



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

Module 5

Trade, Investigation, and Exploration

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Key Terms and Concepts

- exploration
- investigation
- trade and trade development
- resources and resource exploitation
- images
- secondary societies
- encounter (indigenous-newcomer)

Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Upon completion of this module you should be able to

1. identify the primary motivation of secondary societies for exploring northern regions.
2. learn the basic chronology of the exploration of the North by peoples and governments from the South.
3. identify some of the implications for the North of the processes of external discovery, description, and exploration.
4. gain an appreciation for the manner in which the indigenous peoples responded to the arrival of outsiders.
5. understand the different waves, or processes, of southern trade, investigation, and exploration of the North.
6. enhance your understanding of the geography of the North and of the location of key events and resources.



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

7. gain a sense of the importance of initial contact in shaping subsequent indigenous-newcomer relations.
8. understand how the images and experiences of the first representatives of secondary societies in the various northern regions shaped, for southerners, the subsequent understanding of and approaches to the North.

Reading Assignments

The course instructor will assign readings from the required textbook by Freeman (2000), *Endangered Peoples of the Arctic*.

Course readings will be reviewed to examine the effects in different regions of the North circumpolar world of contact and of indigenous-newcomer relations.

Overview

Many generations after indigenous peoples established themselves firmly in the circumpolar world, outsiders began to take an interest in the area. In a series of cautious, timid, and often fearful steps, explorers, traders, government officials, and scientists moved into the region. These outsiders provided southern societies with their glimpses of the region, often in highly creative and inaccurate paintings and descriptions. These initial images proved to be extremely difficult to dislodge and they continue to both fascinate people in southern nations and to influence the outsiders' understanding of the possibilities and realities of the North.

The outsiders entered the North in a series of waves. The first, largely European in nature, was driven by opportunities for trade and resource development, resulting as well in the mapping and general description of these northern regions. The second wave emphasized the harvesting of the rich marine resources of the northern seas, sparking a burst of southern commercial interest in what many initial observers had viewed as barren and valueless land. The third wave—the one that continues to attract the most interest—involved more politically motivated explorations, combined with a scientific desire to understand better the geography of the Far North. This wave also contained an element of national rivalry, as the British and others searched for the Northwest Passage for many of the same reasons the Americans and Russians competed to be first to the Moon in the 1960s. While there was considerable contact with indigenous populations, the encounters were more sporadic and often less traumatic than subsequent interventions by outsiders in the region.



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

Lecture

We take the map of the world for granted. We have a clear, birds-eye view of the globe, including vast, largely unpopulated places, like much of the circumpolar world. These maps reflect the benefits of several generations of aerial photography, countless geological and cartographical investigations, and, more recently, the latest satellite technology. There are very few corners of the world, indeed, that are not well mapped and reasonably well known, both at the broad level of a regional map and in terms of detailed understandings of local ecological and human conditions.

This has not always been so. For most of human history, people knew a great deal about their immediate surroundings; much less about nearby regions; very little about lands and societies a relatively short distance away; and nothing at all about populations and areas vast distances away. Only with the advent of trade and exploration—followed shortly thereafter by the processes of claims of sovereignty and colonial control of newly found lands—did peoples come to understand more about distant lands and the people, land forms, and environment that could be found there. The regions in the North, among the last parts of the globe to be inhabited by human beings (interestingly, many thousands of years after Australia but several thousand years before nearby New Zealand), were also among the last to become known to outsiders, particularly to those from southern areas.

The manner in which southern peoples came to understand the North, and their reasons for looking to this mysterious and unknown area, is a crucial process in the evolution of the circumpolar world. The primary societies had thousands of years to adjust to their territories and to develop social, subsistence, and spiritual regimes that suited them and that grew from their relationship with their home territories. Then, often with dramatic suddenness, outsiders arrived in the North, ushering in new economic systems, radically different political assumptions, and the broader, complex, and often disruptive tapestry of indigenous-newcomer relations. This process—the onset of a new age in the North—began with the early and initial development of southern interest in the region. It progressed, in a series of three major waves, to the nineteenth century, resulting in the establishment of claims by southern governments to all of the regions of the North and the initial occupation and development of portions of the area by outsiders.



