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Green Ice? Tourism Ecologies in the High North

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Tourism in the Arctic regions is expanding rapidly in both scale and scope. Where once intrepid travellers set out on well-equipped expeditionary tours, today's tourists can glide through Arctic waters on luxury cruise ships or fly from destination to destination, living the Arctic tourism product they were sold in anticipation of their actual journey. Tourism has been seen as a primary target for economic development in many peripheral regions, and all of the European Arctic nations have prioritised tourism in recent years. But tourism has consequences, some perhaps surprising, which have to be considered. In this chapter, we introduce ideas about tourism ecologies in the European High North, outline the key concepts and set an agenda for new tourism research, laying the ground for the chapters that follow.

Our title 'Green Ice' gently pokes fun at the idea of Arctic ecotourism. As many commentators have observed, for people outside the polar regions the word 'Arctic' often conjures visions of sparkling snow and ice, startling blue skies and an overall impression related to the concepts 'clean', 'untouched', and, of course, 'cold'. Arctic tourism itself retains much of the spirit of the expedition for many tourists, with all its associated visions of wilderness and the exotic sublime (Oslund 2005 2011; Sæþórsdóttir et al. 2011). The promotion of tourism in European Arctic regions leans particularly heavily on such imagery, adding in icebergs, polar bears and other Arctic wildlife, as well as the stock images of tourism promotion – luxury-tinged hotels and occasional indigenous colour. Of course, that is not the whole story, and one aim of this book is to show what else Arctic tourism is in the European region, how it is changing, and what some of the consequences are for people who live and work in the relevant regions. Contrary to the kind of imagined frozen Arctic of the tourism brochure world, many people do live and work in the European High North, in Arctic and sub-Arctic zones, which extend relatively far south into Scandinavia, depending on which of the various definitions of 'Arctic' are being used. For this book, we have referred to the European High North, an area that extends from around the Arctic Circle northwards, also incorporating Iceland, but we are not including the Russian North in our discussion. This is mainly for pragmatic reasons, since the book reports primarily on recent research on ecotourism in Norway, Iceland and Greenland, but we also reflect on related regions in the broader context of polar tourism, including a comparison with Antarctic tourism.

Our particular focus is already a broad area that encompasses land and sea that is Nordic, Scandinavian, Sámi and Inuit – but not necessarily in that order. The order matters, not least because these are places that need to be considered in relation to various phases and forms of colonialism. The sister-volume to this one, subtitled 'Unscrambling the Arctic', includes a more detailed discussion of the claims and merits of the idea of the 'postcolonial' (Huggan and Jensen 2016) that complements the discussions here, but the political contest around

defining, claiming and exploiting Arctic resources is central to all the following discussions. The broader context is thus the rising clamour about the fate of the Arctic in a time of global climate change, with increased pressure for resource-extraction, bubbling tension over sovereignty claims, and a rapid expansion in industrial activity in all sectors, not least mineral and fuel extraction, and tourism activities.

The political 'heat' building around Arctic issues is spreading well beyond the countries whose coasts border the Arctic oceans (see Roussel and Fossum 2010). Since the Arctic Council was founded in 1996 in the wake of the end of the cold war, its work as a high-level forum has gradually given substance to the idea of the Arctic as a region. Yet the tension over who belongs to the Council, and who should have rights or claims on Arctic resources, continues to bubble. The role of indigenous organisations acknowledges the tensions related to what Martello calls 'Arctic citizenship' (2004), but is hardly straightforward. These organisations are acknowledged as 'permanent participants', but their status is not equal to the 'member states' who make up the council. The Arctic littoral states are continually testing their rights over the extended continental shelf through the auspices of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)[1] and there is pressure at every Arctic Council ministerial meeting to negotiate the status of other interested parties as observers. China and Korea were allowed to be ad hoc observers in 2009 but their applications to be permanent observers was declined. By 2013 a different approach was reached, with a new 'manual' clarifying observer status, including the requirement to support the Council's objective and respect its authority. At this point, eleven countries were given permanent observer status, including France, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, the UK, China, Italy, Japan, Korea, Singapore and India. The claims of China and India to have interests in the Arctic may be as much about neighbourly rivalry as resource interest (Chaturvedi 2013), but the diverse list of countries indicates the broadening awareness of the potential of the Arctic as a global political space as well as a source of valuable resources. Ironically, of course, it is the very changes in climate that threaten to do so much damage in the Arctic area that make it attractive to states and industries around the world, through the promise of increasing access to navigation and resources as the ice sheet retreats. This same paradox shapes the growing Arctic tourism industries, as greater sea access and heightened awareness of environmental fragility feed a growth in cruise tourism across the Arctic, particularly in the European High North, across into western Greenland and northern Canada and now into Russian waters too.

