



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

## **Module 8**

# **Consolidation and Organization**

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### **Key Terms and Concepts**

- megaproject
- non-renewable resource
- transportation
- High Arctic
- strategic location
- Cold War
- relocation
- social welfare program

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### **Learning Objectives and Outcomes**

Upon completion of this module, you should be able to

1. chronicle the emergence of a permanent state-centred presence in each of the three major North circumpolar regions: Russia, Europe, and North America.
2. identify various non-renewable resources extracted from the North, and locate the circumpolar regions where these resources are found.
3. explain the significance of the North circumpolar world in a strategic, military sense.

### **Overview**

This module provides an overview of national, industrial, government, and military expansion into the North circumpolar world. The effects of large-scale industrial development; military/strategic studies; and the formalization of government administration in the North are all themes in this module. In the interest of generating wealth, southern companies created permanent northern



## UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

settlements to explore for non-renewable resources. Meanwhile, the Second World War and the Cold War converted the Arctic into a primary, strategic military location. With a focus toward economic development and sovereignty, governments instituted health and education programs that were directed particularly at circumpolar indigenous peoples in the North. As a result, industry, military bases, and government social programs contributed dramatically to changing the circumpolar way of life.

## Lecture

### Introduction

This module focuses on the period of consolidation and organization in the North. Chronologically, it follows the era of colonial government and administration, when the interests of the state were mostly trade based and piecemeal. In much of the circumpolar world in the twentieth century, “northern expansion” became a primary objective for Arctic states. When, how, and to what extent development was pursued differed between regions and states. Previously, state presence was necessarily impeded by a lack of infrastructure, unconsolidated northern policies, and little public or corporate interest. However, fundamental change occurred when opportunities for the extraction of non-renewable resources and external influences, like war, affected the North. The North was no longer an isolated or remote region.

The rate of northern expansion reflected the rise of technological innovations. Easier transportation of goods and people, more efficient resource extraction and production, as well as advancements in construction and communication turned the North from what southern states considered to be a barren frontier, to a frontier that held potential wealth and strategic importance.

Megaprojects soon became a regular feature of circumpolar lives and landscapes. Pictures of the North usually conveyed—and still reflect—one of two stereotypes: the pristine land of ice and snow untouched by human progress, or that of massive infrastructure projects built to extract resources and triumph over nature.

### War and Technology

Although the expansion of government and corporate interests in the North occurred at varying times and speeds, it was the events of the twentieth century that strongly affected the circumpolar region. Themes of war and technology factor prominently in this respect.



## UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

State investments in technology were often motivated by war. During the First World War and Second World War (1914–1918, 1939–1945) sailors on Pacific coasts and soldiers in European trenches required fast and reliable communication and transportation devices to achieve victory. After 1945, Cold War tensions between the United States and Soviet Union motivated the launching of satellites and the testing of nuclear weapons in a race for military supremacy. In this respect, the North regularly served as an experimentation lab for military and space exercises—owing in part to the North’s sparse population and cold climate.

As a result of military demands, significant innovations occurred in transportation and communication technology. Telephones and televisions became standard household items, along with cars and snowmobiles. Rather than sail to the North Pole, people could now fly over it—or even view it from outer space. Innovations in transportation allowed for heavy equipment and large numbers of people to be carried to and from Arctic locations previously considered remote. In 1900, indigenous people in the circumpolar North—particularly in more isolated places like Baffin Island or Chukotka—had more in common with their ancestors who had lived in the first years AD than with their children living in 1950. So significant were the effects of technology.

## Northern Resources

Northern natural resources have been exploited for centuries. For example, whaling ships have been scooping mammals and fish from Arctic seas for nearly five hundred years. In addition, permanent inhabitants of circumpolar regions have been using land and sea resources for even much longer than that. In the context of consolidation and organization, we are less inclined to think of animal and plant resources as non-renewable natural resources.

Substances like coal, copper, ore, oil, and gold prompted states and private investors to assume substantive financial risks for the extraction of northern resources and potential wealth. Capital investments on this level required security. Resource corporations often looked to the state to provide such security through tax exemptions, law and order, and a relatively stable and educated labour pool.

This section highlights some of the non-renewable natural resources that have been exploited from North circumpolar jurisdictions and provides examples of where, when, and how these resources were extracted.



## UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

### Coal

Coal is an organic matter mined from the earth for its combustible energy value. Coal is used in the heating of domestic homes, in powering sea and rail transportation, and to fuel production in other industries, such as steel. The largest circumpolar state to exploit its coal resources was unquestionably Russia. The most significant coal mine in the Soviet North opened in the 1930s in the Pechora coal basin at Vorkuta near the Ural Mountains. Other locations, like the Norwegian islands of Svalbard, also held large coal deposits. Here is a comparison of coal output from four northern areas.