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

Student Activity

Locate a good map of the circumpolar world. Noting the dates, trace the specific exploratory ventures mentioned in the lecture.

You can find a basic map at Athropolis, <http://www.athropolis.com/map2.htm>, or at the University of Texas at Austin, http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/islands_oceans_poles/arctic_ref802647_1999.jpg.

The Expansion of Southern Interests into the North

The expansion of southern, secondary societies into the North reflected a series of crucial developments:

1. The advent of sailing and navigational technologies to the degree that those venturing into new regions had a reasonable possibility of returning successfully. Without proper vessels, people perished in the frigid waters of the North.
2. The development of interest in new lands, sparked perhaps by stories, rumours, or accounts offered second- and third-hand of resources, opportunities, or simply new peoples and territories to be examined.
3. A need for new or additional resources, either because of population pressures (such as over-crowding on available land), a lack of food or other supplies (such as lumber, minerals), or a search for new wealth (particularly gold).
4. A desire of governments to extend power and authority over new areas, often spurred by the possibilities that a rival government might move first into a new area.
5. Simple curiosity, or the desire to discover what lay beyond the horizon of contemporary knowledge.
6. A desire to share the benefits of southern civilization with, as yet, unknown northern peoples, principally associated with the determination to bring the Christian message to the non-Christian peoples of the North.



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

Beginning well over one thousand years ago, representatives of southern societies began to venture into new lands to the North of settled areas. They did so with great fear and hesitation. Before the first explorers returned from their northern adventures, people knew nothing of the land, its inhabitants, its dangers, or its opportunities. Into this vacuum of information flooded all forms of rumour, speculation, misinformation, fanciful concept, geographic forecasting, and simple bad guessing. Early maps and drawings of the region—prepared without the advantage of encounter with the region—included portraits of dangerous monsters and human foes. Some promised a great and open northern sea, offering access to far distant lands. Still others hinted at northern land masses, perhaps holding abundant resources. The simple point was that the outsiders did not know. Some—not many, to be sure—wanted to know and were determined to find out what lay to the North.

The sagas, tales, and records of the northern explorations are now the stuff of legend. From the Norse accounts of dramatic and exciting expansions—five full centuries before Columbus reached North America—to the exploration and subjugation of the western continent, to the tragic accounts of vessels lost at sea, of mariners stranded on Arctic islands and forced into cannibalism in a desperate attempt to survive, outsiders provided graphic descriptions of their experiences in the region. Many, writing to enhance their status through tales of courage and determination, exaggerated the hardships, downplayed the contributions to survival made by the indigenous peoples, and presented a stunningly inaccurate depiction of the land, its resources, and its original inhabitants. Even today, exploration literature remains a mainstay of northern libraries and bookstores, and southern fascination with the North as seen through the eyes of these adventurers and agents of expansion seems destined to live on, indefinitely. Southerners continue to be fascinated by a region that very, very few have visited in person, and they appear content to do their exploring from the comforts of the armchair and in the company of a good book.

As southerners moved north, they found, most often, that the lands were occupied, that there were resources and opportunities to be had, and that the North lacked the agricultural lands and farm surpluses that formed the basis of settled societies in southern locations. They discovered riches, on occasion; but more often they encountered disappointment and frustration. They found, too, that the climate was harsh by southern standards, unforgiving and even dangerous to the unprepared. Many outsiders perished before they learned how to survive in the region. The North, as time evolved, proved to be less frightening than first expected but also of less benefit than promoters of northern expansion had hoped.

