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GREEN ICE

Tourism Ecologies in the European High North

Edited by
Simone Abram and
Katrín Anna Lund

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Arctic Encounters

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CHAPTER 1

Green Ice? Tourism Ecologies in the High North

Simone Abram and Katrín Anna Lund

Abstract Tourism has been expanding rapidly in the European Arctic alongside growing international interest in the Arctic as a site of extreme, palpable climate change. This chapter explores the idea of tourism ecologies, tracing the development of tourism in the European High North in its colonial contexts, and highlighting the tourism narratives that help to sustain Arctic ecotourism. We ask what entices people to travel from afar to experience something called 'the Arctic', what they might be expecting, and how it is promoted and performed in practice. What idea of Nature is it that sustains this tourism, and how are the people of the European Arctic imagined, from inside and out? The chapter outlines the ecologies of this tourism, looking beyond the notion of a natural Arctic, and considering the many people, places and things that come together to make Arctic tourism possible. In the current forms of tourism development in the European High North, we see echoes of earlier colonial images and practices, but we also see attempts to learn from past mistakes that may help to redefine

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tourism development and reinvent tourism for an ecological future. The chapter thus situates the current growth in Arctic ecotourism in relation to postcolonial European narratives, introducing the chapters that follow.

Keywords European High North · Arctic ecotourism · Postcolonial Arctic · Tourism ecologies · Sápmi · Greenland · Iceland

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; Oslund 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 (see the Afterword to this volume).

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' (Martello 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 were 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, 11 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 (see Bjørst and Ren, 2015) 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 his maps provided a vision 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 100 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 (2014/2015) 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 (see chapter 4). 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 (from Russia to 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). 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 is evident from 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 seldom 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 300 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, sociocultural 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' (Björk 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 (e.g. rainforests, tundra and moorlands) 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 an assertion could 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 and have raised debates about the status of land in Finnmark, an area of northern Norway that covers around 50,000 km^2, and has a population of roughly 74,000 including a long-standing mix of ethnic groups (including various Sámi, Norwegians, Kvæns 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 false premise 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 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' (Rutherford 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, in fact, been inhabited. The declaration of Finnmark as 'empty', enabled it then to be 'claimed' by the then Danish-Norwegian King, and it was the later recognition by the Norwegian parliament that this claim was unlawful that 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. (Todd 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 also equally through the circulation of literary and visual representations of exotic 'others' 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 (Sæþórsdóttir and Saarinen 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 hydropower 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 on 7 March 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 parareligious 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 not only echoes of earlier colonial images and practices in the current forms of tourism development, but also attempts to redefine tourism development, to pressure tourism actors to learn from past mistakes and to reinvent 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 Chap. 2, '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 World Wildlife Fund (WWF) 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 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' (Haraway 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 of oil and gas reservoirs on the seabed in the same area disturb whales for miles around. 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 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and Arctic people at a time of rapid change.

In Chap. 3, 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 twofold: 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 4 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 (Notzki 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 reinventing 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 West 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 broadly 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 Chap. 5, 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 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 geopolitics of the Anthropocene, an era in which we recognise that no part of the Earth is now unaffected by human activity (as noted above). 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.

Notes

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.

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CHAPTER 2

Responsible Cohabitation in Arctic Waters: The Promise of a Spectacle Tourist Whale

Britt Kramvig, Berit Kristoffersen and Anniken Førde

Abstract Being concerned with responsible whale tourism, we have argued that we need to understand how whales are enacted in multiple ways. To do so, we describe a series of knowledge practices or ontologies through which different whales are enacted and the relations between these. We argue that there are multiple versions of the whale in northern seascapes, and have organised our analysis around four dominant versions: the spectacle touristic whale, the co-hunter, the environmental whale and the invisible whale. All of these are assemblages of research activities, natures/seascapes and expanding networks and politics. The whales reside in waters with fishermen and their nets as well as interferences from seismic ships on behalf of the Norwegian government and international oil companies. Whales are still being hunted and put on the menu; they are being protected and given territorial

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rights by environmental organisations, fishermen and local communities alike. They are enacted as a touristic spectacle. In doing so, the whales become a new and important companion, not least for a growing tourist industry in the north.

Keywords Whale watching · Responsible tourism · Political ontologies

Prologue: A Companion Worth Fighting For?

There are between 70 and 100 sperm whales all year round at Andenes, where often-spotted whales such as 'Glenn', 'Helge' and 'Mats' ensure that whale tourism companies satisfy their guests' dreams of glimpsing a whale. Glenn, named after the son of the manager of Whale Safari, was first spotted in 1994 and is perhaps the biggest cetacean celebrity at Andenes. Through numerous iconic photos of his tail, Glenn's many encounters with tourists are well documented. Lately, different kinds of whales are moving even further north than Andøya in increasing numbers, and have returned to the narrow fjords of Kvaløya (literally translated as Whale Island). The return of whales to these Arctic waters has become a new and important tourism spectacle around the Arctic capital of Tromsø, such as at the smaller municipalities of the islands of Senja and Andøya. Within a few years, a range of companies have established themselves with different whale-watching products, often in addition to fishing and Northern Lights tours. Controversies over how to behave responsibly around whales are ongoing and often involve emotive discourses, as numerous local people have taken a stand by defending the whales' rights to move and feed in these waters without interruption, and are calling for tourist companies to behave responsibly and with sensitivity towards whales.

In the waters off Andenes, there are not only whales but also important fishing fields and oil and gas reserves. There has been extensive mapping of potential petroleum resources over the past decade, and conflicts between fisheries, whale tourism and the mapping of the seabed culminated when the research ship *Håkon Mosby* entered the Andfjord in September 2014 to map the different geographical layers on the seafloor using seismic air guns. Glenn and the other whales disappeared. Potential petroleum extraction in these waters has been

Fig. 2.1 Photo (Britt Kramvig)

one of the most controversial environmental issues in Norway for the past 15 years, and exposure to seismic airguns can cause physical damage and behavioural changes in whales. This was, however, the first time that whales have been an actor in the struggles (Fig. 2.1).

Introduction

Whales have become an Arctic spectacle. In Norway, whale watching is a rapidly expanding tourism industry. Orcas, humpback whales and fin whales are following new herring migration routes, taking them into fjords around Tromsø where they have not been seen for decades. With them comes not only a booming new tourist industry but also locals, photographers and researchers, who are eager to meet the 'giants of the sea' on the doorstep of the largest city in northern Norway. In this process, the whale is transformed from an object of historical searching and hunting to one of searching and observing (Blok 2007; Einarsson 1993, 2009; Kristoffersen,

Norum and Kramvig 2016). In other words, the whale is 're-mattered'; its matter has been recast in different assemblages of techniques and practices that produce the whale as either a marketable meat product for consumption or as a vehicle for the sociotechnical networks of the tourism industry.

In this chapter, our concern is responsible whale tourism. For the last 2 years, we have conducted fieldwork on whale tourism in Andenes and Tromsø in northern Norway as well as in Reykjavik and Husavik in Iceland. We have participated in multiple whale-watching trips and talked with tourists and tour operators as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), researchers, politicians, fishermen and others concerned with the ecology and future challenges of these waters. In addition, we have organised seminars to facilitate dialogue between the tourism industry and different research communities. Our main undertaking is that in order to enable responsible relations towards whales in the ocean, we need more knowledge of the different relations, networks and politics put in motion by whale tourism. This plays into what we consider to be new articulations of whales' territorial rights in these waters, but also into the range of historical and present practices related to encounters at sea. In this chapter, we will take advantage of two theoretical concepts. One is the concept of the *pluriverse*, introduced by Mario Blaser (2013); the other is the concept of *political ontologies*. Both will be more comprehensively accounted for later in this chapter. Through practices, whales are enacted as pluriverse, involving different and sometimes overlapping human and non-human relations as well as diverse economic and research activities, diverse political ontologies and different and expanding networks and politics. In the following sections, we will argue that there are four main whales that are performed: the spectacle touristic whale, the environmental whale, the invisible whale and the co-hunter. The different versions of whales depicted in this chapter are neither fixed nor disconnected. Whale tourism, to a large degree, draws on the environmental whale, leaning on the re-conceptualisation of the whale by environmental organisations, where whales have been transformed from being conceived as a resource to be harvested into a species to be saved. For the local fishermen, whales have been both hunted and given protection for centuries, and the whale has been conceived as a necessary co-hunter. What we describe as the invisible whale, as the prologue exemplifies, refers to the lack of territorial rights for whales when it comes to oil drilling in northern waters: an absence of policy documents and practices relating to oil drilling in Arctic waters. Moreover, the incident at Andenes shows the potential of a spectacle tourist whale that calls for the

environmental whale to be given territorial rights, and thus to become a companion in the fight against oil, for fishermen, environmentalists and locals.

The Spectacle Tourist Whale

Whale tourism in northern Norway has a relatively short history. It began with the establishment of Whale Safari at Andenes in the late 1980s. In recent years, whale tourism has expanded into different areas around the coast of northern Norway, especially in the waters around Tromsø, Kvaløya and Senja. Migrating whales can be unpredictable collaborators in tourism development. Due to new migration routes, whale watching is currently a growing industry along the coast with about 20 different companies offering different whale tourism products. At a conference in January 2016, organised by the Arena Winter Experience[1] in northern Norway, whales were presented as 'the new Northern Lights' for Arctic tourism. The touristic whale thus represents a crucial new resource for coastal communities. However, the growing interest in whales has not only occurred in the north. From around 9 million whale watchers in 1998, the global total rose to around 13 million participating in whale-watching activities in 119 countries, generating tourist expenditure estimated at $2.1 billion (O'Connor et al. 2009). In Europe, some 22 countries participate in whale-watching tourism, accounting for nearly $100 million in expenditure. The whale-watching companies at Andenes receive about 20,000 whale tourists a year, while in Tromsø about 6000 whale trips are sold each year, with numbers increasing rapidly. In comparison, Iceland sold about 272,000 whale-watching tickets in 2015.[2]

Through whale tourism, tourists are offered 'a step into the whale world'.[3] Tourists who come to Andenes for close encounters with whales are offered '100% whale guarantees', due to the stable numbers of sperm whales and the significant number of minke whales, pilot whales, humpback whales and the growing numbers of orcas in the nearby fjord. The spectacle touristic whale is both mythological and scientific. The whale-watching operators offer encounters with the whales and knowledge of marine mammal biology and ecology. The main feature of Whale Safari is the opportunity to get close to the mighty animal, which seems to have a strong force of attraction to humans. As one of the pioneers explained, 'to be out there on the sea and smell the breath—I mean, you get so close you can smell what it has eaten, and you see the play of the muscles on its back when it dives—it changes people'. The idea of

encountering a moment of togetherness with the big sea mammal seems to fulfil the need to be part of nature rather than merely looking at it.

Whales are performed through written stories. 'Moby Dick', named after Herman Melville's famous novel from 1851, was one of the first whales given a specific name and accounted for as a species with emotions towards humans. The struggle between Captain Ahab and the whale Moby Dick is described as man's struggle with nature. Captain Ahab is obsessed with revenging the previous loss of his leg, and Moby Dick seems obsessed with revenging Ahab's attack. Moby Dick is still an iconic whale, and the name was used as a slogan when Whale Safari in Andenes was established. However, the story of a vindictive whale has been replaced by other stories of whales' interactions with humans.

Whales are given specific and human names by the tour operators outside of Andenes, where the same sperm whales dwell for several years in a row. They are recognised by their individual shapes and tail patterns. On their trip out with a whale-watching ship, tourists are informed about who they will meet at sea by the tour guides: 'This, ladies and gentlemen, is Glenn'. Tourists take photos and most travellers recall having 'met Glenn'. He comes with storylines, relationships and images. Tourists who did not take a good photo can buy one at the whale centre on shore. Kalland (1993) discussed how whale tourism has contributed to whales being redefined and individualised, and represented as 'the humans of the sea'. The whales are named after people by tour operators, or even by tourists who buy the right to name a whale. The naming of individual whales is thus part of the tourism product, where travellers can sometimes even choose the name of a new whale. At the same time, tourists can take part in research projects by sending the photos that they take to natural scientists who work in the area on the identification of individual whales, building up whale catalogues. Whales are identified by researchers through photos and specific numbers and are being traced with Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking devices that record data such as depth, water, temperature and underwater sounds.

Knowledge transfer and dissemination has been central to whale watching at Andenes since it began. The initiative to start whale tourism came from marine biologists, students and other whale enthusiasts engaged in the Swedish Centre for Studies of Whales and Dolphins, funded by the

World Wildlife Fund (WWF). In parallel with the development of tourism, where people meet whales at sea, they built up a whale centre to disseminate knowledge about whales. Those who participated in establishing Whale Safari at Andenes tell of a highly professional environment with a combination of researchers, students and people from the arts and cultural sector. Their objective was to increase knowledge and awareness of marine mammal ecology (Førde and Viken 2014). Although Whale Safari never took an official stance for or against whaling, for some of the young researchers and students who came from all over Europe, the aim was to offer tourism as an alternative to whale hunting. Whale Safari has since got new owners and established itself as a professional tourism industry actor. However, Whale Safari at Andenes has maintained the link between knowledge and commercial operations. Through the years they have recruited a number of researchers and students from various countries, who have combined studies with guiding. The research, mainly identifying and tagging individual sperm whales, is also used in the marketing of whale tourism. Tourists are invited to be 'scientist for a day' and help identify whales.

These networks, where science is part of whale tourism, contribute to responsibility in tourism. But this kind of network is not activated in all whale tourism products. In Tromsø, there has been an expansive growth of whale tourism and new companies. Over the past 5 years, huge stocks of herring have been migrating into the fjords outside of Tromsø in wintertime. With them come whales and people attracted by the spectacular scenes of groups of whales hunting herring. Orcas, humpback whales, dolphins and fin whales have been entering the fjords in increasing numbers. Family groups of orca have come to feed and deliver calves, and humpback whales to hunt in groups. When the sea literally starts boiling with herring being pushed up to the surface, the humpback whales come up through the water with their mouths fully open to ensure a giant mouthful of herring. This cooperative hunt can be observed from boats or land. It takes place in narrow fjords, allowing for the spectacle to be viewed comfortably from the shore. Tourists, tour operators and others have been queuing up to get a glimpse of the hunt. A number of companies have leapt on this new opportunity and started whale tourism. The fjords have occasionally also been full of private boats, big and small, in what has been described as a 'Klondike' (Kramvig and Kristoffersen 2014). Local newspapers have reported a 'whale bonanza', and drawn

attention to the growing number of companies offering whale products. The County of Troms saw a 15 % increase in travellers from 2013 to 2014, mainly in the winter season. So far, the Northern Lights have been the main attraction, but whale watching is about to become another. As described in the local newspaper *iTromsø*:

> When winter really sets in . . . just get on a boat and get ready to study the ruler of the ocean up close. Whale watching is getting more and more popular, and being able to see humpback and orca just feet away from you can't be described as anything but a powerful experience.[4]

Many of the new tourism actors entering this field have little knowledge about how whales behave. In Tromsø, several established winter tourism companies have tried whale watching, eager to learn along the way and continuously assessing the skills needed to meet tourists as well as various whales. Other companies have less experience with both tourism and whales. There are great differences in knowledge transfer between the various operators, and there are differences in quality and the products, for which tourists often pay the same price. Many new companies do not have researchers or trained guides specialising in sea mammals. Few have the necessary knowledge of how tourism and whales can coexist. As a result, conflicts arise about who has the right to the fjords, and there have been several accidents at sea. Still, entering this field as researchers, we have encountered great interest in exploring how coexistence can be achieved in secure and ethical ways. We have arranged seminars where new actors in whale tourism in Tromsø have had the chance to meet experienced actors, such as the company Whale Safari from Andenes, as well as researchers who work on marine mammals and tourism researchers. The seminars generated great interest and participation. These dialogues, as well as the public debates following the situation, show that the spectacular touristic whale is ascribed a right to the sea.

The aim of the tourists is to meet the whale in its natural environment. Countries that are still involved in whaling are said to be less lucrative for whale watching (Higham and Lusseau 2007; Cunningham et al. 2012). However, in Norway this argument does not seem to carry sway politically. Statements from local and national NGOs and local politicians claim that whaling and whale watching can coexist without affecting each other. Looking to Iceland, we see that whale tourism has become economically essential in Husavik, where the anti-whaling slogan 'meet us don't eat us'

seems to resonate with the profiling of the community (Kristoffersen et al. 2016: 102). In Andenes and Reykjavik, this differs. Some local restaurants are still putting whale on the menu, even though stories and practices of whaling are downplayed in meetings with tourists.

With expanding whale tourism, the touristic whale is entering into new networks and relations. Lawrence and Phillips (2004) claimed that the radical change of conceptualisation of whales in North America, from resources to be harvested to a species to be saved, served as a premise for the growth of whale tourism. The many actors involved in performing the touristic whale in northern Norway constantly negotiate their practices, and in doing so also the whale and its place in the sea. As an effect, the spectacular touristic whale opens new dialogues of responsible relations in what we, following Tim Ingold (1993), describe as seascapes. The touristic whale is enacted through multiple and complex networks. Performed by an increasing number of tourists, tourist enterprises, researchers and others, encounters with 'the giants of the sea' or 'the rulers of the ocean' have become an important commercial product.