The expansion in tourism activities is our focus in this volume. All around the world, tourism has been on the rise since the end of the Second World War. As traditional subsistence livelihoods have become increasingly fragile, and manufacturing industries have become increasingly footloose, communities, corporations, nations and associations have looked to tourism as an alternative opportunity. Tourism appears to promise economic redistribution, new livelihoods or ways to maintain traditional livelihoods and artisanal production, with the added promise of personal fulfilment, social contact, and opportunities to experience new people and places, as well as familiar ones. Tourism, in fact, is so broad a category that it is

commonly described as an 'industry', thereby incorporating everything from sales trips to visits to weekend cottages or even days out shopping. In the 'industry' sense, definitions of tourism usually refer to travel, accommodation, consumption and visiting, and all the networks and facilities that enable those things to happen (see Abram 2010). But tourism has also been described as a way of experiencing the world, closely linked to colonial history, science, politics and religion (Urry 2001; Mitchell 1991; Graburn 1977). Once we acknowledge that tourism revolves around the generation and satisfaction of particular desires that are grounded in particular conditions of politics, economics, society and nationalism (Franklin 2004), the notion of tourism rears up as a rather peculiar object of study. It prompts us to ask why people want to travel from afar to experience something called 'the Arctic', and what they make of it when they get there, or after they return. And what do these tourist desires have in common with those of the people who live in the European High North, and how do these various desires and their effects interact? Despite quite extensive research on the global Arctic, attention to tourism in the European High North is still emerging, and forms the core of this volume.

The voyage north

Tourism to the European Arctic regions is not new, and its history remains present today, underlying much of the style and content of contemporary tourism. Hall and Johnston, who have done so much to establish Polar Tourism as a field of study, remarked back in 1995 that the world's polar regions were thriving tourism frontiers. While they identify Antarctic tourism dating back to the 1960s, Arctic tourism has a much longer history (Hall and Johnston 1995). Viken (1995) refers to the first organised commercial tours to Svalbard (Spitsbergen) in 1871, and by the 1890s there were regular tourist routes from Norway, in the early days of organised travel. But organised tourism always follows on from prior journeys, either by traders, explorers, colonisers, missionaries or others, and the European High North is no exception. Steen Jacobsen (1997), for instance, traces the current status of North Cape in northern Norway (Finnmark) back to the British Willoughby Expedition that sought the North East passage to China in 1553.[2] Maps made by Richard Chancellor on his return from the voyage marked the North Cape out as a landmark, and provided maps of the periphery of the European known-world of the time. By 1664, Francesco Negri was extolling the experience of reaching the end of the world at North Cape, enabling him to look forward to returning home satisfied (Ibid.) and just over a hundred years later, books were being published with images of the North Cape headland. By 1875, after a string of famous and royal visitors, Thomas Cook was offering tours to North Cape, with regular steamships following from 1877 and the coastal steamer (*Hurtigruten*) plying the coast from 1893 and carrying tourists even then.

The history of Europeans travelling north is dominated by discourses of exploration and discovery, and by external accounts of heroic adventures (Ryall et al. 2010). These accounts remain current, repeatedly reinvented through contemporary travel writing, travel company

brochures and advertising campaigns (Oslund 2005; Sæþórsdóttir et al. 2011; Lund 2013). Only in the last year (2014/15) has the Greenlandic tourism agency redefined its advertising strategy away from the 'white hero explorer' narrative towards a more inclusive, less colonial-style outdoor adventure theme (pers. comm.). For Ryall et al. (2010), post-romantic era texts (i.e. since the mid-nineteenth century) repeatedly return to fixed motifs, with the Arctic typically imagined either as an icy hell or an earthly paradise, the latter vision now seen as threatened by human influence rather than the extreme climate. These images inform elements of the historical perception of the Arctic which circulate in tourism contexts, with travellers often steeped in accounts of historical Arctic expeditions, noses in books about Arctic travel, flora and fauna (Wråkberg 2007).

The degree to which long-standing trading routes fail to feature in accounts of the High North indicates how strongly the explorer-narrative has dominated discourses about northern travel. Norwegians travelled to northern Fennoscandia and began to settle among the Sámi in the thirteenth century, and Pomor trade across the north, across Russia and Norway, grew steadily from the Middle Ages. Towns like Hammerfest, Vardø and Tromsø became official trading centres in the late eighteenth century, and saw remarkable traffic, including the migration of many Finns into Norway throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The vast majority of travel around European Arctic waters was for colonial administration and trade, as the history of Iceland and Greenland attests. But while accounts of such travel, in missionary reports, ministerial briefings and company accounts, may inform historical accounts and circulate in the Scandinavian languages, they barely figure in the popular or literary imagination, and certainly hardly at all in the English language.[3] The nomadism of Sámi herders is also neutralised in travel accounts, either romanticised and naturalised or exoticised, but barely registering as 'travel' in literary representations. The journey of many Sámi to attend the annual market that was established at Jokkmokk (in the Swedish part of Sápmi) in the early 1600s slides under the same radar. Jokkmokk has become a tourist attraction in its own right (see Abram 2016), but its history as a kind of trade festival is part of the attraction, rather than being taken as evidence of an earlier emblematic form of tourism (travel to market and pilgrimage being the primary precursors of tourism, or 'going on holiday'). Where the terms Arctic and Travel coincide, the dominant themes remain strongly colonial, either steeped in expedition mode, or in scientific discovery of nature, with or without the help of indigenous peoples (Ryall et al. 2010).