The story of the expansion of secondary societies is a complicated one, and we will focus in this module on only the first and most tentative elements of that expansion. Over a very long period of time, from before AD 1000 until the early decades of the twentieth century, when airplane travel replaced sea and overland



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

journeys as a means of exploring uncharted lands, southern societies sought to understand the vast circumpolar world. They did so for a variety of reasons, ranging from simple curiosity, to a desire to add to scientific knowledge about a region. Some societies looked for new places for their surplus population or for resources to enrich the home country. Others simply wanted to beat rival countries to any and all new lands and to claim them for their own. The best means of understanding the opening of the North to outsiders is to consider the three major waves of southern interest.

Student Activity

Examine the descriptions of the North provided by some of the early explorers and traders in the region. What features about the North stand out most strongly in these portraits and images? How close are these images to the reality of the North? Examples you can look at are the original accounts (at Early Canadiana Online) by Thomas Simpson (1843) at

<http://www.canadiana.org/ECO/ItemRecord/40724?id=b7e3560c942ac84c>;

Samuel Hearne (1795) at

<http://www.canadiana.org/ECO/ItemRecord/35434?id=b7e3560c942ac84c>; and

Martin Frobisher (collected by Richard Hakluyt 1889)

<http://www.canadiana.org/ECO/ItemRecord/33128?id=b7e3560c942ac84c>.

First Wave of Southern Interest: General Investigations and Trade

In this first period, southern populations in what is now Europe began to explore trade opportunities in contiguous and comparatively accessible northern regions. These areas had not, for the most part, been occupied and settled earlier because they were not deemed of use for agricultural purpose. But the desire for other trade goods, including animal products, fish, and the like, drew outsiders slowly and tentatively into the North. The expansion occurred very gradually, with the Swedish, Finnish, Norwegians, and Danish moving northward toward the Gulf of Bothnia and also along the northern coastline of Norway. Traders based in Novgorod (one of the most ancient cities of Russia, and a great export centre for furs) expanded slowly into the northern reaches of what is now understood as European Russia. While the initial impulse in this wave of exploration, which continued until the 1400s in most parts of the region, focused on trading opportunities, the outsiders were intrigued by the new lands and new peoples. Some of the trading expeditions expanded into more general exploratory investigations. (See table 5.1.)



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

Table 5.1 Major Events (from All Things Arctic, 1998, <http://www.allthingsarctic.com/exploration/timeline.aspx>)

Date	Event
~18,000 BP	First people arrive in North America from Asia on Bering land bridge, also known as Beringia
330 BC	Greek navigator Pytheas sails near vicinity of Iceland
AD 850	Norse people settle in Iceland
AD 981	Eric the Red visits northwest coast of Greenland
1490	John Cabot first proposes existence of a Northwest Passage
1500s	Whalers explore from Baffin Island to Novaya Zemlya
1534	Jacques Cartier explores St. Lawrence River for Northwest Passage
1576	Martin Frobisher discovers Frobisher Bay
1586	John Davis explores western shores of Greenland
1596	Willem Barents discovers Spitsbergen and seeks Northeast Passage
1610–11	Henry Hudson expedition survives Arctic winter
1612	William Baffin explores Hudson and Baffin bays
1648	Semyon Dezhnev finds Northeast Passage
1728	Vitus Jonassen Bering discovers Bering Strait while seeking Northeast Passage
1741	Semyon Chelyuskin reaches most northern point in Asia
1770	Ivan Lyakhov explores Novosibersky Ostrova in Siberia
1822	William Parry sails through Hudson and Hecla straits
1831	John Ross reaches magnetic North Pole
1845	John Franklin's lost expedition proves existence of Northwest Passage
1854	Robert McClure makes first successful transit of Northwest Passage
1878–79	Nils Nordenskjold completes Northeast Passage from west to east
1888	Fridtjof Nansen makes overland crossing of Greenland
1893	Nansen's ship, <i>The Fram</i> , proves the existence of Arctic current
1903–06	Roald Amundsen successfully navigates Northwest Passage by ship
1909	Robert Peary and Matthew Henson reach North Pole
1912	Knud Rasmussen completes Northwest Passage by dogsled
1913–18	Vilhjalmur Stefansson lives among Inuit of northern Canada
1926	Richard Byrd and Floyd Bennet fly first airplane to North Pole
1958	U.S. Nuclear submarine <i>Nautilus</i> passes under Arctic ice cap
1968–69	Wally Herbert completes first surface crossing of Arctic Ocean
1977	Icebreaker <i>Arktika</i> reaches North Pole
1978	Naomi Uemura completes first one-man expedition to North Pole
1986	Will Steger completes first dogsled expedition to North Pole



