

1



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People vs. Nature

- Svalbard is an Arctic archipelago, 500 km from the nearest mainland
- The physical living conditions are extreme
- The resource basis creates limitations for human subsistence
- No indigenous/aboriginal population or "colony"; meagre basis for local production and/or finishing
- Particular legal and political status



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Arctic colonization

Expansion from
Central Asia during
Pleistocene

First crossing to
America > 13,000
years ago (?)

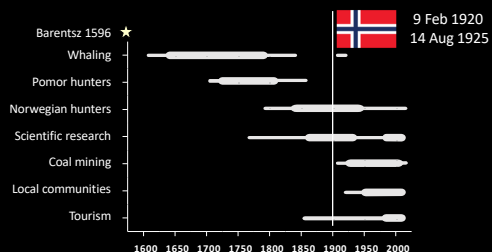
Colonization in waves
during Holocene

Thule People of Arctic
Canada settled in
Greenland from
ca. year 1000 CE



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Svalbard's history – a brief overview



6

15 minutes break

7

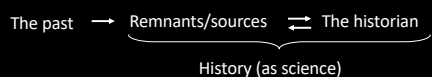
What is history?

- The subject of history: human communities and activities in the past
- History – a human and social science
 - Actors and actions
 - Society and structures
 - Material and spiritual culture
 - Man and the environment
- History vs. chronology: the “*post hoc* fallacy”
- Stories vs. history: (re-)constructing the past, with an ambition to explain what, why, how...



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Historical practice




Method:

- Asking questions, defining problems
- Deliberate choice of sources, material, and data
- Systematical criticism of sources:
 - Reliability, relevance and representativity;
 - Facts vs. truth
 - Type of sources; possible bias


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Various types of historical sources



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Here's what you get



- An overview of Svalbard's history from 1596 until the present
- Economic and political history, social and cultural development
- Introduction to historical method
- Museum visit and excursion
- An online exercise; > 66 % in order to be approved for exam
- Reading, ca. 250 pages
- Written exam + exercise + attendance = 6 credits (ECTS)

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Lecture plan 2023, 1st week

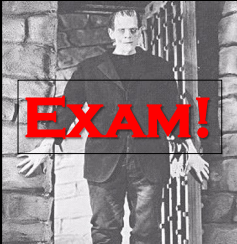
1.	30 Jan	Introduction. Arctic colonization and main lines in the history of Svalbard
2.	31 Jan	The early exploration of the Arctic and the discovery of Svalbard
3.	1 Feb	Whaling and sealing in the 17 th and 18 th centuries
4.	2 Feb	Hunting and trapping. Russian and Norwegian trappers
5.	3 Feb	The scientific exploration of Svalbard and modern polar research

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Lecture plan 2023, 2nd week

6.	6 Feb	The great (and not so great) polar expeditions from Svalbard	Deadline withdrawal
7.	7 Feb	The industrialization of Svalbard: Exploration and mining from Søren Zakariassen to Svea Nord	
8.	8 Feb	The development of governance and environmental protection	Deadline exercise
9.	9 Feb	Svalbard in national and international politics: problems of sovereignty and strategy	
10.	10 Feb	Development of local communities and the history of Longyearbyen	


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Monday 13 February at 12:00-15:00
(3 hours written digital exam)

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Teaching and learning



- Purpose and function of lectures
- Course curriculum: recommended reading (see course pages)
- Museum visit and excursion, if weather permit...
- Online exercise must be approved to take exam
- Evaluation: written exam (3 hours)


Information <https://www.unis.no/course/sh-201-the-history-of-svalbard/>

UNIS-students, use Canvas: <https://unisvalbard.instructure.com/courses/318>

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Boring... (yawn)?

- During lectures: ask questions, make comments
- Text me: +47 906 35 072
- Email me: thor.arlov@unis.no
- See me: office A 321 (top floor, old building)



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Next time on HOS



Who came first?

- Vikings?
- Pomors?
- Barentsz?

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End of lecture 1

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