The same applies to Steen Jacobsen's account of North Cape's transformation into a global visitor attraction, which mirrors many tropes of tourism development. Even though many of the passengers on early coastal voyages would have been locals and traders, complaints about tourists at North Cape were already emerging in the early twentieth century, and a protection campaign was founded in the 1920s with the headland becoming a nature reserve in 1929. Even so, by 1950 the municipality changed its official name to North Cape, and the headland's local name disappeared even further. Its photogenic qualities, cliffs looking north to the summer midnight sun or the winter Aurora Borealis, and its historical identification

with visitors, mark it out as belonging to that dubious assembly of places adopted by the global travel trade. North Cape offers a classic tourism scenario, emblematic of the trajectory of tourism development later characterised by tourism theorists in 'life-cycles' and 'capacity' (Butler 1980). First, it is named by an intrepid visitor as a site worth seeing, marked up on a map and extolled for the sublime feelings it will arouse in the visitor (see Lund 2013). Gradually, more tourists arrive, infrastructure is established, and visitors begin to complain about the presence and effects of other tourists. Later, as Feifer (1985) speculated, tourists come to expect to see fellow travellers, confirming the value of the site they are visiting as 'worth seeing'. Tourists do not only seek to be alone, despite the prevalence of 'unique experiences' offered in tourism advertising.

Becoming ecological

The story of North Cape also highlights the environmental and social consequences of tourism expansion and the discourses of fragility and wilderness that accompany tourism in the region. The challenge for tourism development in all areas is to find a way to make tourism sustainable: economically, environmentally, socially and culturally. This aim lies behind the invention of 'ecotourism', which emerged more or less in the 1980s along with the rise of global environmental policy. Various operators around the world sought ways to continue with tourism while minimising its impact, following on from earlier campaigns for more socially just tourism, but now in the name of global as well as local socio-environmental costs. Any human activity has impact in some way, so the question of 'balancing' benefits, costs and risks is not straightforward, nor is it yet clear whether tourism development can be ecologically neutral, or whether it is possible to define or evaluate such a state. Ecotourism can be said to include a suite of different approaches, such as community-based or village tourism, home stays or wildlife watching, but it is both broadly defined and highly contested (Carrier and West 2004). Weaver and Lawton argued in 2007 that after much debate, a general consensus had formed around a fuzzy definition of ecotourism. Reviewing more than three hundred academic articles and books, they identified three broad core criteria to define ecotourism; namely that ecotourism attractions should be largely nature-based, be focused on learning or education, and that the management should 'follow principles and practices associated with ecological, socio-cultural and economic sustainability' (Weaver and Lawton 2007:1170). In an earlier review, Björk (2000) argued that cooperation between tourism businesses, authorities, tourists and local people was essential to achieve ecotourism experiences that benefit the environment, companies and tourists. The latter thus mixes a more pragmatic aspect of social and political justice with the nature-based definitions that Weaver and Lawton prioritised.

If the aim of ecotourism is, as Björk defines it, 'to make it possible for tourists to travel to genuine [*sic*] areas in order to admire, study and enjoy nature and culture in a way that does not exploit the resource, but contributes to sustainable development' (2000:197), then it would appear to chime with some of the ambitions articulated in recent Arctic tourism

development literature. However, if ecotourism falls into the category of ‘alternatives’ to mass tourism, then Butler (1990) argues that it risks merely reproducing a kind of elitism that has been intrinsic to tourism discourses since the nineteenth, if not the eighteenth centuries. Writing during what has been called a crisis of legitimacy for eco/alternative tourism, Butler described simple calls for ‘alternatives’ as a panacea to the ills of tourism as ‘quackery’ (Ibid.:41). If approaches to ecotourism have become rather more nuanced since then, and their limitations more clearly acknowledged, the paradoxes of tourism development in the Arctic remain relevant.

If ecotourism in Arctic regions entails educating the tourists to become more aware of climate change, of its effects on the environment and on the people of the Arctic regions, then it meets with the goal of ecotourism to protect the environment. However, if that aim is achieved only by flying tourists on long-haul jets or aboard even higher-fuel consuming luxury cruise liners, then the educational benefits might be rather overshadowed by the environmental cost (Gössling 1999). Yet this environmental discourse itself makes some rather large assumptions that can be seen as emerging from Western colonial discourses. Much social science critique has questioned the Western notion of ‘nature’ as other to humans, defined in turn by their ‘culture’ (Abram and Lien 2011). Increasing evidence that human activity has shaped even the areas idealised as wilderness (rainforests, tundra and moorlands, for example) began to raise awareness that humans are not separate from nature. The recent geological proposal that the Earth is now entering a new era to be called the Anthropocene is a recognition that no part of the Earth is now immune from human influence, at least through the effects of anthropogenic climate change. But the latter claim detracts from equally important political recognition that very many of the regions described by scientists and others as ‘empty’ or ‘wild’ have been home to humans for millennia.