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

A detailed summary of the development of the circumpolar North is given in Amanda Graham's Circumpolar History Timetables, <http://www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/~agraham/nost202/timetables.htm>.

This initial summary suggests a great deal of caution, even timidity on the part of the Europeans of the pre-1400 era; but in that age, long before the Portuguese and Spanish perfected the capacity to undertake long-range, open-sea sailing expeditions, even these comparatively short oversea and coastal ventures represented bold steps of discovery and substantial additions to the known worlds and universes of the European peoples involved. In this same era, however, some of the most daring, adventurous, and dramatic exploratory trusts in human history occurred. The Norse peoples, living along the coasts of what are now the Scandinavian countries, undertook significant ocean-going excursions into the North Atlantic. Using what would now be seen to be basic navigational tools, and with largely open vessels that placed the occupants at the mercy of the Atlantic swells, the Norse reached to the Faroe Islands and other North Atlantic islands. Where appropriate, as in Iceland, which they reached in the ninth century (Rekjavik was founded in AD 874), they occupied the uninhabited lands and established viable and dynamic societies. And still they pushed on, to the southeastern and southwestern coasts of Greenland, where they encountered Inuit peoples who had lived on the massive island for generations. They established settlements on Greenland, ones they inhabited for about 400 years, and eventually expanded briefly to L'Anse aux Meadows, on the northern tip of Newfoundland, in North America.

Second Wave of Southern Interest: Marine Resources of the Northern Seas

The usually tentative and occasionally bold steps of the first wave laid a foundation for the second wave of southern interest. As southern populations expanded, as pressure on locally available resources increased, and as technological improvements permitted longer and more reliable exploratory activity, Europeans began to extend their commercial operations. They came, in particular, in pursuit of the rich resources of the northern seas. Arctic coastal areas, from Norway and Iceland to Baffin Strait and the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, hosted abundant stocks of walrus, whale, cod, and other harvestable commodities. Much of Europe was a Catholic society and the demand for fish was a regular part of the diet. There was no shortage of purchasers for harvests from the sea. With prices and demand for these goods rising, companies found sizeable profits in sending commercial expeditions into northern regions in pursuit of supplies.



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

There was, as well, the belief that the as yet uncharted lands of the North held the same kind of wonderful resources that had been uncovered in Central and South America, there for the claiming by the first European state or company wise and adventurous enough to explore the region. A good example of this process lay with the adventures of Martin Frobisher. The British-sponsored adventurer set out in 1576 to discover a passage across the top of North America. Sailing into what he believed to be a westerly passage—it turned out to be the bay on Baffin Island that now bears his name—Frobisher made a landfall and discovered what he thought were large quantities of gold. Abandoning the original expedition, he collected samples, returned to England to much acclaim, and outfitted a second expedition for the next year, and a third one, also for 1577. This third journey, which included miners and supplies to build a large camp, ran into severe difficulties when one of the ships sank and the expedition came into conflict with the Inuit. When Frobisher returned to England after the third voyage, it was revealed that his find was not gold, but iron pyrites—fool’s gold. Frobisher and his backers were ridiculed and charged with fraud. The assumption that the North held vast quantities of rich mineral resources was, at least for a time, replaced by the realization that all that glitters is not gold.