**Table 8.1** Tonnes of Coal (000) (adapted from Armstrong et al. 1978, Appendix 3, 284)

	1950	1960	1970
USSR (Far North)	n/a	28,000	35,000
Canada (NWT and Yukon)	3.7	7.7	10.9
USA (Alaska)	373	600	498
Norway (Svalbard)	364	404	484

### Gold

For centuries, gold has been a primary trading commodity. It is the reserve that has backed numerous national currencies and international wars. The Yukon region attracted thousands of fortune seekers in the late nineteenth century in hopes of discovering personal wealth in the Klondike gold rush. In fact, you may recall one of the most recognizable northern photographs ever taken, shot in 1898 as hundreds of men ascended the Golden Stairs of the Chilkoot Pass. The abundance of “yellow brick” in the Yukon led to the establishment of communities like Dawson City (which, at the close of the nineteenth century was the largest Canadian city west of Winnipeg). During the period 1880–1910 Alaska also sponsored a gold rush. Outside of North America, gold mines were opened in places like Aldan, Russia, in 1920 and other Russian locations, such as the Dzhugdzhur Mountains and Indigirka. But it was in circumpolar western North America that gold played a distinctive role in establishing an organized northern state presence.

### Hydroelectric Power

Hydroelectricity is created by capturing the force of rushing water and using it to propel large turbines to generate power. Hydroelectric stations require rivers to be dammed and sometimes diverted to harness the force of rushing water at its apex. Water-powered megaprojects have been built in Labrador and Iceland. Even some joint national projects have been launched in the circumpolar



## UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

world—for example, the Norwegian, Soviet, and Finnish agreement on the Pasvik River. Hydroelectric dams alter river systems, often depleting fish stocks and disrupting navigational routes.

### **Oil and Gas**

Rising oil and gasoline consumption in the twentieth century has been stimulated by increased personal vehicle ownership and industrial production. In a global context, circumpolar oil and gas exploration and drilling has served as a major addition to overall world supply. Arctic oil discoveries like the one at Prudhoe Bay in 1968, 90 miles east of Barrow, Alaska, illustrate well that not all circumpolar communities were affected by resource development at the same time; though the initial search for Alaskan oil began in 1901, it was not until the 1970s and 1980s that the North Slope of Alaska felt the full weight of industrial development. By contrast, towns like Norman Wells in the Northwest Territories were created in the 1920s because of an oil refinery. In Russia, one of the world's most significant oil and gas reserves was discovered in the 1950s on the northwest Siberian plane between the Ob and Yenisei rivers. Some of the Soviet regions affected by 1950s and 1960s drilling include the Ural, Vasyugan, Middle Ob, and Nadym-Pur.

### **Strategic Location**

One northern resource that does not fit in the non-renewable category, but does factor heavily in an expanded northern state presence, is, simply, the location of circumpolar countries. While this is as much an accident of geography as are deposits of, say, iron ore, the Arctic has proved critical during the twentieth century's major conflicts. Naval and air bases were first located in places like Iqaluit and Longyearbyen during the Second World War to serve as stopovers for North Atlantic convoys. Shortly afterwards, submarines with Russian and American decals moved under the polar cap and navigated the Northwest Passage, causing international debate over Arctic sovereignty. After 1945, the Cold War intensified the strategic importance of the Arctic, because the polar route was the shortest distance to launch a missile attack directed at Moscow or Chicago. Air defences, radar shields, and missile testing were based in northern locations, including Hall Beach, Canada; Thule, Greenland; and Murmansk, Russia.

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### **Student Activity**

Get a map of your region or country. Place markers on the locations where northern megaprojects have been constructed. Use recognizable markers to distinguish between different types of developments (e.g., red flags for mines, blue flags for pipelines, green flags for military bases).



## Characteristics of the Northern Megaproject

In response to the construction of a hydroelectric project on the Iokanga River on the Kola Peninsula, one man lamented,

How can such a serious and crucial decision as the construction of a hydroelectric power station be taken without the people concerned being consulted—those who were born on this soil, whose ancestors it reared, and whom it still feeds and clothes, although poorly and scarcely by virtue of its sadly decreasing capacity? (Galkin 1996, 185)

In many ways, this man's experience represents the defining characteristic of the northern megaproject during the period of consolidation and organization, that is, unfettered development, void of community consultation.

A megaproject can be defined as a large-scale, capital-intensive development. Usually, megaprojects are resource based. Examples of megaprojects include the Churchill Falls hydroelectric dam in Labrador and the Monchegorsk copper/nickel mine on the Kola Peninsula. They conjure images of heavy machinery, imported labour, massive industrial structures, and environmental impact.

Oran Young provides insight into some common features of resource development in the Arctic: Arctic megaprojects involve substantial future risks (e.g., financial, land, transportation); are subject to events of probability and uncertainty (e.g., oil spills, climate); and are constructed in complex ecosystems and social systems (adapted from Young 1992).

Perceptions regarding northern megaprojects are derived from a core–periphery perspective. The state, investors, developers, and skilled labour arrive from regional centres or distant economic and political capitals. Megaprojects were considered to be erected in “unpopulated wastelands.” Meanwhile, those in the impacted regions were most often indigenous peoples with limited or restricted rights. For them, development occurred on hunting grounds, burial grounds, and in communities.