The Whale as a Co-hunter

Tourism is not new to the Arctic. Since the 1600s, the Arctic North—in particular, framed as 'Ultima Thule' or the end of the world—inspired expeditions as well as researchers and travel writers. The unknown north needed to be mapped, named and documented in dominant European languages. Ultima Thule was still a blank spot on the map that could be filled with ambitions, desires and the visions of expanding European nations. In the same period, whale hunting close to the coast of northern Norway was at its peak. Industrial investments in whaling stations, ships and hunting equipment made hunting big whales lucrative in the nineteenth century. Whaling and the emerging tourism in Arctic Norway came together on a number of occasions at the time. From the 1870s onwards, the English company Thomas Cook's travel bureau organised cruises to North Cape, arguing that travellers needed to get away from overcrowded Europe (Brendon 1991). The Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten* wrote in 1890 that 'a couple of times it happened that the tourist got to witness whaling, when several whaling ships went hunting outside of the North Cape. It goes without saying that this aroused waves of enthusiasm amongst tourists' (Kalland 2015: 253). Historical documents tell stories of how whaling became a spectacle for the European

bourgeoisie visiting the north. In this first wave of tourism, whale hunting was a desired tourist event, and whaling stations became a tourist destination (Kalland 2015).

On several occasions from the early years of the nineteenth century, industrial hunting for whales was articulated as problematic by local fishermen. Fishermen contacted the Norwegian Parliament in order to address the need for regulations. The fishermen argued that whales drove capelin to shore, making fishing in the fjords and in more shallow waters possible for fishermen in small and mostly open boats. This was the main reason for whales being protected in hunting regulations going back to the *Gulating law*, which dates back to before 900 A.D. (Kalland 2015: 278). In Paragraph 149 in the *Gulating law*, the following statement appears: 'if whales are hunted while in bait hunting fish, and with this act prevent the gift of God, then the one responsible, have to pay 40 mark'[5] (Ibid.). Whales were referred to as 'herring-movers' (Kalland 2015: 278–279) or, more loosely translated, as 'herring-shepherds'. This more than 1000-year-old paragraph was maintained in various forms until the late eighteenth century, when it was challenged by what Kalland (Ibid.) calls a new scientific story. This new story rejects the idea of the whale playing an active part in the giving of herring and cod to people from God. The whale, it seems, was about to be modified from a companion species to playing a role in the assumed 'larger household of nature' (Asdal and Hobæk 2016). Still, this did not happen without resistance.

The whaling controversy culminated in 1903 in a dramatic rebellion known as the 'Mehamn Rebellion'. After 1900, the important spring season in the Finnmark cod fishery failed for several years in a row. The fishermen believed that there was a link between whale hunting and the lack of fish. When there were no whales around, the capelin and cod were out of reach for the fishermen. On Whit Sunday, the whale hunting station in Mehamn was assailed by more than 1000 fishermen and was partly destroyed. Military ships and soldiers were summoned from Vardø and 20 of the protestors were arrested and convicted. Local politicians from the new political Labour party claimed that the closing of close-shore whaling was important for the fishing communities in the north (Johansen 2002). This event had an effect on national politics; one of the local politicians, Alfred Eriksen, brought the local fishermen's arguments into the national debate. As a result, Alfred Eriksen was elected for Parliament in 1903. Later the same year, whaling within the territorial borders of the three

Fig. 2.2 Photo (Espen Bergesen)

Northern counties of Finnmark, Troms and Nordland was prohibited for a period of 10 years (Fig. 2.2).

There are multiple storylines not only enacting the connections between whales, herring and capelin, but also fishing-nets, boats and people. At the beginning of industrial hunting with cannons firing grenade harpoons in the mid-twentieth century, the fishermen's knowledge of the whale was challenged by natural scientific views on the whale as a sea mammal as well as a resource for the production of oil and meat. Arguing that whales had a specific political position as a co-hunter was not considered a legitimate argument by the new body of natural scientists who wrote reports for the government, for whom this idea was categorised as superstition (Kalland 2015). The ontology that had protected the 'herring whale' against whaling while fishing took place was being challenged, and was eventually overrun by natural science knowledge production that opened up industrial whale hunting. This was achieved by successive reports made by different whale committees set up by the government in the period of whale hunting controversies (1860–1910) and was orchestrated without the voices and knowledge of the local fishermen. Several whaling stations were built in the Arctic North by different private companies, with ongoing protests and reports addressed by the local fishermen and their communities towards the government, arguing for protection of the whales. For the herring and cod fishermen, the whale was a distinct kind of companion

Fig. 2.3 Marked orca and map (Audun Rikardsen)

species. The whale report by Sars (1888) commented upon this as follows: 'When the ill-informed lacks choice, he turns to the familiar. When other options are lacking, he chooses superstition. But he is mostly wrong.' (Juel et al. 1890: 21, cited in Asdal and Hobæk 2016).

There are thus written sources confirming that whaling has been part of coastal fisheries as far back as the *Gulating law*. In contemporary northern Norway, there are 20–25 boats involved in whaling, usually with a crew of between three and eight, which use the same boats for fishing in the winter as for whaling in the summer. These hunters argue for the protection of the whales, seeing whale hunting as contributing to upholding an ecological awareness and responsibility. Whales, these hunters argue, are species we live with but also harvest. They are simultaneously co-species and an animal in a hierarchy.[6] For fishermen trawling for herring outside the fjords of Tromsø during recent years, this has also been the case. Whales gather around the nets when they are brought together, harvesting many of those herrings that fall or slip out of nets taken on board the ships. To interact with whales, anglers need to act differently. In some situations, particular species of whales are hunted and eaten. In others situations, as in the seascape of assemblages between tourists, tourist operators, herring trawlers, local people, the coastguard and others, the whales are given territorial rights. Several times in recent winter seasons, when orcas and humpbacks have been stuck in nets, the anglers, ships, divers and the coastguard have done what they can to free the whales (Fig. 2.3).

The Environmental Whale

As we have seen, the whale is encountered as a companion to coastal fishing and the touristic whale is an effect of different networks, and by that is enacted as a whale through whale watching. Still the politics of whales in Norway consider the whale as a mammal that is partly protected, hunted for research purposes only and part of the coastal culture; but also part of the menu in a shrinking number of restaurants, festivals and homes. The whale is positioned as a resource to harvest and afforded an important place in the ecosystem by the fisheries, but is also strengthened by the support of national environmental non-governmental organisations (ENGOs) with a decentralised structure and a range of local associations, such as *Natur og Ungdom* (Nature and Youth) and their 'parent' organisation *Naturvernforbundet* (Friends of the Earth Norway). Local and national NGOs thus position themselves within local networks in Arctic Norway, where the hunt for between 500 and 900 minke whales annually is considered a practice of ecologically balanced harvesting. This stands in stark contrast to the position held by the aforementioned foreign ENGOs that initiated whale watching in Norway. In the following statement by WWF, they characterise the whale as a global actor in terms of its right to move freely across the globe in all oceans, emphasising the similarities between humans and whales:

> Whales roam throughout all of the world's oceans, communicating with complex and mysterious sounds. Their sheer size amazes us: the blue whale can reach lengths of more than 100 feet and weigh up to 200 tons—as much as 33 elephants. Despite living in the water, whales breathe air. And like humans, they are warm-blooded mammals who nurse their young. A thick layer of fat called blubber insulates them from cold ocean waters.[7]

The complex, mysterious, and sublime whale, still similar to humans, differs from the whale that appears in what Sea Shepherd calls their 'equality statement':

> Sea Shepherd Conservation Society operates internationally without prejudice towards race, colour, nationality, religious belief, or any other consideration except for an impartial adherence to upholding international conservation law to protect endangered marine species and ecosystems. Those illegal operations that we oppose routinely attempt to accuse Sea Shepherd of being anti-Japanese, anti-Native American, or anti-Scandinavian etc., for our opposition

> to illegal whaling or the killing of dolphins[. . .]. Nothing could be further from the truth. We do not oppose Japanese or Norwegian whaling we oppose illegal whaling as defined under international conservation law . . . Sea Shepherd operates outside the petty cultural chauvinism of the human species. Our clients are whales, dolphins, seals, turtles, sea-birds, and fish. We represent their interests.[8]

The juxtaposition of people and whales is interesting in this statement. While WWF emphasises similarities between the two species (the capacity of complex communication, breathing air and caring function), Sea Shepherd takes a stand where they represent the whale's interests and have them as clients in what they consider to be an unequal relation as whales' 'shepherds'. They also articulate themselves as being 'othered' by different nations in the same process. Their position challenges the established human authority in relation to these non-humans of the ocean. Rather, they claim, it is the nation states supporting whale hunting that should be 'othered', not those that speak on behalf of the whales in international forums of political negotiations as well as in direct actions, to make 'whaling an ancient history once and for all', opposing only 'criminals and criminal operations' (Kalland 1993). The environmental and animal welfare rights movements became important to international actors after the 1960s, and the whaling issue was a major contribution to this expansion (Kalland 2009). Today, there are hundreds of national and international NGOs campaigning against whaling. Kalland (2009) divides them into three main groups: environmental organisations (such a WWF) are concerned with biodiversity and see themselves as fighting against the depletion of whale stocks; the second group are fighting for animal welfare and rights (such as Sea Shepherd) and a third group is mostly concerned with interspecies communication and our relationship with whales as spiritual beings. In the 1980s, global actors such as Greenpeace, WWF and later Sea Shepherd, adopted anti-whaling positions, and there were several actions carried out against whaling and whaling ships. In 1982, the International Whaling Commission (IWC) established a moratorium on the harvesting of 13 species of large whales (IWC 1982). Norway and Iceland have shared a history of whaling since the late nineteenth century, but both ceased commercial whaling after the moratorium was enforced in 1986. Iceland continues a small scientific whaling programme in which it not only kills roughly 60 whales per year but also hunts fin whale that are listed as

endangered, while Norway also carries out scientific whaling on minke whales. As previously mentioned, giving up whaling because of whale tourism does not seem to be high on the agenda in Norway and Iceland. However, there is a new alliance emerging between whale tourism, fisheries and opponents of petroleum extraction in the north, which the Prologue exemplified regarding the touristic whale, Glenn, who is being chased away by seismic soundings. What is being challenged in this new alliance is what we call the 'invisible whale', the whale that is not considered in relation to increased oil and gas activity in Arctic Norway.

The Invisible Whale and Glenn's Vanishing Act

Loud explosions caused by seismic airguns are used to search for oil and gas. ENGOs and researchers have argued that exposure to seismic airguns can cause physical damage and behavioural changes leading to reduction of survival success for marine mammals, and is therefore considered to be a serious marine environmental pollutant (Vester 2014). The sperm whale Glenn, who has been seen in the area since the early 1990s, was spotted 5 h prior to the entrance of the vessel doing the seismic mapping in September 2014. In the subsequent days, the whale watching company Whale Safari had to travel far out of the fjord to find sperm whales (18 nautical miles) on its first trip, while on the following 2 days, no whales were found. 'Both whale watching trips lasting for around 8 hours' a report on the event says, and continues, 'The identified sperm whale "Glenn" was further north of the Andfjord on the day after seismic testing finished but has not been seen since in the following days' (Vester 2014). Going on whale watching trips in Andenes without spotting whales is rare. Whales are so plentiful that the two companies operate with the aforementioned 'whale guarantee'. The report further critically assesses the episode in Andenes in a broader context:

> The investigation exposes the realities of current seismic survey operations in Norway, where no assessment of marine mammals is conducted prior to the start of a survey. The information available to the public is very limited, and even direct requests for further details are denied. Also, no guidelines are in place to mitigate the negative effects on marine mammals. (Vester 2014: 12)

Vester claims that without a monitoring and mitigation programme in Norway, it is 'possible that marine mammals in the North Sea, the Norwegian Sea and the Barents Sea are exposed to close-range seismic blasts possibly causing damage to internal organs or permanent hearing damage, thereby significantly degrading their ability to feed, reproduce, socialise and communicate' (Ibid.: 12). As the Norwegian coast is known to be a migration route for many marine mammals, including fjords that are important feeding grounds for both travelling and local cetaceans, Vester writes in the report that Norwegian authorities are 'failing to comply with the Best Environmental Practice requirement in the Convention for the Protection of Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic-OSBAR convention',[9] and concludes: 'As a result, migrating whales are not protected in their critical migration and feeding areas' (2014: 14).

By the remaking of a sperm whale into a spectacular tourist whale in field reports, Glenn also represents the whale as a global actor (the environmental whale) with a designated space in all of the world's seven seas. Mappings through seismic surveys have been intense over the past decade in northern Norwegian waters and have been conducted under the leadership of the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate. Local fishermen in Andenes addressed the specific challenges associated with both industries effectively sharing the same territory. They raised concerns about who has a 'right to the ocean' and have argued that the seismic mappings of the seabed severely hampered fishing activities, both directly through not being able to fish during the seismic shooting, and indirectly as fish catches went down afterwards, for the same reason as the whales—they were scared away (Kristoffersen and Young 2010).

The report by Vester was co-financed by the *People's Action for an Oil-Free Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja* and Greenpeace Norway, exposing the new alliance and thus the network that whales enter, tying into the local–national conflict of drilling for oil and gas in these waters and the environmentalist whale of Greenpeace and their like.

Still, in the Norwegian government's many reports and White Papers, Glenn is one of many invisible whales in northern seascapes. Searching through key documents shows that in Norway's High North Strategy White Paper (2011), whales are not mentioned once, while polar bears are mentioned twice and the word fish appears 54 times in various ways. In the White Paper from the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy for opening new areas in the Barents Sea in 2012, whales are mentioned in three paragraphs; the most relevant is the Ministry's explanation of why there is

little research on whales in relation to petroleum activities, and sound in particular: 'In Norway it is assumed that there is only a minor influence on marine mammals in areas opened for petroleum activities. This topic has therefore received little attention' (Ministry of Petroleum and Energy 2012: 66 [our translation]). Only one Norwegian study has been conducted on the effects of seismic activity on marine mammals, a review of previous research which concluded that there are no indications that marine mammals' internal organs will be damaged as a result of manmade sound (Dalen et al. 2007). Many international cetacean researchers would challenge the conclusion in this document. Thomson et al. showed how toothed whales (approximately 68 species) would be disturbed in a range of up to 10 kilometres by a 180 decibel sound and that these sounds are detectable up to 100 kilometres from the source (1995: 5). Sperm whales react to seismic shooting by moving more than 50 kilometres away from seismic vessels in the Gulf of Mexico, and in the Indian Ocean, sperm whales stopped singing when they received pulses from a seismic vessel that was up to 300 kilometres away (Mate et al. 1994).

On the seismic vessels that operate in Norway, there are regulations that require fishery observers to ensure that the survey maintains 'a safe distance' from operating fishing vessels (MPE 2012). It does not require marine mammal monitoring and mitigation procedures as is standard practice in other countries, such as the UK, the USA, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. As seismic activity effects on whales are not monitored, the whales vanishing from these documents are no longer an object of concern for knowledge production, policies or oil-related activities in these waters. The whales, important for the tourist actors in this area, are thus not given territorial rights in oil-related practices and policies (Fig. 2.4).

Responsible Tourism and the Politics of Ontologies

Being concerned with responsible whale tourism, we have argued that we need to understand how whales are enacted in multiple ways. We have contributed to this by describing a series of knowledge practices or ontologies through which different whales are enacted and the relations between these. Since these practices differ and since realities are enacted in practices, these practices *do* different whales—whales that migrate in and out of these seascapes. This chapter has explored the choreographies of practices, focusing upon how different agencies as well as otherness are generated through them. In addition, we argue that we need to be open

Fig. 2.4 Photo taken by Heike Vester/Ocean Sounds (Vester 2014: 7)

to multiple versions of the whale. We have shown that there are at least four dominant versions of whales in northern seascapes. We have named these the spectacle touristic whale, the co-hunter, the environmental whale and the invisible whale. All of these are assemblages of research activities, natures/seascapes and expanding networks and politics. The whales live in waters with fishermen and their nets as well as increasingly in waters that are being mapped by seismic ships on behalf of the Norwegian government and oil companies. Whales are still being hunted and put on the menu; they are being protected and given territorial rights by environmental organisations, fishermen and local communities alike. They are enacted as a touristic spectacle. In doing so, the whales become a new and important companion, even for a growing tourist industry.

Blaser (2013) gave some advice on what a political ontology of environmental conflicts could entail. By ontological conflict, he points to conflicts involving different assumptions about what exists. First, it reminds us to not rush too quickly to define what the conflicts are. Second, we need to attend to performances and not groups' ascriptions in order to evaluate a conflict as ontological or not. Third, political ontology means telling stories that hold

together and open up possibilities to further the commitment to the pluriverse (Blaser 2013: 25). Blaser argued that where we suspect that ontological conflicts are taking place, a political ontology approach is crucial, for it is 'at these points of encounter between ontologies that the pluriverse might be protected or abandoned' (Ibid.). Within the different practices we have explored, and the whales generated through them, there are conflicts that can be regarded as ontological conflicts because they hinge upon contests between nature and the culture of modernity. We argue in line with Blaser that the pluriverse whale is the one in need of protection. The whale enacts interests on its own behalf. Whales come to these waters to breed and feed on herring. They interact with fishing vessels and their nets, with coastguard divers when they get stuck in nets or cables, and researchers that mark them and take samples out of their bodies. They interact with tourists who take nothing more than pictures, tourism companies that commercialise the spectacle of nature, and a range of other actors that are becoming dependent upon their presence. Through these different networks, they become pluriverse, and knowledge practices seen as relevant in Arctic research also become multiple. In Arctic research, natural science often becomes the dominant source of knowledge when it comes to organising nature in official political documents and assessment studies. This is nowhere more obvious than in the present environmental controversies. Who gets to speak on behalf of the environment or nature and with what authority in the public–political domain, when decisions of resource management in the sea are being made? The returning whales disturb the authority of natural science and create a possibility for more pluriverse Arctic seascapes, where other knowledge claims interact.