The notion that much of northern Scandinavia is ‘empty’ continues to have traction in state circles, as a recent controversy indicates. In 2014, Sparebanken Nord Norge, a major financial actor in the north of Norway, presented a study to the annual regional business conference that identified 98% of the area of northern Norway as ‘untouched’ (Grünfeld and Pedersen 2014). The response from the President of the Sámi parliament was swift: these areas are used for reindeer herding, which entails ‘rights that are protected by international conventions and obligations’[4] (reported in Måsø et al. 2014). It is particularly remarkable that such assertions come from the north, where awareness of legislation over access to resources is high. Ween and Lien (2012) have explained in some detail how the process by which Sámi rights over land use have gradually been acknowledged has raised debates about the status of land in Finnmark, an area of northern Norway that covers around fifty thousand square kilometres, and has a population of roughly 74,000 including a long-standing mix of ethnic groups (including various Sámi, Norwegians, Kvæn and Russians). Distinguishing who belongs to which groups is complex, not least because there are no clear boundaries between groups, and after many decades (centuries) of oppression, many Sámi still hesitate to self-identify in census records. Aside from reindeer herding, people of all ethnic identifications

engage in similar nature practices across the region, including fishing, berry picking or hunting. Definitions of these practices differ, however, and indicate strikingly different concepts of, and relations to, the land. But what those living in Finnmark do have in common includes the knowledge that 'the "wilderness" is not wild at all, but a fine and familiar web of activity-based points of significance and routes in between them' (Ibid.:100). Such views are not shared by national resource management institutions who govern much of the area, alongside the recently established Finnmark Estate. In the 1990s, the ministries saw Finnmark as more valuable as a tourist destination than a subsistence area, and a recent push to expand mineral extraction threatens to undermine even tourism as an economic resource, again based on the notion that Finnmark is largely uninhabited.

As Ween and Lien (2012) explain, throughout the process of changing the governance system in Finnmark, with the recognition of Sámi rights and comprehensive nature-resource access rights, national institutions have continued to identify the land as untouched wilderness, as 'beautiful nature' that will attract tourists, ignoring the long-standing and extensive nature-resource practices of local residents that have both sustained this landscape and support their ongoing subsistence.

This concept of nature has been described by Milton (2002) as 'out there', a wilderness whose integrity relies on its opposition to that which is touched by human beings. Its popularity is usually traced to an eighteenth-century European ambivalence about the idea of progress, seen by some as leading humankind towards its destiny, while others saw increasing urbanisation and industrialisation as exposing populations to crowding and pollution and the breakdown of community relations. European middle classes began to seek authentic experiences away from city life, through excursions into the countryside and then increasingly through nineteenth-century alpinism and nature tours (Solnit 2000; Urry 2000). A similar discursive transition happened in the USA, as the first national parks were established (Sears 1989), possibly only once wilderness was transformed in the imagination from a dangerous place to be feared and avoided into God's creation, a place of purity (Cronon 1996).[5] As Rutherford puts it, this pristine nature is defined by the discourse about what nature is, discourse that does not leave the land untouched: 'it makes and remakes nature for consumption by particular people at specific times' (2011: xviii). Defining large areas of land used by indigenous people for herding as 'natural' thus easily carries a presumption of 'emptiness' (with undertones of 'uncivilised'). It is widely recognised that the act of declaring a territory as 'tabula rasa' or 'terra nullius' (Ween and Lien 2012) is a crucial legalistic premise for colonisation, irrespective of whether the territory has ever, in fact, been inhabited. The declaration of Finnmark as 'empty' enabled it then to be 'claimed' by the Danish-Norwegian King, and the later recognition by the Norwegian parliament that this claim was unlawful enabled Sámi rights legislation to be established.

It is not only environmental management agencies that slip into the deterministic discourse of 'natural' landscapes, and naturalise populations. In their overview of polar tourism, ecologists

Stonehouse and Snyder blithely slip into the colonial language of western-centric scientism when they declare of the indigenous peoples of the circumpolar Arctic that, ‘interbreeding has occurred in all the stocks, and traditional cultures are diluted as the benefits of southern ways of life spread northward’ (Stonehouse and Snyder 2010:16). We hesitate to reproduce such language here, in view of the offence it may cause to some readers, but it is important to recognise that even purportedly reputable scholars continue to purvey colonial mentalities in the guise of ‘science’, their ignorance of social scientific critique not impinging on their willingness to make grand pronouncements on populations and their ‘cultures’. Such patronising colonial positions then feed directly into policy generation, through reports to the Arctic Council, for example, that can have direct and deleterious effects on the lives of northern dwellers, as Ween and Lien (2012) have taken pains to describe. These tropes then play into tourism promotion, which adopts the discourses that Ryall et al. (2010) have so clearly articulated. These, too, have consequences, and it is some of these consequences that we wish to highlight in this book.

Ethnographies of tourism ecologies

One clear way that the contemporary realities of tourism practice can be examined is through detailed ethnographic case studies, where the everyday and extraordinary of tourism practice can be observed, interrogated and analysed. All of the contributors to this book have first-hand, extensive experience of tourism as it is performed in the European High North, be that in Icelandic Northern Lights tourism, whale watching, or Greenlandic cruise tourism. By the term ethnographic study, we refer to a detailed long-term, first-hand research where the researchers have themselves participated in the activities they go on to describe, analysed in the context of a close reading of comparative texts and other detailed field research. The ‘field’ is not merely a geographic space, but can be defined in the context of the study. For example, Northern Lights tourism can itself be described as a field, since it is the theme that organises the different methods and approaches engaged by the researcher(s) (Amit 2000). Such research inevitably rolls over disciplinary boundaries, engaging with current and historical research in associated fields, addressing political questions, challenging issues of justice and ethics, and thinking critically from an informed position about relevant debates.

