty during Cold War
 - No realistic alternatives to coal mining
 - Ambitious national industrial policy



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Coal mining at any price?

- Soviet/Russian and Norwegian coal mines heavily subsidized since the 1920s
- 1976: Store Norske taken over by the state – not just for economic reasons
- The “normalization” process of the 1980s challenged the coal company
- A new economic policy in the 1990s – visions of a post-industrial Svalbard
- Russian problems after 1990; Pyramiden closed 1998
- Svea Nord: Store Norske on its own from 2001; Lunckefjell mine closed 2015, cleaning up and closing Svea



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Coal mining in perspective

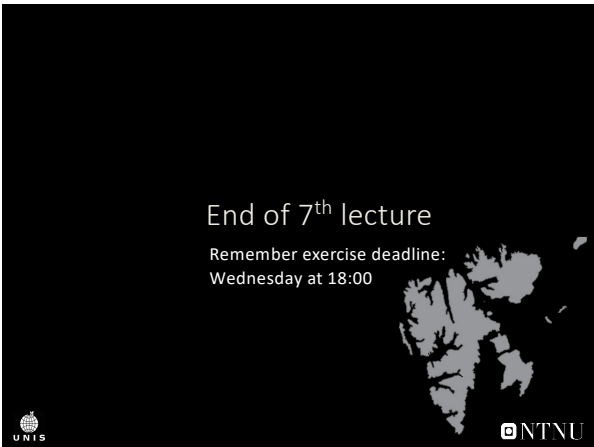
Blessing

- Important basis for Norwegian and Russian presence
- Almost ideal activity to ensure stable, diverse settlement
- Concentrated environment load and limited land use
- Created vital infrastructure for all other activity

...or curse?

- An economic “black hole” for Norway and Russia
- Health hazards and fatal accidents
- Inflexible tool for a dynamic Svalbard policy
- Conflict with environmental interests

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