Although we have mostly focused on the spectacular touristic whale, it is not the predominant whale in these seascapes. The co-hunter's return after decades of absence in the fjords outside Tromsø allows large-scale natural science-based mapping of individual whales in Tromsø by researchers, tourists and locals. The whale as a co-hunter becomes articulated through the interrelations between the whales and herring, and the herring and fishermen. Locals and tourists alike seek to know these newcomers through connections to climatic change (warming waters), changes in migrating routes of herring and the effects upon the local ecologies in the fjords where whales stay for the winter season. Other ontologies manifest themselves as stories through which the assumptions of what kind of factors and relations that makes up a given world are articulated (Blaser 2013: 22). The herring-whale fisherman riots to protect whales in 1903 emerged from other relations, binding them to other

human/non-human relations, interdependencies and common ancestors as God's gift. The contemporary alliances and claims from locals, for the right of whales to move into the fjords, hunt herring and be protected from nets, seismic ships, propellers and aggressive tourist operators can be seen as an extension of local people's ontologies of whales. With the right to move without borders and legal rights to co-hunt herring, whales have been part of the coastal people's knowledge for centuries.

The environmental whale is, as we have argued, also a whale multiple, protected by—or a client of—environmental organisations. Organisations like Sea Shepherd challenge Norwegian as well as Icelandic whaling, but these are not ontological conflicts. They are struggles to protect but also to speak on behalf of the whale that have been much needed in the modern discourse of resource management, against the modern industrial approach that almost eliminated big whales in the twentieth century. Still, the nature/culture divide is not challenged in the articulation done on their behalf. The animal rights movement tends not to consider the pluriverse whale. The recognition of the pluriverse could generate unexpected alliances between NGOs and Arctic people. This could be part of the new responsibility, where the spectacular touristic whale can make possible what Blaser (2013) called *border dialogues*. We need to cultivate these dialogues and the tensions that they involve in order to act responsibly towards whales, tourists and other species in Arctic nature.

Notes

1. Arena Winter Experience is a cluster of tourist companies in the north of Norway that aims to develop high-quality winter experiences based on tourism, culture and sports in Arctic regions.
2. The number given by the Icelandic Tourist Board, January 2016, on request.
3. www.whalesafari.no
4. http://www.itromso.no/nyheter/2015/10/17/100-grunner-til-%C3%A5-elske-Troms%C3%B8-11686403.ece [Downloaded 15.4.2015] (Our translation)
5. This is our translation of the following statement: 'skyder man hval i åte, dvs mens den tar fisk, og således spilder og hindrer guds gave, da er den som det gjøres, brødig 40 mark.'
6. Based on fieldwork and interviews with whalers in Lofoten, 2015.
7. http://www.worldwildlife.org/species/whale [Accessed 10 October 2015].

8. http://www.seashepherd.org/who-we-are/equality-statement.html [Accessed 10 October 2015].
9. http://www.ospar.org/convention/text

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CHAPTER 3

Chasing the Lights: Darkness, Tourism and the Northern Lights

Katrín Anna Lund

Abstract In recent years, winter tourism in Iceland has been growing steadily featuring the Northern Lights as an important attraction, and since 2009 the Lights have been used intentionally to promote Icelandic winter landscapes. The Lights, however, are mysterious, flickering in their nature and sightings are unreliable due to their different strengths and weather conditions. Moreover, the primary condition for sightings is darkness, which has traditionally in the Western mind been associated with chaos, even danger. This may seem to contradict how Icelandic landscape were composed and created by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century explorers or to be visually approached as pristine and majestic, evoking a sense for the sublime, an image that the contemporary tourism industry continuous to promote. Thus, the paradox of the promotion is that Icelandic natural landscapes were created to be seen and appreciated in daylight and not in darkness. In order to explore how the Northern Lights fit in with this natural landscape, this chapter explores how the Northern lights are promoted and simultaneously experienced by tourists,

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which reveals how darkness is constantly being improvised, ordered and managed by different actors, making it inviting by bringing out its sublime qualities.

Keywords Iceland · Tourism · Northern Lights · Darkness · Nature

Introduction

The Northern Lights are a phenomenon of light that appears in different strengths and colours and is visible in the dark winter sky in the High North. They have long been a subject of curiosity for people who have tried to explain their appearance in various ways, sometimes with the assistance of folklore and superstition. Since the eighteenth century, scientific investigations have generated explanations to rationalise their existence. Even so, the Northern Lights still carry an aura of mystery, which provides a space for perplexing awe to remain. The scientific explanations tell us that they are caused by solar wind, or streams of particles charged by the sun, colliding with the Earth's atmosphere. Their colours, which can range from light yellow to strong red and blue, are the characteristic tones of different elements when they hit the plasma shield protecting the Earth: blue is nitrogen and yellow-green oxygen. Although predicting the Lights, or Aurora Borealis (their scientific name), is still inaccurate, they are most likely to be visible during the darker period in the northern hemisphere from September to April, and on clear nights. Hence the mystery remains, and equipped with curiosity and excitement, tourists travel to Iceland as well as to other areas in the High North in the winter, with hopes of getting a glimpse of the spectacle.

Northern Lights tourism in Iceland is a recent trend that was boosted in the winter of 2007–2008 when Icelandair, the largest tourism operator in Iceland, started promoting them as a product. In interviews, the marketing team of the company revealed that they had been aware that Norway and Finland had already made them into a product, especially aimed at British tourists. They had also noticed that Japanese tourists visiting Iceland during the winter season were interested in seeing the Northern Lights. In 2008 they began to advertise short trips during winter time to see the Northern Lights in Iceland, and the success of this initiative meant that a new product had been made. This trend towards the Northern

Lights has without doubt arrived as a gold mine for many Icelandic tour operators to prolong the tourism season into the winter (Sívertsen, Jóhannesson and Lund 2014). According to the Icelandic Tourist Board, 43 % of all tourists who visited Iceland at winter time during 2013 and 2014 paid for a Northern Lights tour (Ferðamálastofa 2014).

The chapter will focus on how the uncertain possibilities of the mysterious and flickering appearances of the Aurora Borealis in the Arctic winter darkness have been made into an exotic attraction, how they are packaged as a product and performed as a phenomenon. Although a recent tourism trend in Iceland, the Northern Lights appear to fit well with the emphasis on nature-based tourism that has already been promoted in Iceland. As affirmed by various scholars (Oslund 2002, 2005; Sæþórsdóttir 2010; Huijbens 2011; Karlsdóttir 2013; Lund 2013), the nature that is marketed in Iceland continues the Romantic vision created by early explorers in the country who sought 'a Europe at the very limits of Europe: animistic, unspoiled, primitive' (Prior 2015: 83) or 'Europe's last Wilderness' (Oslund 2005; Sæþórsdóttir 2010; Lund 2013). Packaged as such, Icelandic landscapes are seen as nature still in formation, full of mystery and unpredictability. It is a nature in which one may feel 'far removed from the developed Western world while still being in it' (Lund 2013: 160), distant but simultaneously accessible. In this nature, the mysterious Northern Lights, as product, seem to fit well. Their stable representation in glossy tourism brochures and adverts works well to highlight the wonders of winter in the High North. The paradox of this promotion is that 'natural' Iceland was created to be seen and appreciated in daylight, yet the Lights can only be seen in the dark.

The national carrier, Icelandair, in an act of perhaps surprising irony, has named their 21 planes after Icelandic volcanos. The company recently enlisted Icelandic artists 'to paint the exterior with luminescent colour, and outfitting the interior with mood lighting to mimic the Northern Lights' (Feinstein 2015) of the plane named after the volcano, Hekla. Thus an aeroplane themed with Aurora Borealis, and named after one of the most famous and volatile volcanos in Iceland, appears to connect the Lights to Icelandic nature, allowing the company to use recent disruptive volcanic activity for promotion and turn fickle nature into an attraction (Benediktsson, Lund and Huijbens 2011; Lund and Benediktsson 2011). Furthermore, the other 20 aircraft also display moving images of the Lights in miniature above the luggage compartments (Fig. 3.1).

Fig. 3.1 'The Northern Lights' flickering above a luggage cabinet in an Icelandair plane. (Katrín Anna Lund)

However, no matter how glossy the images are, the Northern Lights can only be seen in darkness which is not the ideal situation to appreciate Icelandic nature. The travellers and explorers of the nineteenth century considered themselves 'enlightened' and, as Karlsdóttir points out, 'wanted to *see* and experience sublime nature' (2013: 142, emphasis added). Icelandic nature was, and continues to be, created as a visual and sensual spectacle, as a picturesque 'that emphasized forms and compositions in the landscape' (Lund 2005: 31) and how to visually arrange them akin to the aesthetic formulation of a landscape painting. How, then, does darkness that obscures both forms and compositions but is nevertheless required to see the Lights, alter perceptions of Icelandic Nature?

In this chapter, I shall attempt to throw light on how Northern Light tourism alters the understanding of nature that has conventionally been promoted as a spectacle. My findings are based on research carried out in Iceland in 2014 and 2015 by a team of researchers from Iceland, Norway

and Finland.[1] We participated in Northern Light tours and interviewed tourism promoters, as well as carrying out focus group discussions with Northern Light tour guides. I shall start with discussing darkness, the most important feature in Northern Light tours. I examine how darkness may, or may not, fit with nature as promoted in nature-based tourism in Iceland, and how meanings have been adjusted to suit contemporary capitalist methods of producing nature as a pristine space. I shall then enter darkness and discuss how Northern Light tours may be experienced in situ and how the tour itself is a co-creation spun by a multiplicity of actors, human and non-human. Finally, I will invite readers to go ahead into darkness accompanied by me and my colleague, a few tourists and a tour guide on a Northern Light trip in the North of Iceland, to illustrate further what kind of nature emerges in darkness. This will provide a reason to examine the 'greenness' of this nature and how it appears through different marketing strategies and in situ experiences.

Managing Darkness

All Northern Light tours start with a journey, usually by car, into darkness and out of the urban environment where the glare from artificial lighting can prevent celestial sightings. As several scholars have observed,[2] darkness flows; it enwraps the body and slows down the rhythms of the world dominated by light and modern devices. Darkness obstructs visual perception, concealing the forms and features of the surroundings. It was in darkness that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century travellers and explorers lost their sense of direction when they found themselves in 'the domain of other' (Edensor 2013: 448), which in turn needed to be brought into light. Darkness has indeed been loaded with negative meanings throughout Western history or since Europeans left the 'dark ages' behind and were enlightened. However, dark spaces persisted unexplored and disorganised in the uninviting Arctic regions and polar spaces as well as the Dark Continent, Africa. In this colonial context, darkness is chaotic and unpredictable; it is a mythical space where creatures and forces, human and non-human, can simultaneously be present in different temporalities. Mysteries such as the Northern Lights would not be revealed without darkness, and in the contemporary capitalist world, mysteries sell. It was into this forbidden darkness that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century explorers and scientists heroically sailed their ships and travelled on foot to discover and investigate different lands, their nature and resources as

well as their peoples, although the Arctic was mostly regarded to be uninhabitable. It was out of this darkness that Icelandic wilderness materialised.

As Sæþórsdóttir et al. has pointed out, Iceland, along with the rest of the High North, was considered to be 'the borderlands of the civilized European world' (2011: 254). Historian Sumarliði Ísleifsson writes:

> When Iceland was described as a part of the far North in the period from c. 1500 to 1800, it was generally as an extremely cold place, where no trees or grain could grow and the wind was so fierce that nothing could withstand it. Instead of eating bread made of grain it was asserted that the inhabitants subsisted on bread made with fish. Further, it was believed that people on this northern island lived underground like animals because of the extreme cold. The situation was supposed to be similar to the life of the people in the far South, where they were also said to live underground, but there because of the extreme heat. (2009: 99)

Thus, the people in Iceland were believed to live in darkness and the barren grounds fostered no vegetation but instead 'volcanos, geysers and earthquakes', including the volcano Hekla, mentioned above, which was believed to be 'the entrance to Hell' (Sæþórsdóttir et al. 2011: 254). It also appears that for the inhabitants of Iceland themselves during this time, a large area of the country was also in darkness, as a result of being uninhabited. During the settlement period (from around A.D. 900), people had travelled some particular routes across the highlands to attend the parliament, or Althing, in the southwest of Iceland, but after 1262 when Iceland lost its sovereignty to the Norwegians these gatherings became infrequent and the central highlands fell into obscurity. Farmers did go into the highlands in the autumn to gather sheep but only to limited areas in the vicinity of their farmsteads (Sæþórsdóttir et al. 2011). As a result, the highlands became a place of danger in the mind of Iceland's inhabitants and were believed to be occupied by outlaws, ghosts, trolls, hidden people, elves and other ethereal beings; creatures of darkness living in a space in-between on the borders of the human and the non-human.

In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries 'the meaning of the North changed fundamentally' (Ísleifsson 2009: 100). Between 1783 and 1785, volcanic activity led to the so-called Móðuharðindi or the famine of the mist, evoking interest among European scientists and explorers. After

1783, 'travel books about Iceland devoted considerable space to describing the new landscapes and speculating about the composition of rock formations caused by these lava flows' (Oslund 2002: 318). These landscapes were nature to be explored rather than admired as they were considered to be barren and forbidding. However, trends in Europe towards nation and culture building in the nineteenth and twentieth century (Burke 1992) changed the attitude towards Icelandic culture as well as Icelandic nature (Ísleifsson 2009). This was a time when the nation was regarded as the creator of culture, and the nation was made up of people that had lived in proximity with the land and its nature; nature bred its nation (Olwig 1993). It was through people's connections to nature that their roots in the nation were founded and from these roots the culture—which combined stories, poems, beliefs and customs—emerged (Burke 1992). It was during this time that young and educated Icelanders, influenced by the Romantic era, were fighting for independence from Danish authorities. Their strongest weapon was the old Nordic literature, the Sagas that were meant to have originated from Iceland. The Sagas played an important role because 'there was a nationalistic need for a counterpart to the South and Classical literature' (Ísleifsson 2009: 99) and the Sagas had not only taken place on Icelandic ground but had also been written by people living in Iceland. As Karsldóttir states, during this period the motivation for travellers to visit Iceland went beyond the desire to 'explore foreign and unfamiliar landscapes', and included a wish 'to visit a country that had given the world unique cultural medieval treasures, notably the Sagas' (2013: 142).

Iceland had been brought out of its dark period and into civilisation. Still, nature in its primitive form shaped its landscapes now valued as 'majestic and awesome' (Oslund 2002: 318), or picturesque and sublime in line with the sentiments of the Romantic era (Brady 2010). Icelandic landscapes had been aesthetically composed as visually pleasing, in line with eighteenth-century scenic emphasis that instructed how landscape should be framed or 'perceived as a picture' (Solnit 2000: 96). As scientific and scholarly knowledge about Icelandic nature and wilderness grew, the space for ethereal creatures of darkness decreased in representations of sublime nature (Sæþórsdóttir 2010). Still, for the common people living at the farmsteads the creatures remained, as collections of folklore from the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century indicate (e.g. Árnason 1862). As Karlsdóttir points out, 'the roots of today's iconic image of Iceland as a world of fire and ice lie in the second half of the nineteenth

century' (2013: 142). Iceland became 'Europe's last wilderness', as promoted by contemporary tourism in Iceland and reflected in the images and slogans used for marketing 'that refer and rely strongly on the wilderness characteristics of the country: e.g. "Iceland naturally", "Nature the Way Nature Made It" and "Pure, Natural, Unspoiled"' (Sæþórsdóttir et al. 2011; see also Oslund 2005; Huijbens 2011; Lund 2013).

Today, the same darkness that required such effort to reach for the travellers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries can easily be accessed in a world that has become extremely mobile. Instead, the modern traveller is accompanied by the idea of travelling into a space of pristine nature and mysteries, as depicted by the aeroplane carrying the name of the volcano and decorated with the Northern Lights: simultaneously providing modern comfort in air travel and a notion of Arctic wilderness. In this context, I want to argue that the Western darkness, once so formidable, is controlled and ordered by human technology, and thus not merely seen as opposition to lit spaces but rather a space that may be decorated with lights to shape atmospheres (Bille and Sørensen 2007). Edensor has, for example, demonstrated how 'darkness, shadow and gloom have been celebrated as capacities', not least in the urban landscape (2015: 2). A romantic dinner loses its aura without the candlelight and northern living rooms during dark winter evenings are lit through shades from lamps located in the corners rather than lighting the space with an unbroken glow from the ceiling (e.g. Bille and Sørensen 2007). Tourist firms marketing the Northern Lights in Iceland have captured these changing attitudes towards the interplay of darkness and light, which becomes evident in the glossy photography used by tourism promoters.