Marine resources proved to be more reliable. They were harvested from the most readily accessible areas first and, then, when supplies became depleted there, exploration moved into new regions. Small fleets capitalized on the rich harvests of cod and other fish off the coasts of Norway, Iceland, and North America. Whalers found quick returns by following the pods into Arctic waters, where they engaged in a dangerous dance of death with the large and deadly creatures. The whaling sector proved to be quite voracious in its appetites, clearing out large areas in the eastern and central North Atlantic, Baffin Strait, and Hudson Bay and, in the late nineteenth century, moving through the Bering Strait and along the northwest coast of North America.

The fact that large stocks of the large and valuable mammals could be found and commercially harvested in the North, particularly whales and walrus, fitted nicely with the southern image of the region. It was, the outsiders believed, a harsh and unforgiving land, one that gave up its resources only with a struggle, and surrounded by uncertainty and danger. This was the world of the whaler, the North Atlantic fisher, and the sea mammal hunters. And if they returned to Europe with valuable harvests, they were not resented for their wealth, for they had braved waters, lands, and frozen seas that few on the continent were prepared to challenge. While there was wealth to be found, it was equally clear that there was no opportunity for major settlements, save for a few locations along the Norwegian coast and in Iceland. The rest of the North, many believed, was best left as a preserve for the wildlife, to be harvested profitably when and as southern markets dictated.



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

The search for harvestable resources also brought the European and North American “Norths” together in a significant manner. The Russian explorer Vitus Jonassen Bering between 1728 and 1741 explored across the strait that bears his name and identified the coastline of Alaska. He also discovered large quantities of harvestable sea otters in the North Pacific waters, a resource that the Russians sought to exploit (by way of a critical trade network with China). As a result, the Russian American Fur Company established posts along the coast and several in the Alaskan interior. This expedition was matched by those of James Cook and George Vancouver, who explored the west coast of North America from the south and brought British, Spanish, and American traders into the highly competitive trading economy. The Russians had, even before the sale of Alaska to the United States in 1867, already surrendered much of the coastal trade to the Hudson’s Bay Company, and the sea otter fur stocks had also been substantially depleted by the aggressive competition.

Third Wave of Southern Interest: Voyages of Exploration and Geographical Confirmation

The third and perhaps best-known phase of external interest in the northern region consisted of a lengthy series of exploratory adventures designed to unlock the remaining mysteries of the Far North. The discovery of great wealth in Asia and the difficulties of navigating around Africa or South America sparked a great interest in an alternative route to the Orient, one that could be controlled by European governments and companies. There was, as a result, an enormous effort made to find a suitable passage, northwest across the top of North America, or northeast across the top of Europe. (See tables 5.2 and 5.3.) There was a strong element of national rivalry in this expansion. Whoever found a navigable passage would be destined for great wealth and fame. And when the search finally proved that there was no commercially practical passage, as it had by the early nineteenth century, countries nevertheless continued to press on the exploratory front for reasons of national prestige. The Europeans, and a few North Americans, sought to solidify national claims to northern lands, to add to scientific knowledge about the region, and potentially to identify new resources.

Table 5.2 The search for the Northwest Passage

Martin Frobisher	Baffin Island	1576
John Davis	Cumberland Sound	1585
Henry Hudson	Hudson Bay	1610
William Baffin/Robert Bylot	Smith Sound/Foxe Channel	1615–1616
Luke Fox and Thomas James	Hudson Bay/James Bay	1631–1632
Edward Parry	Lancaster Sound	1819–1825
John Ross	Boothia Peninsula	1829–1833
John Franklin	Central Arctic	1819–1846



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

Peter Dease/Thomas Simpson	Arctic coast, west and east of Mackenzie River	1836–1839
Charles Francis Hall	Eastern Arctic	1860–1869
Roald Amundsen	First ship through the passage	1903–1906