This kind of empirical research offers insights into the changing lives of those entangled in tourism, either willingly or unwillingly, and demonstrates how tourism is often so much more than merely an economic activity. Fonneland’s (2012) description of the delicate line trodden by a Sámi tourism practitioner between New Age spirituality and Sámi shamanism throws light on the enduring intrusion of romantic visions of the sublime. Tourists visiting the farm in Finnmark that Fonneland describes (which has since changed hands) are promised ‘slow and spiritual experiences’ (Ibid.:163), in which an indigenous spirituality is contrasted with an essentialised Western experience. Sámi spirituality is thus sold to New Age tourists through the emblematic use of shamanic items and practices and through Sámi architecture and handicrafts as a sublime, other-world experience, the guest-house as a portal to a magical

world of untamed nature and spirituality – thus fulfilling all the colonial-style desires of the Western imagination.

Recent growth in 'environmentally friendly consumerism' (Rutherford 2011: xix) has played a role in highlighting the High North as an ecological niche. An image of relatively untouched nature, where a sophisticated Western population is scattered in small towns and villages surrounded by what appears to be uninhabited wilderness is highly attractive to those who seek immersion in dramatic natural environments. This desire is heavily promoted in visual form, through a picturesque that dominates Western appreciation of nature – or at least its commercialisation – 'at the expense of the many other types of properties and experiences that nature can offer' (Todd 2009:165). A recognisable visual aesthetic of magnificent wilderness incorporates high mountains, waterfalls and barren coastlines, alongside other 'wonders of nature' including living creatures such as whales and seals, and natural phenomena imagined as living, such as the Northern Lights.

And yet a known trope of tourism development is its tendency towards self-destruction, as Todd writes:

> Wonder lies partly in encountering the new and strange, and in the sheer difficulty and effort often involved in doing so. Once a place becomes a tourist destination, however, this effort may no longer be required to experience the very attributes that drove tourists there initially, and those very attributes themselves are thereby endangered. (2009:267)

In other words, as the sublime, unreachable nature is made accessible, it becomes less attractive. On the other hand, as outlined in the chapters of this book, the increase in tourism activities in European Arctic areas reveals how heterogeneous tourism and tourists are, the diversity of ways in which tourists approach nature, and the variety of meanings attributed to nature in the different ecologies of tourism.

Arctic natures and peoples?

Closely associated with the modern European romanticisation of nature was a tendency to imagine indigenous people within the frame of nature too. As Said (1978) memorably outlined, Western colonial powers both infantilised and naturalised populations, not only through direct policy but equally through the circulation of literary and visual representations of exotic 'others' that were for domestic consumption. But colonial power has always been resisted, and resistance and rebellion have been present in regional politics and in tourism contexts. Resistance, though, is often hidden behind tourism experience products. The Sápmi-park in Karasjok (Kárášjohka) offers an essentialised experience of Sámi indigenous cultural heritage to tourists visiting a Sámi town otherwise relatively bare of overt symbols of Sámi presence (Mathisen 2010). At the Sápmi-park, tourists are offered an archetypal Sámi experience in a theme-park space outside historical time that Mathisen describes as an 'ethnographic present' (see Sanjek 1991), in a performance with echoes of 'native-

performances' from the Skansen outdoor museum to the human zoo (Blanchard et al. 2011). Within the park, tourists are invited to participate in a digital performance of Sámi spirituality and buy Sámi craft goods in the shop. The whole portrays an ahistorical and depoliticised 'traditional' lifestyle only metres from the home of the Sámi parliament, established in the aftermath of historic uprisings and anti-colonial rebellion.

The High North has thus hardly been exempt from colonial visions. The persistent emphasis on the 'most natural' is evidence of the perdurance of perceptions of the sublime in the encounter with northern landscapes. Unnur Karlsdóttir's (2013) account of historical trajectories of Icelandic nature tourism makes explicit this pursuit of the sublime, as an experience of overwhelming emotion in the encounter with landscapes idealised as pristine, pure, remote and wild. The combination of ice and volcanoes emphasises the power of nature, themes exploited in Icelandic tourism promotion to great effect. The Icelandic central highlands thus emerge as a 'wilderness' to be explored; described, indeed, in hyperbolic terms, as 'the largest remaining wilderness in Western Europe' as Sæþórsdóttir and Saarinen note (2015:2). Into this exotic expanse, student expeditions set out in the image of polar explorers, to include the youngest person to cross the highlands on foot, for example (pers. comm.), and tourists take guided tours into this photogenic, untamed space. Ironically, only as roads were built to service power plant infrastructure, did the central highlands become easily accessible to humans (such as tourists), formerly having been largely left as grazing land for sheep. Within Iceland, as Karlsdóttir (2013) discusses, competition between geothermal power generation and tourism development often comes to a head over the vision of landscape as 'wild', a vision apparently threatened more by power-generation equipment than tourism infrastructure. A debate has emerged that pits increased renewable geothermal and hydro-power supplies against maintaining the highlands as an area of 'untouched' nature, promoted as the image of Iceland for tourism. Within Iceland, a memorandum was published in March 7, 2016, declaring that the central highlands should have the status of a National Park. The organisations behind the memorandum, including the Icelandic Environment Association, the Icelandic Travel Industry Association and several other outdoor activities and tourism related groups, simultaneously aimed to make the highlands accessible for leisure activities and to protect them from other forms of exploitation. Yet the demand for protection is framed within the discourse of commercialisation, in the interests of tourism and leisure actors, while at the same time the central highlands are deemed too valuable to have a simple price tag attached.