A recent advertisement from Icelandair, depicts two lone travellers somewhere in the wilderness of Iceland lying on the ground, admiring the sky above, or one can assume so, because in fact the only things indicating the presence of the travellers are their boots positioned at the front of the image (see: https://www.icelandair.co.uk/iceweb/img/Stopover-NorthernLights.jpg). Judging from the different sizes of the boots one may guess that this is a heterosexual couple. They have put up their tent in the middle of nowhere under the dark winter sky lit up by rays of the Northern Lights, indicating a peaceful space where time stands still and there is nothing to worry about. This is an atmosphere of stillness although full of movement created by the dynamic fluctuations of darkness and light. The quality of darkness as a space to escape to is directly emphasised. As both Shaw (2015) and Edensor (2013) have pointed out,

darkness provides a sense for 'time and space which are not dominated by technology and capitalism' (Shaw 2015: 6). Spaces of darkness offer opportunities to 'escape the strictures of commerce, economic rationality, and spatial regulation maintained during daylight' (Edensor 2013: 450). The use of the glossy advertising material reveals that positive aspects of darkness are realised. Although darkness has been associated with negative forces in the Western enlightened world, threatening to 'deterretorialize the rationalizing order of society' (Williams 2008: 518), it also attracts, because, as pointed out above, it offers contact with nature in its purest and most primitive form. As Lefebvre (1996) has suggested, it alters and slows down the rhythms of the day and offers an alternative sense for the environment from how it is observed and practiced during daytime. It demands different sensations that move the emphasis from the observing eyes towards the body that moves through it. And as one moves through darkness, the body entwines with it and is 'immersed in a pulsing space, in the currents and energies of a world-in-formation' (Edensor 2013: 451) rather than in an inert scenery. Moreover, this darkness reveals the 'poetics of light' (Bille and Sørensen 2007: 268, italics original). It provides a space in which one can experience the dynamic play of lights—stars, moonlight, Aurora Borealis—an alternative order of the surrounding encompassing nature to the one composed in daylight by connecting forms and features. As Bille and Sørensen point out, darkness 'illuminates the relationship between thing, light and shadow as a way of creating [alternative] reality' (2007: 267); reality that is in continuous motion through its display from the one which is shaped merely by light or dark. Hence, the overly illuminated Western world has recently rediscovered the potentials of dark spaces. I say rediscovered because dark spaces have for long been appreciated in different parts and at different times in the world. Edensor (2013, 2015) refers to Tanizaki (2001) who points out that the extreme illumination of the West has been experienced as an 'intrusion on the Japanese experience of place' who appreciated 'the virtues of shadows in generating mystery' (2013: 451) and aesthetics. In a similar vein, Shaw (2015) reveals how Buddhist philosophy accentuates the importance of 'natural darkness'. Della Dora (2011) discusses anti-landscapes in her writing about spiritual meanings of caves in the Christian East, which were places for spiritual reflections and revelations because '[v]isual presence conceals spiritual absence; visual absence invites divine presence' (2011: 762). It thus appears that dark spaces have for long been appreciated for the qualities they entail that

allow bodies to connect with the non-human existence of the self. Moreover, these divine and poetic qualities of darkness that simultaneously illuminate inner and outer existence are packaged and sold, as illustrated in the advertisement. This is not the primitive darkness of otherness that needs to be discovered and enlightened; rather it is a type of divine darkness, spiritual darkness, mysterious darkness that is more-than-human, aimed at the adventurous, environmentally sensitive, middle-class traveller; the so-called metrospiritual which Rutherford (2011) calls the 'new normal' (2011: 94):

> Metrospirituals eat local foods, support green organisations, and consume responsibly. Similar to their namesakes [metrosexuals], metrospirituals have a sensitive side, seeking both communion with nature and its preservation. And like metrosexuals, they too are a consumer category that is targeted by very particular marketing strategies, specifically around style, sensory experience, and adventure, and they use purchasing power to express their vision of the world. (2011: 95)

This is the new green but affluent stereotype that is becoming the target of contemporary tourism promoters. The illuminated darkness has now been reorganised and packaged to suit a conscious and sensitive lifestyle in a material world of conscious greenness, otherwise ordered by neoliberal capitalism. Darkness is no longer an uninviting space of otherness but an illuminated and extremely inviting space for revelation of the self. However, this is also darkness that is imagined and staged, because its ordering is managed with a romantic vision of the tourism promoter from afar. It is put forward as a picturesque in the same manner as the pristine nature created by the early travellers. Still, it is not a God's creation like the illuminated and sublime nature that was created and experienced (Cronon 1996) by nineteenth- and twentieth-century romantic explorers. Rather it is a landscape in-between, offering a more-than-human connection for the middle class, prosperous, modern traveller who needs to get away from it all. Still, the question remains, what kind of nature does the tourist encounter?

Being in Darkness

Tourism promoters know about the power of images and tourists are lured by them. While some tourists realise that reality may be somehow different from what appears in the images, there are others who may not. For de

Botton (2002), to appreciate what the 'art of travel' is all about is to accept how it changes, even transforms, tourism spaces when you, as a tourist, realise that it is you, yourself, who are in it. The product as it appears in the image is therefore always an illusion as it excludes the self of the tourist who continues the making of the product through performing it. Tourists visiting Iceland certainly find themselves to be an addition to the image as they drive out of the urban space into the darkness to encounter the Northern Lights. Icelandic tourism promoters offer a variety of tours and are constantly shaping and reshaping their products as rising numbers of tourists who come for the Lights are intensifying the competition. Buses, four-wheel drives or boats are probably the most usual methods of transport. The tours may also be combined with some other activities such as glacier hiking, snowmobile tours, caving, bathing in hot spas, and sometimes dinner may be added to the package. All organised trips are guided so that most tourists have an experienced person to help them chase the Lights, making the isolated couple in the image mentioned above something of an exception. Despite the variety of tours offered, the most usual way for tourists to view the Northern Lights is by taking a bus tour. Two companies in Reykjavík offer tours every night from September to April using large coaches. These tours are very popular and could be classified as a form of mass tourism since each company sometimes sends out about 10 buses per night. These tours are accessible as all the tourist has to do is to buy a ticket and get on the bus; sometimes the deal allows them to use the same ticket night after night until they manage to get a sight of the Northern Lights. It is thus obvious that for the majority of those who experience the Northern Lights, it happens in quite different conditions from those shown in the image above. Fig. 3.2 depicts what may be closer to reality of a Northern Light tour *en-mass*.

In fact, Fig. 3.2 above was taken by a guide from one of the tour companies for the company's Facebook page. Most tour operators are active on social media and Facebook is the most used, at least by the tour operators themselves. Using social media follows a new trend in marketing that goes along with the concept of the experience economy (Pine and Gilmore 1998). The idea behind it is that the customer seeks a particular experience rather than simply a product, and thus within the experience economy a product is not merely being sold but also needs to fulfil the needs of the customer. In this context, the tourists themselves have been brought into the image as well as the landscape, and are co-creators of the product that is in the making, as they 'like' and 'share' and have the

Fig. 3.2 An image from a Grayline tour

opportunity to express their feelings about the images as well as the actual experience (Mangold and Faulds 2009). This is a type of marketing that brings into the open the importance of the word of mouth, which has often been regarded to be the strongest promotional tool. The customer, in this case the tourist as a consumer, plays a direct part in developing the product, emphasising how a product is never finalised as an innovation but is incessantly improvised, evolving in relational entanglements between heterogeneous actors, humans and non-humans (Ingold and Hallam 2007). In the Northern Lights images that are put on Facebook, the most obvious human actors in the improvisation would be the tourism firms, the guides taking photos, the tourists who are brought into the picture from various backgrounds with different expectations as well as the medium itself. However, non-human actors such as Icelandic nature, darkness and the Lights themselves, also play a similarly important role in how they improvise the experience together with other actors such as tourists and guides in the images themselves.

In Fig. 3.3, the emphasis is not so much the visible nature, except to the extent that the outlines of snowy mountains in the background appear on

Fig. 3.3 An image from a Saga Travel tour

the other side of the fjord, hazily lit up from the Northern Lights dancing in the sky. On the other hand, the snow and the heavy outdoor clothing which the tourists are wearing depicts how they are wrapped in with nature, in the cold on the snowy ground and with a shadowy atmosphere shaped by the interplay of darkness and light. At the forefront are the tourists themselves, standing close together portraying their relations as a group (Larsen 2005) and their joint experience of having seen the Lights, some even standing arm in arm as if to emphasise further their personal relationships. Indeed, the main theme in the image is the relations, human and non-human, that created the tourist experience on that particular tour. Thus, in Fig. 3.3 we have an entirely different experience compared to the lone travellers in the Icelandair advert, lying passively on the ground surrounded by the magic and mystery of the Northern Lights that dance for them in the sky in their retreat into darkness. Instead, the tourists in Fig. 3.3 are far from being passive; indeed, it was their relational effort that, at least partially, created the experience which was initiated by a movement into darkness of flow and fluctuation, in which the poetics of lights emerged.

Although a photographic image, like Fig. 3.3, may illustrate a relational co-creation of the tour itself, it is nevertheless an image frozen in time which excludes the actual movement of the tourists, and omits what kind of nature they are relating to. To get closer to an understanding of how these tourists may enmesh with the gloomy surroundings, the next section goes on a tour into darkness to give a sense of how the Lights may be chased in situ. What emerges is how the darkness entered is still one that needs to be managed—controlled and ordered as a tourism product—but now with the assistance of the guides who are always in the lead.

Experiencing the Lights in the Dark

It was a Monday morning in the middle of October 2014. My research colleague and I had landed in Akureyri—a town of approximately 18,000 inhabitants usually referred to as the Capital of the North in Iceland—to explore Northern Light tourism outside of Reykjavík. We had been told that the company Saga Travel had such a good reputation for their Northern Light tours that some tourists would not bother stopping in Reykjavík at all, instead taking a domestic flight straight to Akureyri. During the day, we visited the company and spoke to some of its employees and were invited to go on a trip in the evening. During the visit to the offices it had started snowing and as we left, we found ourselves paddling through an ankle-deep layer of wet snow that covered the ground. Big, damp snowflakes falling from the sky prevented us from seeing more than a few meters ahead and low clouds covered the surrounding mountains. Knowing that the forecast for the Lights themselves was not great, the low visibility made us wonder if the tour would operate but we had been told that there were tours every evening except when it was considered to be dangerous to go, such as in heavy storms. If one does not see the Lights, the price includes a free trip the following night.

We arrived for a pick up at 9 p.m. It had stopped snowing but the clouds remained, although they had slightly lifted. There were some people waiting: a group of Chinese visitors, two Russian women and an American couple. The company has a policy only to use small buses and if they need to use more than one bus for the night they go on separate routes. This is to make the tourist experience more exclusive and avoid a sense of mass tourism. The bus went ahead, out of town and into the dark. I lost my orientation and had no sense of where we were going. The guide was lively and open. He went over safety issues, reminding passengers to

wear their seat belts and warned people to be careful when stepping out of the bus because it might be parked close to the highway. The appearance of the Northern Lights is not limited to particular spots or car parks; they appear when they appear. He advised people to look out at the sky and if they could spot a star to let him know because that would mean there was an opening in the clouds. He also said that we were heading north because his local contacts around Akureyri had told him that there was the chance of an opening in the clouds. This gave a local, even authentic, feel for the trip. His contacts are friends and family who he spends the day communicating with before going on a trip, people from the surrounding countryside who know how to read the clouds for weather conditions and wind directions. He explained how an opening can close very quickly so we might have to go from one site to another and that he might have to upgrade the tour to a 'Northern Light hunting party'. He asked people to keep in mind that the Northern Lights are a phenomenon whose appearance is always different, and thus, every single Northern Light show is unique. They come with different strength, colours and movements.

After discussing safety and facts regarding the Northern Lights, he invited questions and told the passengers not to be afraid to ask, emphasising their opportunity to contribute to the evening, but the group remained quiet. The silence that followed did not last long as the guide filled the gap with a few local anecdotes, relating the passengers to the local atmosphere, describing the local character of the area and local conditions in a playful manner. In that context, he emphasised how people in the north are different from people from the capital, in the south, depicting the local characters as more connected to their natural surroundings and thus more like real Icelanders. Then he raised his arm and pointed out into the dark towards a church that we could suddenly vaguely see from the glare of the lights from the bus. He told us that this church is featured in one of the most famous Icelandic ghost stories. He said he would tell us the story on the way back. I asked myself if this was his plan B. I had heard guides talking about plan B in case of a no show. All his talk about the special features of the locality made me worried that he was trying to shift attention away from the Northern Lights as the main element of the trip. The bus took a turn and the guide explained that we are turning into the valley Öxnadalur because there may be a possibility of a break in the clouds. The bus soon stopped but the guide asked people to stay on the bus as he was only checking the sky. But he did not need to leave the bus to check because suddenly the Lights appeared straight in

front of the bus, which immediately pulled off the road and into a car park. My recorder picked up chaotic sounds of amazement and wonder coming from the tourists as we all rushed out of the bus so as not to miss the Lights. The tour had turned out differently from how the guide and the driver had expected it would. The Lights, although not very strong, danced in the sky for about an hour, with just a few intervals when they were hidden by passing clouds. Some people stared in awe into the sky whilst others took photographs. The guide walked around and spoke to people, making sure that they were looking in the right direction and talking about the nature of this particular display, explaining how the clouds were breaking at the top of the surrounding mountains like curtains that were continuously opening and closing. Before leaving, the guide and the driver also made sure that everybody had a mug of hot chocolate and a doughnut. This had been a good tour given the insecure conditions and I noticed that the ghost story was never told on the way back. Nevertheless, the Russian women complained and wanted another trip for free the night after because the Lights had been too weak and not green enough. The guide told me afterwards that this had been a difficult tour, as I will illustrate further below, despite the fact that the Lights came out quite early and as a result the tour did not last for too long.

The description of the tour is based on a recording made in the bus and on field notes. This particular tour was chosen because it reflects many of the Northern Light tours we undertook in 2015 for research purposes. It starts when the bus leaves the artificial lights of the town and heads into darkness. This is when the improvisation of the product in situ starts in order to generate an experience of nature, in which darkness becomes the medium. How the tour is directed, and darkness is ordered, is in the hands of the guide, who is the main director of the improvisation, especially at the beginning of the tour. He has done his homework and knows where to go and has information about whether the Lights may appear and where it might be best to spot them. Still, he needs to recognise what kind of actors are going to take part in the improvisation and in what way they might participate. As Ap and Wong point out, guides are the 'essential interface between the host destination and its visitors' and are 'responsible for the overall impression and satisfaction' (2001: 551) of the guests. Therefore, it is important to examine how they attempt to bring together the threads that create the whole experience in situ. In fact, guides, equipped with the information they need to provide, perform the sites they guide and bring them 'to life through spatial practices' (Overend 2012: 50). They put the

actual product together in different ways depending on the demands of the organisation they work for (Bryon 2012), as well as the character of the tour itself. The image of the tour guide—especially the bus tour guide—has been projected in the literature as highly prescriptive, in which the guide merely follows a script in order to deliver a product (Urry and Larsen 2011). However, as Bryon points out, the 'experience economy has dramatically reshaped the tourism industry' (2012: 29), with tourists wanting to immerse themselves through more 'interactive and multisensorial activities' (Ibid.). This puts an additional demand on the guide who has to ascertain what kind of experience the tourists in his group want to be a part of, and as Larsen and Meged (2013) point out, there is no such thing as 'standardised tourists', no matter what the goal of the tour is (see also Tucker 2005).

In the case of the Northern Lights tour as depicted above, it seems to be most obvious that the Lights are the ultimate goal for guides as well as tourists, not to mention the researchers. Still, it is in the hands of the guide to manage expectations, and possible disappointments, which the guide does by talking about the nature and science of the Northern Lights; whether and how they may appear given the weak Northern Light forecast and poor weather conditions. He also needs to have a sense for what kind of tourists the group includes. To do that the guide opens up for questions and comments. According to the guide, the lack of response told him that this could be a difficult group to conduct. Their silence meant that he did not know what to expect from them and how they might behave. He felt that some of the tourists in the group did not want to blend in with the others and might not coalesce into a group, and it would be difficult to create an ambiance. This echoes Larsen and Meged (2013) who point out that direct participation of tourists in the improvisation of the tour 'can generate positive energy on which the guide feeds' (2013: 95). However, what makes the task of initiating the improvisation for the night in question all the more difficult is that it is carried out in darkness, which is challenging. One guide describes this kind of a situation and says: 'You throw a handful of people into a black box and you have to entertain them for six hours and they are expecting a great show that is not going to happen'. In the same way as we have learned to appreciate and apprehend landscape in an enlightened condition, scholarly literature about guiding is also framed in daylight, and the guiding examined happens in a place or at a certain site. Guiding in order to chase the Northern Lights is not about guiding in a place that can be visually apprehended, it is about guiding in

darkness in a landscape that is obscured and non-visible. It is thus the materiality of darkness that needs to be mediated and this is where our guide brings in the anecdotes. First, he emphasises the special character of the people from the north, being more 'real', more 'Icelandic' than the people from Reykjavík, the capital of Iceland. They are closer to nature, for example, in terms of their ability to be able to read the sky and the weather in order to inform the guide where there might be openings in the clouds, although the weather condition do not look promising for the layperson. Moreover, the guide gives an impression of his direct involvement in the network of these local people, revealing a sense of close community connections in a rural area, 'adding a local touch' (Bryon 2012: 29) to the experience. These are relations that could be made present in daylight, but as Shaw argues, in darkness 'we become significantly more open to the "other"' (2015: 586) and thus, relations that emerge in darkness become intimate as the 'internal and the external more readily intermix' (Shaw 2015: 519). The guide's reference to the close-knit community relations was an attempt to make the tourists feel integrated, at least temporarily, in his network by emphasising how local people have contributed their knowledge about weather condition and wind directions in order to benefit the tour. The tour thus becomes a communal effort, including the tourists who are co-producers of the experience. The attempt to involve the tourists in the improvisation also takes place inside the bus when the guide asks them to keep their eyes open and look out for stars in case there is a break in the clouds.