Table 5.3 The search for the Northeast Passage, a northern sea route

Various	northern coast of Russia	1550s
Willem Barents	reached Spitsbergen and Novaya Zemlya	1590s
Henry Hudson	Spitzbergen	1607
Henry Hudson	Barents Sea	1608
Henry Hudson	Greenland and Hudson Bay	1610
Vitus Jonassen Bering	eastern part of passage;reached Alaska	1741
Russia's Great Northern Expedition	central Russian coast	1733–1743
Nils Nordenskjold	navigated Northeast Passage	1878–1879

Student Activity

Explore the history of the exploration of Siberia and northern Russia as presented at http://en2.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Siberia.

Why did people go to these regions of the North? List the reasons.

The end of the European wars aided the search for the Northwest Passage, as did the freeing of large numbers of British naval vessels and personnel that became available for scientific ventures. With considerable national pride at stake—and with the idea abandoned that either the Northeast or the Northwest Passage held any travel potential—the effort to explore for scientific purposes was supported by promises of monetary rewards, international fame, and personal satisfaction. No person embodied this era and this spirit better than John Franklin. He led a near-disastrous overland expedition to northern North America commencing in 1819. He succeeded in mapping large portions of the Central Arctic, and his written descriptions of a harsh, difficult, and dangerous land helped entrench European images of the Far North for generations. He returned on two more expeditions, the last one ending in disaster in 1845, when his ships became locked in ice in the Central Arctic, resulting in the deaths of all of his crew members and of Franklin himself. Not knowing what happened to Franklin's expedition, the British government launched a series of search expeditions—several of which seemed as interested in finding the Northwest Passage as they were in finding Franklin—which scoured the North American



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

Arctic waters and which added dramatically to the scientific understanding of the region.

The era of northern exploration involved hundreds of ocean-going efforts to explore the Arctic regions as well as an equally large number of overland expeditions designed to map the rivers, lakes, mountain ranges (and passages) of the vast Subarctic and Arctic regions. In the process, and bit by tedious and hard-won piece, the map of the North was slowly filled in. The river systems that drained huge areas of Europe and North America were gradually explored, mapped, and described to the world. Arctic and Subarctic coastlines were defined with increasing accuracy. Land masses, landforms, natural characteristics, flora, and fauna were described, painted, and identified. In the process, scientific knowledge about the North grew in leaps and bounds, adding new insights about the mysterious northlands, and fuelling a continuing southern fascination with the region.

Indigenous Responses to the Appearance of Southern Traders and Explorers

While the period of initial expansion and exploration, which varied widely in time across the circumpolar North, brought indigenous peoples and newcomers into contact, the degree and intensity of the encounter experience was decidedly less than in subsequent decades. Also, scholars have uncovered relatively little information on the encounter experience from the indigenous perspective—although recent collaborative efforts with researchers and indigenous elders and knowledge keepers are providing additional insights into this important phase. In general, the transitory and rapid movement of the initial explorers and adventurers through indigenous lands resulted in relatively little contact and few difficulties. There were occasions where misunderstandings and conflict broke out; but there were even more occasions when, instead of conflict, the indigenous peoples saved the newcomers from starvation and exposure to the elements and when local guides assisted the explorers with their journeys.

The arrival of traders and, in more rare occasions, settlers brought different challenges. The fate of the Norse settlements on Greenland and Newfoundland will never be fully known, but there is some evidence of conflict between the newcomers and the original inhabitants. Those who settled in Iceland, in contrast, had the globally rare experience of finding a habitable land that was completely uninhabited, and they moved in without competition for the resources of the island. In other areas, as will be explored in a later module, trading relations resulted in much greater contact, often with mutually beneficial results, but also typically with significant unintended and negative consequences for the indigenous peoples.