In summary, we note that despite the powerful critiques of colonial practices, scientistic and para-religious notions of nature, and analysis of tourism that demonstrates the tendency for destruction that tourism brings, the industry continues in large part to reproduce the very practices and structures that create such disruption and injustice. In the European High North, we see echoes of earlier colonial images and practices in the current forms of tourism development, but we do also see attempts to redefine tourism development, to pressure tourism actors to learn from past mistakes, and to re-invent tourism for an ecological future.

In this short book, we present four chapters that outline how this is playing out across the High North, with a comparison with Antarctic tourism development. It should be noted that we have not undertaken a global comparison (i.e. with other circumpolar Arctic regions), mainly because there is a very wide literature available, particularly on the North American Arctic regions, and relatively little available on tourism in the Russian North. Our aim here is to present a largely European perspective that should be of interest to Arctic tourism scholars, as well as to those interested in tourism and the European Arctic more generally.

The chapters

Four chapters follow this introductory discussion, addressing the above issues in relation to whale tourism in Norway, Northern Lights in Iceland, Greenlandic tourism promotion, and reflections on Antarctic tourism. In chapter two, 'Responsible Cohabitation in Arctic Waters', Kramvig, Kristoffersen and Førde consider the recent escalation of whale watching in northern Norway. The first venture at Whale Safari in Andenes was established by natural scientists and whale enthusiasts funded by the WWF (World Wildlife Fund) in 1989. Around this time, whales became prominent as environmental icons through organisations such as 'Save the Whales' and Greenpeace, to name but two. Many of the young European environmentalists who started Whale Safari were keen to find an alternative to whaling, and sought to raise awareness and knowledge about whales by offering boat trips to watch the whales in their natural habitat. Andenes was an ideal location for their scientific studies, since the European continental shelf is at its narrowest around the Vesterålen archipelago, and whales of various species can be seen regularly, relatively close to the shore. Hardly a tourism hotspot, the area gradually saw increasing visitor numbers. Whale Safari has maintained a link between scientific knowledge and tourism, but a recent surge in more purely touristic whale watching has emerged, not least because the whales have started to enter different waters. Marine scientists have hypothesised that changing sea temperatures have led to changing herring migration patterns, and orca and humpback whales are even following herring shoals into inshore waters around the city of Tromsø. Many new tourism operators have launched into the frenzy, offering boat trips to see the whales close up, sometimes with less than ideal regard for the well-being of the whales, or for the risk that close encounters might scare away the whales, reducing future tourism opportunities.

Kramvig, Kristoffersen and Førde argue that this new whale tourism era is generating new kinds of whale – or new ways of conceptualising what a whale might be, following on a series of differently imagined whales over the centuries. Nineteenth-century bourgeois European tourists were thrilled to see whales from whaling ships around the North Cape. These whales were certainly prey, but the rapid rise in industrial whaling drew concern from local fishermen. Fishing fleets around the northern coast relied on whales driving fish into shore, enabling fishermen to use small, open boats. These whales were seen by the fishermen as co-hunters, a role documented in the first millennium *Gulating* legal code which describes whales as a 'gift from God', since they brought herring within reach of coastal fishing boats.

Contemporary whale watching seeks a quite different whale, characterised by the named tourist whales who are the familiars of the established tour operators. These whales form a tourism spectacle, with tourists invited to name new individuals seen from the boats, anthropomorphising the mammals and seeking a personal encounter as the ultimate sublime tourist experience. Both co-hunters and tourist whales could be described as what Haraway calls 'companion species' (2003), in contrast to the figure of the environmental whale of the scientific protection organisations, or the hunted prey of the whaling industry.

The authors further identify an 'invisible whale', missing from the tourism excursions, as seismic geological surveys seek oil and gas reservoirs on the seabed in the same area. Competition between the different whales and their respective backers has been intense, with different sides claiming and exploiting different areas of scientific research, and claiming rights to the sea and to its inhabitants and its geology. Glenn, the tourist spectacle whale, is spectacularly absent from government reports and strategic papers on seismic soundings and oil and gas exploitation. Kramvig, Kristoffersen and Førde ask about the compatibility between these different whales, the way the invisible whale, the co-hunter, the environmental whale and the spectacle tourist whale are enacted in practice. The analytical force of 'material ontologies' (Law 2009) reveals how these different whales link to different material practices, sometimes collaborative, sometimes in conflict. Calling on Blaser's discussion of 'political ontology', involving conflicting assumptions about what exists (rather than, say, normative arguments about what should be done), they argue that the multiple universe (or 'pluriverse') of different whales is what needs protection, and which could offer new alliances between NGOs and Arctic people at a time of rapid change.