Darkness also reveals what light normally obscures and the guide, not knowing if the Lights will emerge, starts telling a ghost story, although he never finishes it, as the Lights appeared and plan B was not needed. In fact, legends about elves, trolls, ghosts and hidden people are often directly integrated into the guiding, brought to life as creatures of darkness. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, mythical explanations in custom and folklore were, and sometimes still are, used to describe the appearance of the Northern Lights in other countries, but this is not the case in Iceland which is probably the only country in the European High North that does not have legends directly related to the Northern Lights as a phenomenon. However, as pointed out above, during the Middle Ages the Icelandic darkness included a variety of fearsome ethereal beings, which gradually disappeared as Icelandic nature became enlightened and was reimagined as picturesque; a sublime spectacle (Sæþórsdóttir 2010). Yet darkness remained, and people in rural Iceland continued to live with

their darkness and what it comprised, such as light, shadows and ethereal beings. This is the darkness that contemporary tourism operators perform in a variety of ways in different spatio-temporal situations, especially in the case of Northern Light tours. In fact, many guides who are in charge of Northern Light tours in Iceland use stories of ghosts, outlaws and hidden people in their improvisation, bringing creatures that light obscures directly into the tours. On one occasion when we joined a tour on which the Lights did not appear, the guide told stories of ghosts and hidden people all the time. He told me that he had done it because this is his way to evoke the mystique of darkness but added that also, on this particular tour, the tourists had asked for this. This was a group that had taken a no-show tour the night before and he had used stories to spice it up. Although there had been no Lights on that occasion they all came back the night after for a repeat tour, even if they knew that there was no hope of seeing the Lights. Instead they asked for stories and, thus, the darkness that once provoked fear featured as the primary element in the ongoing improvisation in the composition of Northern Light tours in Iceland. This is not a staged darkness as it may appear in images promoting the Northern Lights as a product, but it still needs to be ordered and controlled, not as a mere product but to be experienced and improvised in situ as a more-than-human phenomenon. Still, at least some tourists are looking for the Northern Lights as depicted in the images, and guides may not always manage to perform the improvisation to satisfy everyone, as in the tour above. Weak Northern Lights, that appeared and disappeared, meant that the improvisation never found its proper rhythm and the two Russian women demanded an extra tour as they felt they had not got the product they had paid for.

Conclusion—Green Darkness

The chapter started with a question about what kind of addition the Northern Lights are to nature-based tourism in Iceland. To answer the question, I have examined what kind of nature Icelandic tourism promoters attempt to sell and how it is improvised by heterogeneous actors. In this context it is darkness that plays an important role, not least because without darkness there would be no Lights, which may seem to contradict how Icelandic nature was created to be perceived in daylight as a picturesque, a sublime nature. Still, darkness has never been fully erased and with Northern Light tourism it has become more visible, and thus nature

needs to be reordered and managed in order to achieve aesthetic qualities. This alters the perception of nature by tourism promoters who have now started to add shades of darkness into promotional material, in a Western world where darkness has otherwise largely been defeated with artificial lightning. In this context darkness becomes inviting and, complemented by the mysterious phenomenon of the Northern Lights, it becomes an attraction in itself. However, darkness, in a similar manner to the flickering Northern Lights, 'cannot be disciplined' (Bender 2002). In darkness emerges what light obscures, which means that the sense of time and space experienced in daylight alters and one is brought into a space where forms and features of nature take on mobile and flickering qualities. This is a space where culture and nature entwine through narratives in which human and non-human beings appear and interact, which arouses an atmosphere that stimulates an aesthetic and sublime quality (Jóhannesdóttir 2010; Edensor 2010). This is a nature to be experienced rather than merely viewed, and thus the task of the tourism industry is to manage it and make it into an alluring choice and put it on stage for the imagined and affluent 'metrospiritual' customer who seeks to be in touch with nature in its most pure form; hence green nature.

In an increasingly mobilised and contemporary world, the tourist has been brought into proximity with the exotic subarctic Icelandic nature in wintertime. She/he steps into the comfort of the aeroplane, named after a volcano and decorated with images of the Northern Lights, to head into darkness. This is the same exotic, dark nature as the scientists and explorers of the Romantic era travelled to in order to discover and enlighten the pristine nature of Iceland. Today, however, tourists embrace the darkness and are embraced by it as they are transported by different types of vehicles into it, and into nature, in order to encounter the Northern Lights. In a nature enveloped in darkness, the 'greenness' of the green product is tinted through the improvisation of guides and tourism promoters, ordering nature and emphasising its sublime qualities in their attempts to make it inviting to visiting tourists.

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Notes

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2. Edensor (2013); Edensor (2015); Edensor and Lorimer (2015); Shaw (2015); Williams (2008).

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CHAPTER 4

Greenland, My Greenland—Accessing Greenlandic History, Identity and Nation-building through its Nation-branding Strategy, a Tourist Website and 247 Comments

Astrid Andersen

Abstract In 2012, Visit Greenland, the Greenlandic national tourist organisation, conducted a survey on Danish prejudices towards Greenland and Greenlanders. The survey, linked to an ambivalent nation-building strategy that pitched Greenland as 'the pioneering nation', was aimed both at challenging and reconciling subnational relations within the Danish realm. Central to the Danish representational history of Greenland is a split between viewing Greenland/Greenlanders as lost subjects in a modernising project and holistic subjects in a tradition-bound society. The holistic image caters also to a wider tourist audience more concerned with preserving whales than with accepting the sustainable visions of indigenous modernity that are currently being articulated by Greenlanders. Contemporary Greenlandic nation branding is a response to these internal and external dichotomies.

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'A pioneer is a person who takes the lead, breaks new ground and paves a way for others to follow… Throughout the ages, people who have been attracted to Greenland are those with pioneering spirits, who are not afraid of making their way to new places, to discover new opportunities. They are indeed pioneers in their own ways: from the Inuit, who migrated to a huge and unknown country thousands of years ago, to the Vikings in South Greenland and to many explorers, traders, missionaries and workers who have visited the country. The pioneering spirit is still Greenland's trademark: despite the natural challenges and hardship, Greenlanders have developed a modern society where modern communication and technology are available. Greenland is also moving forward to achieve independence from Denmark.' (Visit Greenland 2016b: 17–19).

For one unfamiliar with Greenland or with an unfulfilled desire to visit Greenland, initial contact could very likely be through Greenland's national tourist board and Visit Greenland's homepage: Greenland.com (Visit Greenland 2016a). The homepage addresses tourists; it tells them about things to do and destinations to visit, and offers practical help to plan a trip. The homepage also has a corporate section, which gives information about Visit Greenland's work and offers tools to develop a Greenland brand. The homepage builds upon the slogan The Pioneering Nation, a Greenlandic nation branding strategy developed by Visit Greenland. The Pioneering Nation is Visit Greenland's proposal for a key story about Greenland and the Greenlandic people (Visit Greenland 2016b).

In this chapter, I use the homepage as a starting point to discuss narratives of Greenlandic history, identity and society. I will begin by examining the representation of the history of Greenland and the Greenlandic people as it is narrated through The Pioneering Nation. To do this, I have selected five articles from the tourist section of the homepage: 'History' (Visit Greenland 2016c), 'Migration to Greenland' (Visit Greenland 2016d), 'Inuit Culture' (Visit Greenland 2016e), 'Modern Greenland' (Visit Greenland 2016f) and 'Meeting Greenlanders' (Visit Greenland 2016g). I have chosen these articles because among the many articles on the homepage, these are the ones that most vividly narrate the history of Greenland and introduce the Greenlandic people. In addition,

I will also use The Pioneering Nation branding toolkit (Visit Greenland 2016b), which is accessible via the corporate section of the homepage. The toolkit introduces the ideas behind a nation brand and presents the core values and elements of the Greenlandic brand.

Though I recognise the corporate character of The Pioneering Nation, this chapter explores how these narratives of Greenlandic history, identity and society also form part of a nation-building process.[1]

The Danish version of the tourist section of the homepage contains an entry entitled Mitgrønland.dk (Visit Greenland, 2016h): an online forum created by Visit Greenland to educate Danes about Greenland. Even if Mitgrønland.dk is connected to the branding effort, it opens up other narratives about Greenlandic history and identity than those told in and through The Pioneering Nation. Hence I include these narratives in my analysis. Finally, I discuss how all of these narratives form part of a nation-building process.

Pioneering People

The key story told on Greenland.com is about nature and man: through the concepts 'powerful' and 'pioneering', a story is told about 'the relationship between the power of nature and the people's pioneering spirit' (Visit Greenland 2016b: 9). The epigraph opens: 'A pioneer is a person who takes the lead, breaks new ground and paves a way for others to follow' (Visit Greenland 2016b: 17). The term 'pioneer' designates both a person who is the first to explore or settle a new country or area, and an innovator or developer of new ideas or techniques (OED 2011). Greenland's nature, 'untamed... powerful and vast in scope', provides the precondition for being a pioneer insofar as it offers remote unpopulated areas to be explored and potentially settled (Visit Greenland 2016b: 13). At the same time, it is the uncontrollable and unpredictable force of nature 'that has made the pioneering spirit imperative for the survival and development [*sic*]' (Visit Greenland 2016b: 19).

'The Pioneering People' takes up a central place in the narrative. It is the story of all those who have travelled to Greenland throughout several thousand years: from the Inuit to the Vikings, and the many explorers, traders, missionaries, workers and tourists. To be attracted to and subsequently travel to Greenland makes one a pioneer, and this requires a pioneering spirit. To be a pioneer is an identity offered to anyone attracted

to visit or work in Greenland. At the same time, it is an identity that especially characterises the Inuit.

In the article 'Migration to Greenland' (Visit Greenland 2016d), migration history is presented as four waves of migration during a period of more than 4500 years, a history that is also addressed in the articles 'Inuit Culture' (Visit Greenland 2016e) and 'History' (Visit Greenland 2016c). These four waves brought a total of seven cultures: six of them Inuit, entering from Canada in the north and one, the Vikings from Iceland and Norway, entering from the south. 'Greenlanders today are direct descendants of the Thule people', who arrived in the fourth and last migration wave (Visit Greenland 2016d). The story of the Thule people is therefore central to the story of the Greenlandic people and the Greenlandic nation.

The fourth wave of migration came after a period where Greenland had been uninhabited for 800–900 years; the other cultures had disappeared, supposedly due to changes in the conditions of survival such as a harsher climate and lack of animals to hunt (Visit Greenland 2016d). At around the same time, Dorset II migrated from Canada, settling in north and northeast Greenland, and the Vikings migrated from Iceland and Norway, settling in south and southwest Greenland (Visit Greenland 2016d). These cultures inhabited different parts of Greenland and had no contact with one another. Dorset II's disappearance corresponds 'with the onslaught of the Little Ice Age in A.D. 1300 which turned Greenland into a colder and more inhospitable region' (Visit Greenland 2016d). The change in climate is also one of the reasons given for the disappearance of the Norse around 1450. The Thule people arrived in 1200 just prior to the Ice Age but in contrast to the Norsemen, the 'harsher climate and the disappointing summers did not seem to bother the Thule people, a group of highly specialized and adaptable nomads, who quickly spread out all along the ice-free coastline around 1300 A.D.' (Visit Greenland 2016e). Hence, the narrative establishes the Thule people as the first to settle in all parts of Greenland.

The Visit Greenland narrative of the Thule people is a story of pioneers, both in the sense of them being the first to explore or settle a new country or area, and in the sense of being cast as innovators or developers of new ideas or techniques. This narrative is further enhanced by establishing a connection between the Thule people and present-day Greenlanders through survival skills and tools, where archaeological discoveries of tools and settlements have 'confirmed that the Inuit cultures of the past were characterized by the same adaptability to the prevailing climate and geography as the modern day Greenlandic culture' (Visit Greenland

2016e). The Thule people are also narrated as intimately connected to their Inuit predecessors by the account of how 'the people of the Thule Culture were using paths and hunting grounds already familiar to other earlier immigrant groups in Greenland, dating back to the very first immigrants 4,500 years ago' (Visit Greenland 2016e). This connection is accentuated by reference to the national costume, the hunters' winter clothing and the kayak, early versions of which were brought to Greenland by the first Inuit culture, the Independence culture, and also to the *ulo*, or women's knife, which came with the Dorset I culture in the third wave of migration (Visit Greenland 2016d; Visit Greenland 2016d). The Thule people brought the dog sled, and it was this that enabled them to spread quickly and settle in all parts of Greenland (Visit Greenland 2016e). In the narrative, the dog sled also establishes connections forward in time, as the Thule people founded a 'cultural tradition which was popularized later, during the era of expeditions' (Visit Greenland 2016e); hence, the sled is portrayed as the precondition that enabled European exploration of the Arctic (Fig. 4.1).

Fig. 4.1 A portrait of Ulloriaq Kreutzmann from Sisimiut in Greenland with Dog Sled (Mads Pihl—Visit Greenland)

This historical narrative connects the different Inuit groups into one; something that is also apparent in the epigraph where it is emphasised that the Inuit 'emigrated to a huge and unknown country thousands of years ago' (Visit Greenland 2016b: 19), contributing to a narrative of being the first to explore and settle.

In the epigraph the presence of the others, that is, the many explorers, traders, missionaries and workers in Greenland, is described in terms of visits; a status further underlined by their lack of representation in the migration history. The last sentence of the epigraph relates that 'Greenland is also moving forward to achieve independence from Denmark' (Ibid.), hinting at a history where the majority of the many explorers, traders, missionaries and workers were not just any visitors but primarily Danes, a history otherwise omitted from the narrative of The Pioneering Nation and the pioneering people. Hence, the Danish missionary Hans Egede is introduced as the figure who converted the Inuit to Christianity. From Egede's arrival 'from the joint kingdom of Denmark-Norway' in 1721 (Visit Greenland 2016c), to the introduction of Home Rule in 1979, the Danish presence is entirely absent. In the article 'Modern Greenland', under the heading 'Own Political Government', the history of Danish involvement is hinted at. Greenland, with Home Rule and Self Government since 2009, 'has assumed the political decisions and competencies that were previously issued from Denmark'. Similarly, the account states that 'Greenland is now part of the Danish national community, and the two countries are still united on affairs concerning foreign and defence policy, currency and raw materials, the police and the courts', and with Self Government, 'Greenlandic is the nation's official language together with other legal rights and benefits' (Visit Greenland, 2016f). The present is thus connected to a historical past where political decisions were made by Danish politicians and civil servants and where Greenlanders were not legally recognised as Greenlanders but as Danish subjects: a history of Greenland as a Danish colony.

A Contested History

The representation of the history of people migrating to and settling in Greenland, and how these histories may be related to constructions of being the first in an empty land, becomes interesting in relation to the process of 'moving forward to achieve independence from Denmark' (Visit Greenland 2016b: 19) and the connection of this process to The Pioneering Nation's elision of colonial history. The construction of

the migration story of Greenland and the Inuit people is central to contemporary Danish (and Greenlandic) debates about relations between Denmark and Greenland, the content and existence of colonial relations and Greenlandic versus Danish entitlements to Greenland.

One example of this is historian Thorkild Kjærgaard's long media campaign against the perception of Danish–Greenlandic relations as colonial.[2] Taking his point of departure as the migration history to Greenland, Kjærgaard argues that Greenland was never a colony, that Danes and Greenlanders have always been compatriots, and hence that Denmark has 'nothing to apologise for and nothing to deplore: the vicious talk of guilt, reconciliation, love and forgiveness is entirely out of place' (Kjærgaard 2015, *author's translation*). Central to his argument is that Greenland has been part of the Nordic kingdom for more than 1000 years, since the Norse, with Eric the Red, settled in a then empty Greenland. The Inuit, ancestors of the contemporary Greenlanders, Kjærgaard argues, have nothing to do with the people who lived in Greenland before the Norse settled, but are to be seen as an 'invasive' people with no repercussions for Greenland's constitutional status (Kjærgaard 2015). Kjærgaard invokes the logic of settlement (in an empty land) as the criteria for entitlement to the land. Following this logic, Kjærgaard constructs the Inuit as immigrants to the Danish (and Danish–Norwegian) kingdom, who have 'from the outset been recognised as compatriots with equal rights (...) in the same vein as other immigrants to the kingdom throughout time have been recognised as compatriots' (Kjærgaard 2015, *author's translation*).

In a similar vein to The Pioneering Nation, it is the construction of ethnic and national groups together with constructions of being original settlers in an empty land that offers entitlement to Greenland. The Pioneering Nation narrative turns the different migration waves of Inuit groups into one, through its reference to the commonality of culture based on the similarity between techniques and skills. It then detaches the Norse settlers from the later, mainly Norwegian and Danish, missionaries, traders, explorers and workers, ignoring their process of settling by allocating them the status of guests and not migrants, and disregarding their role in Greenlandic history. In contrast, Kjærgaard detaches the earlier Inuit migrations from the contemporary Inuit in Greenland, but connects the Norse settlers with the later Danish migration, emphasising a continuity of a Danish claim across these waves of settlements. Thus, he also ignores the fact that Inuit (Thule) people were the sole inhabitants of Greenland

during the approximately 250 years between the disappearance of the Norse settlers and the establishment of the first mission and trade posts.

In Kjærgaard's argument this means that Greenland is still Danish: the Home Rule Law of 1979 and the Self Government Law of 2009 both represent 'a delegation of power based on an exemption from the Danish Kingdoms' Constitution—a dispensation which in principle may be revoked anytime the Danish Parliament may find it necessary' (Kjærgaard 2015, *author's translation*).

Mitgrønland.dk

Whereas The Pioneering Nation narrative bypasses the common history of Danes and Greenlanders, the online forum Mitgrønland.dk (Visit Greenland, 2016h) has been created to target the aftermath of this history. Prior to the launch of a tourist campaign, 'The Big Arctic Five',[3] in Denmark in the autumn of 2012, Visit Greenland conducted a survey of Danes' knowledge and views of Greenland and Greenlanders.[4] The survey was the first of its kind and attracted significant attention,[5] showing that in many cases the Danes' knowledge of Greenland was based on erroneous conceptions and, in particular, dominant notions of Greenland and Greenlanders. These notions evolved through perceiving Greenland, on the one hand, as made up of isolated, traditional communities and, on the other hand, as afflicted by social problems and abuse.[6] As a way of countering the misconceptions laid bare by the survey, Visit Greenland created the webpage Mitgrønland.dk. Under the heading 'My Greenland', the webpage states that it 'is about all that which Greenland and Greenlanders are and are capable of', but it acknowledges that 'prejudices and myths about Greenland and Greenlanders are still alive today' and that 'Mitgrønland.dk aims to put aside these misconceptions and prejudices by addressing them in an open, honest and *positive* tone' (Visit Greenland, 2016h, *author's translation*).