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

The traditional picture of the early contact experience—crafted by European observers—is that the indigenous peoples were awestruck by the arrival of the technologically superior newcomers, with their large sailing vessels; their iron tools, guns, knives, and axes; their manufactured clothing; and complicated Christian faith. The reality is more complex. Certain elements were alternately surprising and disturbing, including the impressive technological advances of the Europeans, but many European manufactured products were not suited to northern conditions. Untempered steel, for example, did not do well in the extreme cold. Nor were European boots, pants, coats, and coverings anywhere near as well suited to the Arctic conditions as indigenous clothing. While some newcomers were reluctant to accept the advice and clothing of the indigenous peoples—the British navy being among the most resistant—they eventually discovered that sealskin boats worked better than leather boats, and eventually they accepted the logic of using indigenous methods, clothing, and transportation. With some notable exceptions, as when epidemic diseases were introduced to unprepared populations, the initial encounter experience generally resulted in each group learning from the other, borrowing technology, knowledge, and ideas that suited their needs and inclinations; gaining a strong and more positive impression of the other group’s abilities; and remaining relatively firm in their beliefs that their distinctive approaches to life suited them best.

Student Activity

Try to imagine an outsider’s reaction to the nature and the physical surroundings of the part of the North in which you live (or, if you live in the southern area, a part of the North you have visited or know about). Write, in point form, a list of the most important features of your region, as you think they would appear to an outsider. Prepare a second list of the most important features of the region, as you would see them. Compare the lists. How and why are they different?

Summary

By the mid-nineteenth century, most of the major details of the North had been exposed to outsiders. The maps were usable, except in a few remote and inaccessible regions. Europeans knew a fair amount about most areas of the North, including transportation routes and barriers, and had charted the existence of a variety of harvestable resources. They were struck by the scale, danger, and diversity of the North—and they left with the clear impression that this was not a land suited to extensive outsider settlement, at least not until richer and more accessible resources were found. So they took what they needed and wanted, returned to southern homelands, and built a rich literary and artistic portrait of the North, one that lived on for generations in the stereotypes,



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

images, and southern understandings of the region. It is in this area—the world of ideas and images—that this early encounter period left its most substantial legacy, although patterns of resource exploitation, south-centred development, and indigenous-newcomer contact were also set in this time period. It took, ultimately, over a millennium for the southern-based Europeans to expand across the northern regions of Europe and North America and to chart, describe, define, explore, and explain the complex and vast lands of the region. In the process, they established a foundation of knowledge, impressions, and regional understanding that would form the basis for subsequent efforts by secondary societies to develop, exploit, and inhabit the lands of the circumpolar world.

Study Questions

1. Assume that you are a senior government official of a European nation, responsible for determining your country's level of involvement in northern exploration and trade before the 1800s. Prepare a list of five reasons for engaging in northern ventures and five reasons for not participating. Repeat this exercise for the period after 1800. Are your lists different? If so, why?
2. It is difficult to imagine how indigenous peoples viewed the arrival of outsiders in the period of initial contact. Prepare a list of the five more-attractive features associated with the arrival of the newcomers and five things that might have annoyed, worried, or discouraged the indigenous peoples about the arrival of the newcomers.
3. Images created in the first years of encounter had a profound impact on long-term views of northern regions. Based on the lecture and readings, what do you believe the outsiders expected to see in the North? What did they see in the North? To what extent did their image match reality?
4. How did the different patterns of northern exploration, investigation, and trade between Europe and North America shape the subsequent histories of the circumpolar world?

Supplementary Readings

The best history of the exploration of the circumpolar world:

- Vaughan, Richard. 1999. In *The Arctic: A History*. Dover, NH: Sutton Publishing.

A fine account of the initial European discovery of North America:



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

- Morison, Samuel Eliot. 1971. *The European Discovery of America: The Northern Voyages AD 500–1600*. New York: Oxford University Press.

A readable and popular history of the search for the Northwest Passage:

- Berton, Pierre. 1988. *The Arctic Grail*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

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UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

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