In chapter three, Lund explores another conundrum of the High North, where the established sublime landscape must be seen in daylight, while the new tourism attraction of the Northern Lights can only be seen in the dark. The Northern Lights, or Aurora Borealis, have become a tourism phenomenon, massively marketed as a 'must see' around the world. As recently as the 1950s, tourists to the north barely remarked on noticing the Lights (pers. comm.), yet now they are heavily marketed, including by the Icelandic national airline, Icelandair, who started to use the Lights as a promotional device as recently as 2007. The challenge to tourism promoters was two-fold: first, that the Lights can only be seen in the dark; and second, that it is only dark in winter, well outside the conventional tourism season. On the other hand, across the Nordic area (and beyond), the Northern Lights offer an opportunity to extend that traditional tourism season from summer into spring and autumn, and then into winter. Lund gives an account of the rise of Iceland as a tourism destination, boosted by the volcanic eruption in 2010 of Eyjafjallajökull whose ash plume disrupted air travel in northern Europe for several weeks (Benediktsson et al. 2011; Lund and Benediktsson 2011). Iceland also became a tourism destination in the nineteenth century, as Icelandic nature was framed as another form of tourism spectacle. In this case, it was 'nature as landscape' that fitted the popular European imagination of terrifying northern wastelands, made of lava fields, forbidding volcanoes and powerful waterfalls.

Once framed as ‘worth seeing’, the landscape became a spectacle for consumption by visitors, but in the absence of indigenous challengers, Lund (2013) argues that nature itself resists such manipulation. The landscape itself is not merely there, waiting to be consumed. On the contrary, Lund argues that landscape emerges in the experience of moving through or with it. Rivers splash and run, rocks bar the path, the wind blows, and rain and snow lash the walker. Nature and landscape are not external to the person, but emerge in physical and imaginative encounters over time. The sublime, terrifying powers of nature conjured by Jules Verne in his writing about Iceland are not necessarily those that visitors encounter when travelling themselves, even if they interpret their experiences through such discourses. Those visiting Iceland to see the Lights are unlikely to experience the individual sublime of the tourism images, since the great majority of visitors participate in organised tours. The Lights have been commercialised to the extent that they are imitated in the interior lighting of Icelandair aircraft, yet the transformation of the forbidding dark of the northern winter – the ‘endless night’ imagined from further south – into the tempting spectacle of the Aurora has taken immense organisational and promotional invention. It relies on a conjunction of factors that Lund presents through a virtual tour in her chapter. While in much of European history, night-time darkness has been associated with danger and fear, it has another side that can be described as peaceful, mysterious and still. As electric lighting began to banish the dark from urban and other inhabited spaces, the qualities of darkness have gradually been reprieved as essential aspects of a world quite different to the one experienced in daytime.

The Lights can be elusive, just like the whales who may or may not appear to the whale-watchers (also in Iceland), but like whales, the Lights are just predictable enough for tour operators to offer guarantees to visitors. As long as the bus tours (or boat tours) can find a gap in cloud cover, they are likely to see the Aurora at some point, however fleetingly. This very fleetingness, though, offers visitors a sense of the chase, a hunt for a brief glimpse of the desired experience. The onus is then on the tour guides to create and manage a sense of expectation among the tourists, to turn their tour into an experience that they can be satisfied with. As Lund explains, the guides put together the Lights tour as a product, an experience brought to life through spatial practices that the guides curate in response to the particular group of tourists assembled on any one tour. This puts a considerable demand on the guides to be knowledgeable about the science of the Lights, to be able to communicate that knowledge in an entertaining way, and to keep the tourists interested and engaged on what may be a long, dark journey with little else to occupy their attention. Lund reports on guides manufacturing stories to highlight national character, adding local colour, while endeavouring to create a guarded sense of intimacy among the participants of the tour, to encourage them to feel close to Iceland and Icelanders as well as to each other.

Chapter four turns to Greenland, whose European status can be questioned. Despite close cultural connections with Inuit and significant similarities to the situation for aboriginal tourism development in Canada (Notzke 1999), Greenland’s relationship with Denmark throws up numerous comparative reflections for the rest of the European High North. Astrid

Andersen considers the recent exercise by the Destination Management Organisation, Visit Greenland, to create a national brand to promote Greenland to potential visitors. Directed for many years by appointees from Denmark, Visit Greenland finally appointed a Greenlandic director and set about re-inventing their promotional materials, largely inspired by a visiting American student intern (pers. comm.). The history of Greenland raises a number of dilemmas in this regard. An autonomous Danish dependent territory ('home-rule') since 1979, it was formerly a province of Denmark; in other words, a colonial territory, yet it has been used as a strategic base for US defence and is implicated in various international interests. Self-rule was established in 2009, with Greenlandic adopted as the official language, and self-government on all but foreign and defence policy, currency and raw materials, police and courts, all of which remain in the control of the Danish government. Over a number of years, then, Greenlanders have been gradually asserting their rights to self-government, while maintaining close links with Denmark, through higher education and trade, and through the presence of many Danes in Greenland, and Greenlanders in Denmark. Andersen outlines the complexity of questions about self-government in relation to the legitimacy of nation states, since among the Nordic countries, the question of territorial rights and indigenous rights remains contested. Greenland's history of migration is one of repeated settlement by different groups, including successive migrations from various Inuit groups from the North American continent. After the Norse settlement in the south, from the tenth to the sixteenth century, during which time an Inuit group settled in the north-west, Greenland was deserted, being resettled later by a different Inuit group. Claims to being the first or the most authentic are thus open to challenge, as Andersen illustrates.