There is a clear affinity between Mitgrønland.dk and the narratives of The Pioneering Nation, not least in the emphasis on telling positive stories. The brand tells the story of an indigenous people who are skilled, innovative, adaptable, resilient, warm and welcoming. The online forum addresses prejudices and myths as misconceptions, from the perspective that 'we all have prejudices against each other and the best way to get rid of them is to disseminate a different story than the one people think is the truth' (Visit Greenland, 2016h, *author's translation*).

Mitgrønland.dk, however, also deviates from the key stories of The Pioneering Nation by narrating these stories with Danish–Greenlandic relations as the point of departure. In the context of these two sites, The Pioneering Nation can be understood as a counter narrative that indirectly refutes the misconceptions of a premodern society secluded from the globalised world and the notion that traditional culture and modernity are mutually exclusive. The Pioneering Nation also counters the prevailing conception of Greenland as marred by social decay.

Mitgrønland.dk features three short videos with three well-known Danes who talk about their own encounters with Greenland and Greenlanders and, in doing so, challenges the myths and offers more nuanced stories. Underneath the videos is a commentary box with an invitation to 'share your stories' (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*). This invitation goes out to all those who live or have travelled in Greenland, with an emphasis on explaining who the Greenlanders are (Visit Greenland 2016h). But the invitation also encourages those who have not lived or travelled in Greenland to be curious and ask questions (Visit Greenland 2016h). Between 27 November 2012 and 12 January 2016 the invitation resulted in 247 comments and replies (Visit Greenland 2016h) (Fig. 4.2).

The Danes in the three videos address prejudices and misconceptions about a premodern culture and social decay. The first misconception arises from a romanticised image of a hunter and gatherer culture where people live in tune with nature in igloos, hunting seals and wearing traditional clothes. The second is fuelled by perceptions of a population consuming vast amounts of alcohol, smoking marijuana and abusing and neglecting their children. In contrast, the three Danes tell about the many Greenlanders they have met and know, who are well-functioning, warm, generous, hospitable, humorous, talented, intelligent, living in a modern society, using the newest technology and who are thoroughly part of the globalised world.

The reasons for the misconceptions are explained by the Danes in the videos as being due to a general invisibility of Greenland in Denmark, as well as ignorance among Danes about Greenland, reinforced by out-dated curricula and teaching materials in Danish schools. This is accompanied by a generalising and uniform representation of Greenlandic social decay in the Danish media. They call for more and updated teaching in Danish schools, more stories about well-functioning Greenlanders in the media and for Greenlanders themselves to come forward and take responsibility for communicating and showing who they are.

Fig. 4.2 Scene from a Great Greenland photo shoot in Nuuk in Greenland (Mads Pihl—Visit Greenland)

When it comes to prejudices about social decay, the narratives of the three Danes in the videos reveal tensions. Underneath the representation of the prejudices as misconceptions lurks the implication that the prejudices do have a relationship with existing social challenges. All three of the Danes in the videos negotiate, in different ways, the relation to social decay and the issue of neglected children in Greenland. In one video, the Dane argues that asking about social problems should not be the first response to meeting a person who grew up in Greenland: '"How was your childhood then, it must have been tough", because that again has nothing to do with reality' (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*). However, he immediately modifies the statement:

> It is of course not . . . clearly it is also a reality for many people . . . for many . . . for some children in Greenland it can be extremely rough, but it is also a reality for some children in Denmark and it is not . . . it is not something exclusive to Greenland to have social problems, that we certainly also have in

> Denmark, but it is not what we ourselves would begin with (…) and it shouldn't be where you start. (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*)

The same tension features in another video, where a Danish actress, who came to Greenland to make theatre workshops with children, explains why she wanted to make a film about it:

> Because I had heard through media that…that the situation with Greenlandic children was really, really bad, that they were…they were…in many ways…neglected and…Those children that I met were very charming and very happy children, very humorous and very talented. So that was in glaring contrast to everything I had heard before. And I wanted to tell the Danes about this, I also wanted to tell the Greenlanders about it, because…I find it important to have good role models. It was important for me to convey a message that there is actually hope ahead. (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*)

The quotation further illuminates, from a personal point of view, how the pervasiveness of prejudice in Denmark means that Greenlandic talent and agency is eradicated at the same time as the reality of social challenges is also invoked through the importance of role models and the call for hope ahead. This tension between the reality of social challenges and agency is also addressed in the last video:

> There are of course also all the…the sad stories. It is just a shame that it is always those that gets the attention. I have travelled widely in Greenland and have met people who participate in society in a tremendously active way, who contribute with their…their experience and their volunteering…there are many Greenlanders who work as volunteers and…who want society to develop and become a safe and kind place for Greenlandic children and youth. (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*)

The narrative of the first video is in line with The Pioneering Nation, albeit ambivalently, and with the online forum's approach of telling positive stories to refute prejudices by 'disseminating a different story to the one people think is the truth' (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*). The two other videos portray a Greenlandic reality of social challenges, and here the other story is that Greenlanders both have the skills and the will to change their circumstances. Hence, the prejudices refuted are not

the reality of social challenges but the narrative of social challenges as social decay that eradicates Greenlandic agency and skills.

Addressing the prejudices and misconceptions within the Danish–Greenlandic relationship invokes colonial history: the seemingly contradictory prejudices of romanticised premodernity and social decay are connected insofar as both render Greenlanders unfit for a modern society. Furthermore, viewing non-European traditional cultures as incompatible with globalised modernity is rooted in the colonial racialised hierarchy where non-white/non-European people are viewed as primitive and intellectually inferior. This also pertains to another relationship between the romanticised images of traditional culture and social decay, where social decay becomes a consequence of Greenlanders' cultural inability to adapt to modern society. However, the insistence on positive stories and the overall frame of prejudices as misconceptions silences the colonial history, which in turn creates tensions in the narratives. I will further examine these tensions through the narratives of the 247 comments on Mitgrønland.dk.

Positioning the Comments

The videos and the initiative to counter prejudices are met in the comments with an almost univocal praise and appreciation that finally these prejudices are being refuted and countered with positive stories.

The comments respond to the online forum invitation to tell positive stories of Greenland and Greenlanders. Both Danes and Greenlanders in Denmark voice their sense of longing for Greenland, and praise it as the most beautiful place in the world. The Danish comments reflect the videos and the branding's characterisation of Greenlanders as warm, open and welcoming. Some speak of their time in Greenland as the happiest time in their life and others claim that no other place has left such impressions on them. Some Danes acknowledge that they had prejudices before they came to Greenland, but that these were refuted by their actual meetings with Greenlanders and Greenland. Others recount how after their return to Denmark they have met prejudices but have tried to refute them. However, feelings of praise, love and longing are intertwined with stories of prejudices and misconceptions, tensions and conflicts in Danish–Greenlandic relations.

The Greenlandic commentators' accounts of prejudices and misconceptions reflect the portrait in the videos of a traditional anti-modern culture and social challenges, but their accounts also relay how they have

experienced being labelled as ugly, lazy and stupid, and the discriminatory consequences these prejudices have in terms of exclusion from the job market, for example. The many Greenlanders who live or have lived abroad in countries other than Denmark point out that people in other countries know even less than Danes, but do not share the Danish prejudices. In their comments, they expand on how they encounter perceptions of a premodern traditional society, but not the notion of social decay, and how it is a relief to be met with curiosity instead of negative preconceptions.

As in the videos, the prejudices and misconceptions are to a large extent explained as ignorance, with reference to the invisibility of Greenland in Denmark; many emphasise that what representation there is of Greenlanders in the Danish media is flawed, but they also blame outdated school material in Denmark which still represents Greenland as premodern and characterised by social decay. In the commentaries, strategies are discussed to counter these prejudices in Denmark, reflecting the videos' encouragement to Greenlanders to take responsibility and come forward to tell and show who they are. These strategies take the form of a number of bottom-up initiatives: encouraging fellow Greenlanders with children in Danish schools to give talks on Greenland; forming groups to brainstorm on how to use the media to get more, and a more nuanced, coverage; encouraging Greenlanders living in Denmark, who speak Danish and/or have other resources, to protect, help and speak for their less well-off compatriots. Some are sceptical and believe that the coming generations will also encounter prejudice. Others deem it insignificant what Danes think of Greenland and Greenlanders, believing that what matters is to know your own worth. Some view prejudice as a general human trait and still others claim never to have met any prejudice at all. As for the Danes, many see themselves, both directly and indirectly, as ambassadors for Greenland educating their fellow Danes.

In The Pioneering Nation brand, the coherence of the key stories is produced through the use of ambiguous concepts and slippages that negotiate or leave out tensions and conflicts. In contrast, the comments display these tensions as a myriad of contradictory and incoherent stories making up a cacophony of voices and utterances. These utterances and voices gain significance and become meaningful in and through the relations and tensions between them, and together they sketch out the meetings, clashes and grapplings in the Danish–Greenlandic contact zone (Pratt 2008).

Thus, the comments in many ways provide access to narratives of Danish–Greenlandic relations that The Pioneering Nation otherwise

excludes. The comments illustrate a pattern of travel practices: most of the Danish commentators have been working or are currently working in Greenland. Since the eighteenth-century colonisation, Danish expatriates have been living in Greenland, attracted by work opportunities. Most only stayed for a short time, though some stayed on. From the 1950s, following the introduction of the so-called modernisation plans, the temporary expatriate community increased substantially. Some of the comments are written by these workers, their children who grew up in Greenland and their families in Denmark who have visited them. The Greenlandic commentators are living in Greenland, Denmark and elsewhere, but have been to Denmark as children, through exchange programmes to learn Danish, to get further education not available in Greenland, to work and/or to visit family. They illustrate the love unions formed during these travels through comments by the Danes and Greenlanders who are married and/or live together, and by the children of these relationships.

Speaking from the lived experiences of these journeys and meetings, the comments add further complexity to the question of Greenlandic history, identity and society. The comments are mostly written in Danish, some mixed with Greenlandic vocabulary, which is an integrated part of Danish as it is spoken in Greenland.[7] A few comments are in Greenlandic, with most of them also translated into Danish. In grappling with prejudices and attempting to nuance the stories of Greenlandic identity and society, the majority of the voices take up particular positions such as Dane, Greenlander or a mixed identity of Dane and Greenlander. This also adds complexity to the conceptualisation of prejudice. The comments speak about Danish prejudices towards Greenlanders in Denmark, Greenlanders in Greenland and mixed-identities in Denmark. But the comments also introduce discussions about Greenlandic prejudices against Danes in Greenland, against those of mixed-identity in Greenland and against the latter in Denmark. The comments add nuances to the narrative of prejudices with discussions of discrimination, segregation, exclusion, devaluation, superiority, conflict, racism and shame. Through this the comments invoke questions of structural relations and how these are related to past colonial relations. The comments illustrate how meetings and identity positions in the Danis–Greenlandic contact zone take different forms and are experienced differently in Denmark and Greenland, respectively. Hence, examining the differences across these identity positions and spaces of contact, and how they are structured, experienced and connected to past colonial

relations, provides analytical insights into the discussion of Greenlandic history and contemporary questions of identity and society.

Conflicts in the Contact Zones

One utterance that spans the comments is the claim that 'I am proud to be Greenlandic', a comment which occurs in tension with the many stories of being met and living with prejudice. One commentator contextualises her comment about being proud: 'For many years I have lived in the shadow of how many view us Greenlanders, and I have even been embarrassed to be Greenlandic because of prejudice' (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*). Hence, to be proud becomes a counter strategy, defying shame and devaluation connected to prejudice.

Devaluation is related to the videos' considerations of Greenlandic agency and skills, as Greenlanders are viewed as lacking the skills and competencies considered necessary for the Danish labour market. One reflects on a tendency among his friends to disguise their Greenlandic origin in order to get a job in Denmark. Another narrates how he has twice been hired by firms in Denmark, but when his Greenlandic background was disclosed, he apparently no longer fitted the profile and the contract was cancelled. Others speak of how much easier it is to work and be acknowledged as skilled and competent in third countries. Yet another reflects on the many second-rate Danish leaders he has trained when they were sent to Greenland to become leaders in the firm he worked in, but now in Denmark he is rejected as lacking the experience to work in a Danish firm. According to these commentators, it is Greenlandic identity itself that is devalued: despite having the skills for a job, when disclosing one's Greenlandic identity one is seen as inferior and is discriminated from entering the job market in Denmark.

The devaluation also extends to a general devaluation of Greenland, where Greenland is seen as having no means of substance and capacity to manage without Denmark. The existence of this general devaluation is also supported in some of the Danish comments that directly refute it: one says that it was without comparison the most fantastic, educational and instructive half year of his life. Other recounts how he was persuaded to go to Greenland to teach others but found that he himself became the student. Yet another describes how she learned more in Greenland than in any Danish workplace and that her leader was probably the best leader

she had met. But back in Denmark, these experiences are not valued, from which she concludes: 'Denmark simply does not think it can learn anything from Greenland and Greenlanders' (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*).

The above narratives convey that Greenlandic devaluation and inferiority is connected to notions of Danish superiority. The narratives imply the presence of a relation of tutelage where Danes and Denmark are occupying the positions of leaders and instructors of Greenlanders and Greenland. Many comment on how Danes see themselves as more competent and knowledgeable with a know-all and proprietorial attitude, described by one commentator as 'the condescending arrogance of we own you' and 'Greenland is Mini-Denmark' (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*).

The discussions of devaluation, inferiority and superiority circulate around asymmetries of power and position in Danish–Greenlandic relations. In the discussions about prejudices and how to confront them, views on these asymmetries of power and position provide a critical dividing line. Some of the Danish commentators compare and align prejudices against Greenlanders with prejudices against Danes: Greenlanders are discriminated by Danes in Denmark, but in Greenland it is the opposite situation where Danes and non-Greenlandic speakers are discriminated against by (Greenlandic speaking) Greenlanders. From this perspective the injustice goes both ways and both must be dealt with. Likewise, the content of Danish prejudices are levelled down by comments declaring they are not very profound, but more of a teasing relationship, or they are dismissed by claims that 'there are idiots everywhere (. . .) don't let them define a whole population/nation' (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*). Such levelling and alignment, however, not only erases differences and asymmetries, but also erases how differences and asymmetries are related to the shared Danish–Greenlandic history. As voiced by one of the commentators, 'there is unfortunately also in this thread focus on harms done in the past and which countries are best . . . one gets furthest by looking at oneself and one's own society instead of focusing on the wickedness of the other' (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*). This indicates that the conflicts also entail a conflict over the content of the past and the extent to which this past is related to present-day clashes and discrimination.

The asymmetries cut across the different aspects of the Danish–Greenlandic relationship and define the relations between different identity positions. Denmark and Greenland are very different spaces of

contact. Out of Denmark's 5.7 million inhabitants, Greenlanders make up approximately 15,000 or 0.25 % of the population. Of Greenland's 55,846 inhabitants, Danes make up approximately 4500 or 8 % of the population. In this sense the presence of Danes in Greenland has much greater impact than the presence of Greenlanders in Denmark. Danes in Greenland earn on average more than twice as much as Greenlanders in Greenland, and apart from politicians, they occupy if not most, then many of the leading positions within both the public and the private sector and, as such, have significant influence on Greenlandic society. In contrast, Greenlanders in Denmark have been characterised as a disregarded minority (Togeby 2004). This points to an asymmetric socio-economic segregation, which follows the structure of the narratives of devaluation, inferiority and superiority; a socio-economic segregation that is accompanied by segregation in private interactions. As one commenter suggests, the Danes who have been living in Greenland also share an ignorance of Greenland and see themselves as more skilled and knowledgeable, which the commentator connects to a pattern of segregation where Danes and Greenlanders, though they live in the same town, do not communicate.

The entanglement of identity positions, discrimination and conflicts can be further nuanced by looking at comments by some of the children of the contact zone that speak from the experience of having both a Danish and a Greenlandic parent. These voices illustrate that the configuration of discrimination is complex. It is not predetermined who will experience discrimination where, how and from whom. One commentator born and raised in Denmark, who later moved to Greenland for 14 years, recounts how he has been met with racism from Greenlanders in Greenland:

> Looks like a Greenlander and speaks Danish. Right from when I came to Greenland until I moved back to Denmark I was told to 'go home!' With the same cold, clammy tone it entails. From children, and grown-ups, to old people. It seems like a small thing, but for me it has meant that all the way through I have felt there was something wrong with me. Unfortunately, it doesn't just stop by moving back to Denmark. Even here in Denmark Greenlanders have been racist. (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*)

Another adds to this picture of growing up in the Danish–Greenlandic contact zone: 'I experienced many insulting and unconvincing comments from Danes living in Greenland, and I have also challenged my own

Danish father—because I found some remarks neither dignified or particularly intelligent' (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*). Yet, another speaks of her experience growing up in Denmark with a Greenlandic mother and a Danish father:

> I grew up feeling that I had to defend us all: my people, my friends, their families, my families, my parents, and of those two especially my mother. As a child I was often asked why we drank so much. Even by adults. It felt like a huge responsibility (...) it has been like it was something I even had to convince people, that there was no drinking in my home. (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*)

Though these three commentators share the same identity position of being both Greenlandic and Danish, their experiences of discrimination are very different. The first citation relates to discrimination in terms of unmitigated exclusion. Highlighting the contrast of Greenlandic looks but Danish language indicates that through language he is connoted with being Danish, which he further underscores by identifying the discrimination and exclusion as racism; a racism that is most noticeable and persistent in Greenland but that he also encounters from Greenlanders in Denmark. The citation also illustrates how this discrimination from Greenlanders may have the same profound consequences of debasement and lack of self-worth. The second citation illustrates that an equally profound discrimination is expressed by Danes in Greenland. Inhabiting the border zone of being both Greenlandic and Danish, the commentator has experienced the extensiveness of the devaluation of Greenlanders and Greenland first hand, if not directed at her as in the first citation then through the indirect exclusion and conflict she had had to deal with in her close family. The last citation displays prejudice as devaluation in Denmark, how extensive prejudices are, and the profoundly excluding effects they have on a child. The first and the last citations illustrate how, by being both Greenlandic and Danish, one may be positioned in either the category of Greenlander or Dane in both Denmark and Greenland. The citations illustrate the inescapability of the situation in both Greenland and Denmark. As a child of the Danish–Greenlandic contact zone one is born into the conflict. As argued in the previous discussions this inescapability is also a given for the identity position of Greenlanders. But for Danes it is different; as a Dane born and raised in Denmark, one may be oblivious to the discrimination and conflict. If one moves to Greenland, one can always move back to

Denmark and leave the conflicts and their consequences behind. But for Danes in Greenland and Greenlanders and mixed Danes–Greenlanders in Greenland and Denmark, the conflicts are profound and pervasive.

The conflict itself entails clear-cut distinct categories of 'Dane' and 'Greenlander'. As one comments, '…it is a shame that no matter if you use the word Dane or Greenlander by now it just sounds condescending. As if it somehow became a term of abuse' (Visit Greenland 2016h, *author's translation*). In this way the discrimination goes both ways and may be considered the same. But how the discrimination is expressed and experienced is different, depending on which of the categories one belongs to or is interpolated into. The conflicts are embedded in contemporary structural relations between Greenlanders and Danes, Greenland and Denmark. Following Pratt (2008), I suggest that the devaluation of Greenlanders and the superiority of Danes represent a continuation of colonial asymmetrical power relations, which still structure and influence Greenlandic society; the conflicts in Greenland are connected to opposition to these inherited asymmetrical power relations. Through this the conflict is again

Fig 4.3 A portrait of Ujarneq Sørensen who works in the control tower at Kulusuk Airport in East Greenland (Mads Pihl—Visit Greenland)

related to the discussion of entitlement to Greenland, exemplified by The Pioneering Nation and Kjærgaard, above.

Together the comments form a complex testimony of the profound and devastating effects that conflict and discrimination have on Danish, Greenlandic and Greenlandic–Danish subjects in the contact zone. This testimony of agony is entangled with love and understanding, and hope and desires to move on and beyond the conflict. But it also makes clear that devaluation and discrimination are not a consequence of prejudices rooted in ignorance and misconceptions, but a legacy of the logics of colonialism. This legacy constitutes an unavoidable obstacle for Greenlandic nation-building (Fig. 4.3).

(Greenlandic) Postcolonial Nation-building and Reconciliation

Examining The Pioneering Nation tourism promotion brand and its derivatives as a way of accessing issues of identity, history and nation-building in Greenland reflects a broader picture of debates in and over Greenland. It is also of interest precisely because it is a nation-branding strategy with a corporate aim to tell key stories that create a positive image to market the country and its businesses, which are to be recognisable and acceptable across national, geographical and demographic divisions (Visit Greenland 2016b). The Pioneering Nation is a creative attempt to tell stories about Greenlandic identity and history that bypass the political and historical tensions of Greenland's relationship with Denmark, at the same time as it addresses core issues in these tensions. By writing colonial Denmark and Danes out of Greenlandic history and accentuating positive elements of the contemporary relationship, The Pioneering Nation hands agency, skills and merit to Greenlanders and Greenland, affiliates Greenlandic identity with Inuit identity and unambiguously entitles Greenlanders to Greenland. With this, however, it also signals a clear stand on conflict-ridden Danish–Greenlandic relations by providing a counter narrative to Danish devaluation of, and ascendancy over, Greenland and Greenlanders. As a counter narrative it forms part of a nation-building process both internally in Greenland and towards Denmark.

With Mitgrønland.dk, The Pioneering Nation also illuminates that writing colonial Denmark and Danes out of Greenlandic history and disseminating positive stories cannot stand alone as a nation-building

strategy; that even The Pioneering Nation, with its strategy of sidestepping Danish–Greenlandic relations, is compelled to bring in the relationship when branding and marketing in the contact zone illustrates the inescapability of the conflict-ridden inheritance of colonial history. In confronting Danish prejudices about Greenland, Mitgrønland.dk adds on to the nation-building part of The Pioneering Nation, but may also be perceived to work as part of a reconciliation project. Through the narratives disclosed in the comments, the prejudices reveal themselves as symptoms of a more deep-seated cause: colonial history and contemporary asymmetrical power relations. Danish–Greenlandic history and relations have to be addressed; it is not just a matter of telling other stories, but also of addressing the content of both stories and history.

Notes

1. For an overview and discussion of The Pioneering Nation as a branding strategy for Greenland, see Thisted (2013). For a discussion of The Pioneering Nation as a branding strategy in relation to the Greenlandic extraction industry, see Nuttall (2012).
2. Historian Thorhild Kjærgaard is a former Danish associate professor at Ilisimatusarfik, the University of Greenland in Nuuk. Through a long series of articles, mostly in Danish national newspapers, he challenged the idea that Greenland was ever a colonial power, which sparked considerable debate. Kjærgaard's campaign and the ensuing debate unfolded in two stages: first, from January to June 2014, and second from January to July 2015. Among the participants in the debate were the chief editors from two major national newspapers, *Politiken* and *Weekendavisen*, both of whom spent parts of their childhood in Greenland as children of Danish civil servants. In addition, several researchers on Greenland participated, challenging the argument that Greenland was never a colony (Rud 2014; Andersen 2015; Rud and Seiding 2015a, 2015b). Kjærgaard's views in the media campaign have also been dealt with in academic research (Thisted 2015).
3. The Pioneering People is a central element in this earlier campaign called 'The Big Arctic Five'. The Big Arctic Five, inspired by the Big Five concept of the Safari destinations in Africa, brands Greenland as an adventure tourism destination promoting Powerful Nature. The Big Five include dog sledding, Northern Lights, ice and snow, whales and The Pioneering People as the five-core attractions of Greenland. The campaign's core elements are a website and a toolkit, which are available in Danish, English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Chinese and Japanese.
4. Unpublished survey commissioned by Visit Greenland from YouGov 2012.

5. The survey was cited in a series of articles, referred to twice from the Danish Parliament's Rostrum and used as background material for The Danish Institute for Human Rights Report on Equal treatment of Greenlanders in Denmark (Laage-Petersen 2013).
6. The survey showed that 42 % of the respondents erroneously thought that a third of all hunters in Greenland use the kayak as their primary vessel for hunting on the sea. Total 46 % erroneously thought the majority of Greenlanders live in small settlements in secluded small communities, 56 % erroneously thought that Greenlanders have a larger average consumption of alcohol yearly than Danes. On the open-ended question 'What do you immediately think of Greenlanders?', 40 % of the answers associated to 'alcohol, abuse and social problems', 16 % thought of 'Nature, snow, ice, hunters, hardy, primitive', 13 % thought of 'Happy people, lovely, sweet, nice and kind' and 11 % thought of 'Discriminated, ruined by colonialism, forsaken, misunderstood' (YouGov 2012; author's translation, Visit Greenland 2012).
7. For a discussion on the variety of Danish spoken in Greenland today as a result of language contact, see Jacobsen (2003).

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CHAPTER 5

Afterword

Polar Worlds: Arctic and Antarctic Visions

Juan Francisco Salazar

Abstract By showcasing recent research on ecotourism in Norway, Iceland and Greenland, this book presents novel perspectives about tourism ecologies in the European High North that challenge those stereotypical imaginings advertised and publicised in tourism programmes. The purpose of this concluding chapter is twofold: first, provide an afterword of sorts to the previous four chapters by attempting to discuss tourism ecologies in the High North in relation to Antarctica; and second, frame a discussion around what kinds of worlds are emerging in the polar regions in an age many are calling the Anthropocene (Crutzen and Stoermer, Glob Change Newsletter 41:17–18, 2000). The latter signals a need to further cultural research and debate around the contested visions for the future of these regions where tourism is an important node within of larger and broader world-making practices, networks and assemblages.

Keywords Polar futures · World making · Global environmental change · Polar geopolitics

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Comparing Visions

Antarctica has inspired the human imagination for thousands of years. Allegedly, in ancient Greece, Arktos—meaning 'the bear'—was the name of a constellation of stars in the northern sky, so they named the continent they believed to be in the south Antarktikos (the anti-Arktos or 'as opposed to the Arctic'). Historically perceived for centuries as a terra incognita Australis, it is significant that perhaps unlike the Arctic, 'visual mediation defines and has created the territory of Antarctica' (Glasberg, 2012: xix), more than for any other place on the Earth. That is to say that most people on this planet have never been to anywhere in Antarctica and most likely will never go there. Nevertheless, peoples' perceptions and understanding of the Antarctic come from a plethora of images from science, environmental activism, advertising, popular fiction and films (Leane 2011). In this sense, knowledge and experience of Antarctica is highly mediated. Only 1000 people live there year round, a number that grows in summer to 5000 scientists, logistics personnel and military staff from the 30 countries party to the Antarctic Treaty System (ATS). Most of these people live transiently in stations located in the South Shetland Islands (south of South America, where I have been conducting ethnographic research since 2012), in the Larsemann Hills area (south of the Indian Ocean) and in the Ross Sea (south of Australia and New Zealand).

Differently to the Arctic, where eight countries who are members of the Arctic Council have sovereignty over territories north of latitude 66°N (Canada, Denmark—representing also Greenland and the Faroe Islands—Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the USA) and seven countries (Argentina, Australia, Chile, the UK, France, New Zealand and Norway) have claims over extensive territories in Antarctica. In effect, however, no country has sovereignty and the southern continent is not formally governed by any state, but by a series of treaties and conventions bundled under the ATS, including the 1998 Protocol on Environmental Protection (also known as the Madrid Protocol), and the 1980 Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCMLR). Both the Arctic Council and the ATS provide a high-level forum for cooperation and a regime of governance. But while the Arctic Council emerged during the early post-Cold War environment, the ATS was negotiated and signed by 12 countries at the height of the Cold War (1959) and entered into force in 1961. Since then it has provided a

mechanism and a regime for governing the Antarctic based on science and international collaboration.[1]

The environmental and cultural histories and the geopolitics of the polar regions are comparable, yet markedly different. The most striking divergence is perhaps the existence of indigenous populations in the Arctic for thousands of years, which in recent decades have emerged as significant actors in contemporary Arctic politics.[2] This is only one of many other examples that show, as Hemmings (2015) points out, the differing currents of change that are currently at play in both polar regions. Despite these divergences, the polar regions have recently gained renewed interest as matters of concern on a planetary scale, with politically interested parties engaging more than ever in polar geopolitics (Bravo, 2009). Mark Nuttall summaries the point succinctly: both circumpolar regions are no longer 'peripheral to more generic considerations about globalisation, sustainability, climate change, geopolitics, resource development and international security . . . in the sense that the Arctic and the Antarctic have entered mainstream discussion about issues and challenges of pressing contemporary global concern' (Nuttall, 2012: 1). This is particularly true in the case of this book and its call to rethink tourism ecologies in an age of ecological crises. This also extends to the role that anticipation—as logic, discourse and practice—plays in reference to how various actors are positioning themselves in the midst of this profound transformation affecting the polar regions (Dodds, 2013).

Arctic Heat

The 'rising clamour' about the fate of the Arctic in a time of global climate change brought together in this book and its companion volume, typified by the ever-increasing pressure for resource extraction, tensions over sovereignty claims, unstable expansion in industrial and extractive activities and tourism, are also matters of enormous concern in the Antarctic. Biophysical changes underway in the polar regions are stirring a remarkable surge of interest from non-polar states and non-state actors. This profound and far-reaching transformation, already well underway across the polar regions, not only has to do with intensifying climate change but also with the deepening globalisation of trade and shifting geopolitical dynamics, coupled with improved technological capabilities, growing tourism activities and increased interest in resource exploitation. All of these suggest an alarming and complex future scenario for both circumpolar regions.

While the political 'heat' building around Arctic issues is spreading well beyond the countries whose coasts border the Arctic oceans and the Arctic Council, in the Antarctic, 'high policy' is discussed primarily within the various Antarctic Treaty signatory states, whose overt focus is also national interest. Indeed, states engaging in Antarctic matters do so invariably from the standpoint of advancing their national interest (Hemmings et al., 2015). But perhaps more so than in the case of the Arctic Council—established in 1998—the ATS works as a high-level forum that shapes to an extent the idea people have of Antarctic ecologies. The ATS has provided, since its inception in 1959, a normative framework that is statist, minimalist and scientistic, and whose success lies primarily in defusing political tensions over sovereignty claims in Antarctica and preserving the polar continent as a zone of peace, a continent for science, and environmentally as a nature reserve. While some support claims that a comprehensive, legally binding Arctic treaty similar to that of the Antarctic is needed today, others suggest that a more effective governance system can be achieved by an agreement that 'sets aside without extinguishing claims to extended continental shelf jurisdiction on the part of the littoral states, an effort to adjust the character of the Arctic Council to meet emerging needs in the Arctic, and a push to devise issue-specific regulative regimes to address concerns involving shipping, fishing, and off-shore oil and gas development' (Young, 2009: 73).

Tourism activities are of course an important slice of this larger picture. As they expand rapidly in both scale and scope within and across the polar regions, the promotion of tourism leans heavily on prescribed images of wilderness—icebergs, wildlife—as well the socially constructed imaginaries of the pristine and the sublime. As Hemmings et al. (2015) argue, the concept of wilderness in Antarctica is an intensely political construct that draws upon a nominally global framing of untrammelled nature and space, and with roots in a reaction to the loss of domestic wildness consequential upon the Industrial Revolution. This use of outmoded imaginaries of pristine wilderness in polar tourism is comparable to ethnographic and archival research in Indonesia and Tanzania that shows the extent to which contemporary tourism interpretation relies on outdated scholarly models, including anthropological ones, that are strategically used to represent and reproduce places and peoples as authentically different and relatively static, seemingly untouched by extra-local influences (Salazar, 2013: 669). Of course a missionary-explorer anthropologist-tourist trajectory is not to be found in the Antarctic as in other parts of the world. But the argument still stands: in

many cases, contemporary tourism interpretation in the Antarctic is used strategically to represent a pristine place seemingly untouched by external forces and human activities. In an ethnographic study of lived experiences of placemaking in Argentina's Antarctic gateway city of Ushuaia, Herbert (2014) examined the relations between tourism, urban development and a range of agents from across the Antarctic sector, to look at how a sense of place 'at the end of the world' is mobilised and represented. In part, findings of this study showed that beyond the images presented to tourists of a pristine Antarctic and a European-looking city (Ushuaia), several frictions exist among residents, the city council and tourism enterprises.

As this book so eloquently reveals, intrepid travel by Arctic explorers and adventurers crossing those perceived blank spaces of the imperial maps 100 years ago, has given way to luxury cruise ships or fly in/fly out travel, in a context where tourism has emerged as a primary target for economic development in many peripheral regions at both ends of the planet. Not only have many European Arctic nations prioritised Arctic tourism in recent years; the same can be said for many regions and cities in the High South such as Hobart, Christchurch, Punta Arenas or Ushuaia. Ushuaia is now the most popular gateway for Antarctic tourism, capturing close to 90 % of the market (Jabour, 2011). However, it has yet to attract Antarctic national programme operations. Punta Arenas, by contrast, is used by the highest number of national Antarctic programmes—more than 20 countries—and is at the centre of a new ambitious development plan seeking to improve significantly its Antarctic infrastructure and generate new forms of Antarctic culture and identity. This not only includes school education programmes (Salazar and Barticevic, 2015) and cultural festivals, but also concerted policy framework development from the Chilean national government and the Magallanes regional government in Chile. Cape Town on the other hand, situated further from Antarctica than the other cities, promotes itself as having locational advantages in being closer to the northern hemisphere tourist-generating regions and key Antarctic programmes (Boekstein, 2014). Christchurch's main connection is as a logistics centre for national programmes (importantly, for the USA, Italy and South Korea). This city has arguably the most developed cultural sector of all Antarctic cities and a newly launched Icefest, but it has yet to attract significant Antarctic tourism operations. Hobart has the most complete infrastructure of any gateway city, hosting the largest critical mass of Antarctic scientists and scholars anywhere in the world. Hobart's claim to its gateway status is primarily logistical, economic and

scientific, but is increasingly shored up by promoting its Antarctic heritage (Leane et al., 2016) as a new form of heritage tourism, and particularly as a gateway for Asian scientists and tourists.

As in the Arctic, polar cultural heritage in the Antarctic and Antarctic gateway cities also operates as a tourist attraction, where tourism narratives describe memories of past events, narratives of polar exploration and traces in material cultures in ways that are mobilised both in the production of geopolitical imaginaries and in promotion of eco/polar heritage tourism (Elzinga, 2013). This also signals the complex and intricate ways in which tourism destinations are—as Britton (Britton, 1991: 455, cited in; Huijbens and Alessio, 2013: 336) argues—the result of a range of 'commercial and public institutions designed to commodify and provide travel and touristic experiences', where tourism develops into a 'dynamic interplay between actors of capital accumulation, affecting both the materiality and social meaning of places' (Huijbens and Alessio, 2013: 336). The case of Hobart, capital of the state of Tasmania in Australia, is one example. As we have explored elsewhere (Leane et al., 2016), a replica of 'Mawson's Hut' (a historic structure in Antarctica built by Australian explorer and scientist Douglas Mawson in 1911) was erected in 2013, joining a growing list of polar tourist attractions in Hobart's newly redeveloped waterfront, in a push to reinforce the city's identity as an 'Antarctic Gateway'. The hut is part of a heritage cluster, an urban assemblage that weaves together the local and national, the past and present, the familiar and remote. We have argued that the hut becomes a point of convergence between memory, material culture and the histories—and possible futures—of nationalism and internationalism as a key site of Hobart's Antarctic heritage tourism industry, which nevertheless reproduces and prioritises domestic readings of exploration and colonisation over a reading of Antarctic engagement as a transnational endeavour (Leane et al., 2016).