The current majority, both politically and demographically, is Inuit, but Visit Greenland must create a narrative that acknowledges these conflicting claims since the nature of its ambition is not to be provocative or political but to be welcoming. Two further challenges presented themselves, in the form of two classic figures of colonial tourism promotion: the traditionally-costumed indigenous representative of 'local colour', and the colonial explorer-hero of ongoing Western fantasies. Inverting these figures, the brand invented a new figure of The Pioneering Nation, one that effectively flattens the differences and conflicts between claims to authenticity or territorial rights. In Visit Greenland's brand, everyone can be a pioneer, including the various different historic settlers, and the tourist wishing to embark on extreme sports or their personal 'discovery' of Greenlandic locations. Andersen illustrates how the brand sidesteps pressing social issues, questions of prejudice and inequality, while contributing to an emerging public and social media discourse around contemporary forms of modernity in Greenland. Visit Greenland thus attempts to negotiate a path between the promotion of Greenland as an attractive Arctic destination, and participation in postcolonial debates about the representation of Greenland and Greenlanders both home and abroad. In her analysis of the branding exercise, Andersen illustrates the significance of storytelling in creating a new ecology of Arctic tourism and highlights the delicate sensitivities involved in reconciling unresolved tensions between colonial and postcolonial states.

In the final chapter, Juan Salazar brings a different perspective to the ecologies of Arctic tourism through a reflective comparison with Antarctica. Antarctica provides the clearest instance of the scientist/explorer narrative, unsullied by encounters with indigenous populations, yet rich with the encounter with that pristine nature so dear to the Romantic narratives outlined above. Both poles have become increasingly central in global political debate, not least in relation to climate change, where polar images of polar bears and penguins, collapsing ice shelves and retreating glaciers capture the public imagination and render climate change sublimely picturesque. Antarctic tourism is also on the rise, built largely on what Salazar describes as the 'intensively political construct' of untrammelled nature and space of Antarctic wilderness, tied to a heritage narrative around the historical ruins of the global whaling industry. Evidence of the 'alien invasions' of plastic and other non-biodegradable industrial products (Gregory 2009) is largely absent from the tourism promotion literature, if occasionally used in environmentalist campaign materials. In contrast to the Arctic, the Antarctic island is a continent (as opposed to the ice-mass that is the Arctic Ocean), but in common with the Arctic, the notion of Antarctic space extends well beyond the cartographic Antarctic circle. As Salazar points out, various southern cities fashion themselves as Antarctic cities or gateways, just as northern cities (and universities) describe themselves as Arctic by reason of being within or close to the Arctic Circle. The 'Antarctic Convergence'[6], a meteorological phenomenon associated with ocean currents, extends to the southern Atlantic islands (South Shetlands, South Georgia, etc) and the Kergelen, Heard and McDonald islands of the Indian Ocean, thus offering an alternative definition of Antarctic. Further afield, the cities of Ushuaia and Punto Arenas compete as launching ports for Antarctic travel, while the more distant cities of Hobart and Christchurch are among the places presented as logistical centres for Antarctic activities. External interest in the Antarctic is tied as much to commercial exploitation as scientific exploration, with tourism and mineral extraction as the main competing activities now that whaling is at a minimum.

In tourism terms, the poles are radically different, both in scale and activity, since so much of the Arctic region is inhabited (and habitable). But in both cases, cruise tourism is on the rise, bringing with it considerable environmental consequences and increased risks of pollution and ecological damage. In Antarctica, cruise tourism now figures as the primary economic activity, contributing to ecological change through the desire to see it in action, or, as Salazar puts it, as 'both benefactor and detractor to the environmental and political integrity of Antarctica'. Salazar also notes the context in which all of the chapters are situated, as the emergent geo-politics of the Anthropocene, an era in which we recognise that no part of the Earth is now unaffected by human activity. The polar regions may offer heightened examples of its consequences, but they speak to the moral imperative of our age, the problem of anthropogenic climate change. Talking about tourism while the global goes to hell might be seen as trivial, yet this volume shows us that polar tourism tells us much of what we need to know about why, and how, people respond in unexpected ways to global questions. Climate change, postcolonial governance, global capital, extreme forms of inequality, selective

perception and revisionism are all present in the mix, if we look closely enough at the ecologies of Arctic tourism to see them in action.

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[1] www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/UNCLOS-TOC.htm

[2] Interestingly, Jesuit cartographer Heinrich Scherer later mapped the 1519-1522 voyage of Magellan's ship, *Victoria*, using a projection centred on the Arctic (see Keilo 2015).

[3] The English-language publication of Kim Leine’s book on the life of a Norwegian missionary in Greenland (2015) may make inroads, however.

[4] ‘Dette er rettigheter som er beskyttet av internasjonale konvensjoner og forpliktelser, slo Keskitalo ettertrykkelig fast.’

[5] It should be noted that the founders of the national parks in the USA were in close contact with British outdoor enthusiasts and legislators, linking American discourses to European nature conservation movements.

[6] See http://www.ats.aq/imagenes/info/antarctica_e.pdf for an illustration of the southern oceans, or

www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/islands_oceans_poles/antarctica_research_station.gif for an illustration of the political claims under the Antarctic Treaty System.