The Rise of New Polar Actors—Implications for Tourism Ecologies

In both polar regions we are observing a rising interest in resources, together with growth and diversification of existing commercial activities such as fishing and tourism. In the Antarctic context, 'resources' include 'minerals, meteorites, intellectual property of Antarctic bioprospecting (the

quest to find commercial uses for bioresources), locations for scientific bases, marine living resources and preferred access to the continent for tourism' (Brady, 2010:759).

The Antarctic tourism industry is generally considered to have started in the 1950s when Chile and Argentina took fare-paying passengers to the South Shetland Islands aboard naval freight ships, followed by Lars-Eric Lindblad in the late 1960s who led the first traveller's expedition to Antarctica in small to medium-sized ships, making landings ashore coupled with extensive educational programmes (Lamers, 2009). Since the mid-1980s, the annual number of people visiting Antarctica for tourism purposes has increased rapidly from a few hundred to over 45,000 in 2008 (Lamers, 2009). While the numbers of tourists dropped after the 2008 so-called global financial crisis, the number of tourists visiting the Antarctic Peninsula (South Shetland Islands) remains similar to the number of cruise tourists in Svalbard. Svalbard tourism also followed a similar downfall in the number of tourists but, as in the Antarctic Peninsula, tourism numbers have risen again since 2012. It is important to note though that while the tip of the Antarctic Peninsula (South Shetland Islands), where most Antarctic tourism takes place, is roughly the same distance from Argentina and Chile that Svalbard is from Norway, the Antarctic Peninsula has a harsh climate in comparison to Svalbard's comparatively mild climate.

The Antarctic Peninsula is the northernmost part of the mainland of Antarctica, located 1000 km south of Tierra del Fuego, the southernmost tip of South America, across the Drake Passage. This is one of the areas experiencing the most rapid and pervasive global warming on the planet. The Peninsula has also been part of disputed and overlapping sovereignty claims by Argentina, Chile and the UK since the 1940s. None of these claims has international recognition under the ATS. The Peninsula offers some of the most dramatic scenery in the whole of the Antarctic continent and boasts a huge level of biodiversity, particularly in the South Shetland Islands. King George Island is one of the South Shetland Islands located in the Antarctic Peninsula. King George Island has been pictured as a 'mesocosm of the change that is occurring in response to climate warming and a test bed for predicting future responses to climate change'. It is dominated by a pervasive ice cap with more than 90 % of the island being glaciated. However, the Fildes Peninsula, on the southern end of the island, is in

fact one of the largest ice-free areas in the maritime Antarctic, and together with adjacent coastal zones of the island has high levels of biodiversity. Total 87 % of the island's glaciers have retreated over the past 50 years. The island is host to 15 international research stations as well as a military-civilian permanent village with families and a school. The area is home to about 200 inhabitants all year round and up to 2500 people in summer, including scientists, visitors and tourists. King George Island and the South Shetlands are arguably becoming 'a hotspot of land-based tourism development' (Liggett et al., 2011:357).

As some estimates suggest, the South Shetland Islands and other areas in the Antarctic Peninsula experience over 90 % of all Antarctic tourism. There were a total of 65,584 visitors (incluidng tourists (39,037), staff and crew) across all the Antarctic Peninsula sites during 2015–2016 (IAATO, 2016). Tourist attractions include: historic sites of early twentieth-century Norwegian and British whaling outposts; the cultural and historical resources associated with the explorers of the Heroic Era, such as Ernest Shackleton; as well as particular geological formations, an abundance of icebergs and the opportunity to observe and get close to unique wildlife, including giant petrels, several species of whales, seals and penguins.

Unlike the Arctic, Antarctic tourism remains ship-based for the most part and falls under the regulation of the ATS, with the main regulatory framework provided by the 1991 Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (the Environmental Protocol). This coincides with the establishment of the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO) in 1991, the international organisation that oversees Antarctic tourism, comprised of more than 100 companies and organisations from 19 countries. Despite this framework, as Lamers and others have argued, tourism policies have nevertheless remained ad hoc and reactive, targeting individual expeditions rather than clusters of activities, focusing on requirements rather than restrictions and often responding to incidents and plans (Lamers, 2009:10). On the other hand, Liggett et al. (2011) have shown how tourism not only represents the main commercial activity on the Antarctic continent, together with commercial fishing, but how it has also been increasingly thrust into the limelight as both benefactor and detractor to the environmental and political integrity of Antarctica. This is demonstrated by their assessment of Antarctic tourism development during the last five decades, whereby—using interviews and a Delphi study—they found out that stakeholders were concerned about the increasing scale and diversification of tourism activities and that the

rapid development of Antarctic tourism required structural, institutional and legislative changes. On a related issue, and as a recent study by Powell et al. (2016) in the Antarctic Peninsula suggests—and as the chapters in this book also demonstrate—cultural and environmental issues are part of a continuum within a complex 'interplay between natural and cultural heritage resources' (2015:71).

This is of particular significance at a time of deepening climate change, and specifically because the regimes governing Antarctica are becoming a matter of ever-intensifying political manoeuvring (Bravo, 2009). It is also specifically important in the context of a noticeable rise of Asian nations in the region (Brady, 2010, 2012), as China, South Korea and India have all expanded significantly their Antarctic capabilities during the last decade. Indian political geographer, Sanjay Chaturvedi (2013), has argued that rising polar interests by China and India are as much about neighbourly rivalry as resource interest. However, as this book aims to reveal, there is a broadening awareness of the potential of the polar regions as global political spaces as well as a source of valuable resources. Like the Arctic, Antarctica has sprung up as a geopolitical space where investing in Antarctic science is often an anticipatory logic to signal presence and influence in Antarctic decision-making and future geopolitical settings. The case of rising Asian tourism in the Antarctic deserves further research.

South Korea, India, China and to a lesser extent Malaysia are nations entering a new historical phase in their activities in Antarctica, including the construction of new research stations and icebreakers. As Brady argues, the Chinese government has dramatically increased its expenditure on Antarctic affairs since 2005, a year in which the Chinese Antarctic programme successfully reached Dome A, one of the last unexplored territories of Antarctica (2010:759). For Brady, China's recent increased activities in Antarctica 'operate towards an openly stated political goal: the Chinese government is seeking to take on more of a leadership role in Antarctic affairs and is unhappy with the current order in Antarctica' (2010:759).

This is coupled with a notable rise in Chinese tourists to the Antarctic Peninsula, who a decade ago comprised only 0.2 % of the total number of tourists. According to the IAATO, a total of 3367 Chinese visited the Antarctic Peninsula from November 2013 to March 2014, comprising about 9 % of the total number to the continent and ranking third after visitors from the USA and Australia, most of whom depart from Ushuaia in Argentina. Over the last 3 years, consumers in China have become the world's largest tourism spenders, Chinese tourists have reached over

80 million in a year, and the increase in Chinese tourists to the Antarctic has only been constrained by the scarcity of tickets, as agencies are unable to meet demand (Boehler, 2013; China Daily, 2014). Asian tourism to the Antarctic mirrors how the growing level of wealth in many Asian nations is fundamentally transforming global travel, often catching tourism operators, scientists and environmentalists in Antarctica unaware.

A Chinese tourist I met in 2014 while spending time doing ethnographic fieldwork at China's Great Wall Research Station in King George Island told me her main interest—and that of most mainland China tourists on the trip—was to observe wildlife and visit the Great Wall Station, China's first Antarctic research station built in 1985. This advertising executive from Shanghai explained to me that polar tourism companies in China usually charge more for a 2-week trip to the Arctic than a similar trip to the Antarctic Peninsula. While the IAATO code for Antarctic tourism states that ships carrying more than 500 passengers cannot land in Antarctica, only a maximum of 100 passengers at a time are allowed on shore, and a tourist guide must accompany them in groups of a maximum of 20 passengers, it was worrying to see the dozens of zodiac boats coming and going from the tourist mother ship anchored near the Xue Long icebreaker. The visual violence of that event had to do with how a sense of the place was disturbed by groups of tourists embarked on what one of them called 'last chance' tourism: a last chance to see the Antarctic as it is before the damage to its ecosystems is irreversible.

This points out the value of more ethnographic studies in the Antarctic. Important studies have looked at tourism in Antarctic gateway cities or aboard tourist ships going in and coming out of Antarctica (Bertram et al., 2007; Muir et al., 2007; Hall, 2015; Elzinga, 2013; Jabour, 2011; Roldán, 2015); and important work has been done by tourism researchers in expressing concern about IAATO's ability to deal with further tourism development in the Antarctic and the environmental consequences of this activity (Student et al., 2016), but only a few have employed ethnographic methods (see Picard, 2015 for an exception). However, a detailed ethnographic study of tourism in Antarctic places and its consequences and tensions with other cultural practices—Antarctic science for instance—has yet to be done. As this book eloquently shows, a 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. My ethnographic work in the Antarctic Peninsula (King George Island) suggests that because ethnography is a method that crosses disciplinary boundaries and concerns—in my case film and media

studies—it presents certain features that link the practices of participant observation (with direct contact) with issues and social facts including the ambiguous relationships among the people the ethnographer is observing and coexisting with. It also entails a particular mode of writing and making public the description of worlds and practices being experienced. My ethnographic work in King George Island (Salazar, 2013, 2016) contributes to an exploration of the emerging worlds at play in this off-limit space. It helps develop new knowledge about the cultural dynamics at play among international stations; that is, how a range of nations with interests there translate—in the sense of moving—culture into Antarctic national enclaves; how invention of cultural forms and practices takes place in an international space or how scientific practices of discovering new microorganisms are perceiving the Antarctic as a source of new genetic material. In other words, it wishes to promote greater understanding of the complexities of everyday life in the Antarctica—of which tourism is a small but important part—through an engagement with sociocultural phenomena in formation within very particular ecosystems that have until recently not been completely inhabitable for humans.

The ethnographic accounts of a 'European High North', be it Icelandic Northern Lights tourism, whale watching or Greenlandic cruise tourism as presented in this book, are a glimpse of what detailed long-term first-hand research can achieve, where researchers are implicated in the activities they go on to describe, and their insights can become relevant in changing the lives of those entangled in tourism, either willingly or unwillingly. The new modes of practicing tourism in the Arctic that this book calls upon are also an invitation to rethink the worlds emerging in the polar regions. This is important in relation to how, in recent years, anthropological perspectives have developed a distinctive commitment to the study of world-making practices and processes of worlding. This emphasis on producing accounts of emerging worlds, worlds otherwise, and the other-worldly carries a particular anthropological analytic and a mode of conceptualising and practicing ethnography. It speaks to the ways in which knowledge making—including methods and research techniques—is entangled with practices of world making.

Polar Worlds in the Anthropocene

In an exercise of synthesis of future scenarios in Antarctica, Tin et al. (2015) examined a series of prevalent scenarios to offer three alternatives for Antarctica. The first, 'Utopia', where there is no interest in resources

and internal influence; second, nationalism and economic globalisation on the opposite side—with a future of unlimited exploitation of resources and external influence and, third, in between these more extreme possible scenarios, a cluster of three business-as-usual scenarios: Slippery Slope, Self Control and Low Interest. In the first case, by extrapolating current trajectories into the future, Tin et al. (2015) agree that there will be an expansion of virtually all anthropogenic activities in the Antarctic over the next 50 years, predicting that synergistic and cumulative impacts will exacerbate existing threats and reduce the resilience of ecosystems to further anthropogenic threats. Generally speaking, all authors present business-as-usual futures which are pre-empted on the basis that sovereignty, science and tourism will continue to define the logic of engagement with the Antarctic, and where consideration of the protection of intrinsic wilderness and aesthetic values will not change from how they are at present.

Within these business-as-usual settings they conclude that the future of the Antarctic is driven by two complementary logics. One view is of economic resource exploitation and national sovereignty interests, where bioprospecting continues to develop in a vacuum of regulation, parties continue to position themselves for a future lifting of the mining ban and the tourism and fishing industries continue to expand. A second opposing view is of an Antarctic sanctuary vision, where Antarctica is a common heritage for all of humanity, and where the trend towards environmental protection through current governance arrangements prevails into the future. These preferred and aspirational futures also include the vision that Antarctica remains a wilderness where there is little evidence of human presence; where the human footprint shrinks, thanks to the development of new technologies and infrastructures; where parties' influence within the ATS is determined by the environmental standards and quality of their science and international benefit (not national or commercial interests); where international research stations become common; where the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties have a more active involvement in the regulation of the tourism industry starting with the development of a strategic vision on tourism in Antarctica (reduce number of sites visited, the number of visitors ashore, and the ratio of tourists per tourism guide); establishment of human no-go zones and 'rebooting' the ATS to reinvigorate and restore its original mission of preserving 'Antarctic exceptionalism'.

The Arctic and parts of the Antarctic Peninsula are warming at twice the rate of the rest of the planet. In both instances, they have become sources of imagery of amplified environmental change, turning into a spatial setting for climate crisis discourses (Paglia, 2016) and—in the case of the Arctic—an opportunity to expand economic exploitation. Antarctica is becoming an 'anthropogenic landscape' and the challenges of ever-intensifying human activities there entail that current governance systems are insufficient to meet the environmental protection obligations set out under the Madrid Protocol. The scope and intensity of human activities in the region has changed dramatically over the past 100 years, and scientists are painting a sober picture of an unfolding and relentlessly unravelling future where changes will intensify considerably in the next 50 years. Antarctica and the Arctic present themselves as an inherently futures-oriented matter of concern; a concern with the crossing of thresholds in Earth systems, and the shift into whole new systemic states which set out a serious test of our collective and coordinated capacity to exercise foresight. Not only to protect these fragile yet resilient ecologies but also to rethink our species as part of and in relation with these polar ecologies.

In this regard, the polar regions are key objects with which to think about the Anthropocene, a term coined in 2000 by ecologist Eugene F. Stoermer and atmospheric chemist Paul Crutzen that has come to express the current geological epoch, in which human activity has profoundly impacted geology and atmospheric cycles. Human impact at the poles can be seen across many phenomena, including rapid spread of invasive species into new habitats, atmospheric and ocean pollution and global warming, amongst other anthropogenic forces including melting of glaciers and ice-sheets, where human influence can clearly be discerned in several ice core measurements. In effect, ice is playing an increasing role in identifying and defining the Anthropocene. The recurrence of northern hemisphere glaciation and the stability of the Greenland Ice Sheet are both potentially vulnerable to human impact on the environment. The Greenland and Antarctic Ice Sheets have not yet created large changes in landscape or sea level, but some projections suggest that they might in the next few centuries. In other words, emergent geopolitics of the Anthropocene in the polar regions are a complex blend of sociopolitical and physico-material negotiations, where heightened geopolitical interest in these regions and its resources is continually countered by increasing calls for the protection of polar ecosystems, and for reflecting upon the futures associated with the advent and expansion of the Anthropocene in these regions.

There is growing recognition that governance of the polar regions is becoming ever more complex, and the impact of change in these regions is being felt not only in climate change but also in the way we frame globalisation at the beginning of the twenty-first century. There is a need for increased public understanding about how processes of global change in the polar regions are adding new and even more intractable dimensions, and casting doubt over the future of the region. As new global and regional political alliances/alignments come to the fore in the circumpolar north and south, as new life forms with potential commercial and health applications are discovered and as Antarctica potentially becomes a new commodity and resources frontier (Dodds and Hemmings, 2014), it is imperative to develop interdisciplinary approaches that can open our eyes into how polar worlds are being imagined and put into practice (discursively and materially) by a range of actors across different knowledge practices. The problems and challenges posed by the uncertain nature of the polar regions' futures transcend singular disciplines, and their impact will be felt far beyond the communities normally focused on science, policymaking and international relations. As new narratives emerge calling for a rethinking of the continent as an 'anthropogenic landscape' (Glasberg, 2012), this book shows how comparative and cross-national work across epistemic communities engaged in polar activities constructs multiple, often contested, narratives of the future, and prepares to take action in the present in anticipation of those futures.

The polar regions—and the emerging worlds in the making there—speak clearly and directly to the current problematisation of planetary 'boundary conditions' that are beginning to be taken as indicative of the emergence of a new kind of 'geologic politics' (Clark, 2014:19): a politics concerned with the temporal dynamics and changes of state in Earth systems rather than around territories and nation state boundaries. And tourism ecologies in the far north and south cannot be decoupled from this. What is urgently needed then is a new ethics for thinking, living and experiencing the polar regions for the twenty-first century; a new ethics that can build on what Donna Haraway (2008) has termed 'response-ability', which may help enact a new ethic for 'felt urgency' of Anthropocene humanity. This is the critique that Abram and Lund posit in the introduction to this book, when they speak of 'Green Ice' as a conscious move to unpick the many statements surrounding ecotourism in the Arctic in order to present us with different ecologies of tourism development to those promised in Arctic travel literature. In other words, the question with which I wish to conclude this afterword is: can the polar regions be regarded as experiments with living differently in the Anthropocene?

Notes

1. For more detailed information on the history and legacy of the Antarctic Treaty System, see Dodds (2010); Rothwell (2009); Berkman et al. (2011); for a justification the Antarctic Treaty System for the twenty-first century, see Hemmings (2014).
2. This also extends to indigenous polar tourism, as in the case of Nunavik in the Canadian Arctic, for example (see Lemelin et al., 2012), which has been severely affected by global changes and local developments being experienced by local Inuit tour operators.

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