Some examples of northern megaprojects follow. While you are reading these examples, keep in mind the economic and security benefits to the state while you consider the social and economic impacts on affected circumpolar peoples.



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

## **Greenland: Thule Military Base**

Inhabitants of circumpolar regions have their own “North,” commonly referred to as the High Arctic. Usually, these are places known only by permanent residents, scientists, and military officials. Examples of such locations include Grise Fiord, Barrow, and Uelen. Generally, these communities have small populations, are substantial distances from northern regional centres, and endure the coldest temperatures.

Another High Arctic location is Thule, Greenland. Located immediately south of lat 80° N, this area has also been known as Dundas or Uussaqqak. For centuries it was home to Inughuit, who benefited from coastal hunting grounds that offered ample caribou, polar bear, and seal harvests.

With the end of the Second World War in 1945, the Allied victory provided a short-lived period of American and Russian co-operation; but the unification of force that had willed victory over the Nazi regime soon disintegrated into a cold war. As the dominant political concern in the latter half of the twentieth century, the Cold War featured two primary actors—both of them Arctic states. Nuclear weapons and related concepts, such as “mutually assured destruction,” compelled countries to declare alliances with either superpower. Few states remained neutral. In 1951, Denmark, as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), was asked to contribute to the defence of the United States and the western alliance.

The United States proposed to build an air base equipped with anti-aircraft battery and radar-monitoring devices at Thule. The fate of Greenland (which did not establish Home Rule until 1979) was discussed thousands of kilometres away in Copenhagen and Washington, D.C. In spite of the magnitude of the project being proposed and its impact on local residents, negotiations lasted only months. In 1951, an agreement was signed between Denmark and the United States to begin construction in the Baffin Bay community of Uussaqqak.

A fleet of 120 ships and 12,000 U.S. military personnel arrived on July 9, 1951. They brought gifts for local residents, including tins of food and chewing gum. Then they launched the construction of a major U.S. missile-defence complex.

In 1953, the inhabitants of Uussaqqak, which numbered more than one hundred Inughuit, were given four days to leave their homes. It had been determined by the Danish government that military operations posed too big a threat to Greenlandic safety—or that Greenlanders posed too big a threat to U.S. military security. The people were exiled 150 kilometres north to Qaanaaq, and a settlement community was built with American dollars and labour. However, as suitable as the newly developed community may have been, it was missing two essential features: community history, and good hunting. While the land may



## UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

have been familiar to some, it was not the area in which children had grown and elders had died. Ussaaqqak had been selected specifically for access to abundant wildlife; and Qaanaaq did not display equivalent natural wealth. The new settlement offered less food security and held less traditional value.

The signed agreement of 1951 between the United States and Denmark allotted for general “defence areas” to which U.S. military operations were restricted. However, the agreement was loose in its terminology and enforcement. No boundaries were drawn or defined to demarcate this area. Therefore, few limitations or restrictions were placed on American operations. The original contract between the two nations declared that no nuclear weapons would be stationed at the base in the High Arctic. This followed official Danish policy, which did not allow nuclear weapons on Danish soil. In contrast to public policy, a secret agreement was signed in 1957 to allow nuclear materials on the Thule site. By 1968, the terms of this agreement were no longer secret. In that year, a B-52 bomber carrying nuclear weapons crashed on the sea ice between the Thule air base and the small settlement of Moriusaq. Four 1.1-megaton bombs fell to the sea. While no one was injured in the crash (the pilots managed to parachute to safety), there remains debate over how much radioactive contamination affected the sea life and the Inughuit men who were hired as part of the cleanup brigade.

Examples of forced relocation like this one are representative of a larger and more widespread circumpolar trend during the period of consolidation and organization. The relocation of Arctic families and communities was often made by distant policy officials whose cost-benefit analysis did not factor intangible attributes, like one’s connection to the land or the local harvest capacity. If these variables were considered, they were dismissed. A claim could be made that Denmark did indeed protect the interest of its colonial citizens. After all, a new, better equipped community was erected at Qaanaaq. The few residents of Greenland’s most northerly settlement now had access to running water and modern shelter. However, the primary objective in this relocation decision was strategic military development, not the welfare of a small indigenous community.

High Arctic communities, though they are often considered to be remote, were not immune to the effects of economic or military development. Indeed, because of their distance from mainstream public attention, refineries or military installations could often develop unchecked. With the end of the Cold War, many people are only now learning of past military projects that occurred throughout the Arctic.



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

## **Canada: The Mines and Military of the Northwest Territories**

The expansive boundaries of Canada's Northwest Territories (NWT) of the past (now divided into two territories: the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut) led to divergent stories about how the jurisdiction as a whole developed. While communities like Yellowknife and Norman Wells were being created in the west, Inuit in the eastern Arctic were experiencing only infrequent contact with military personnel and traders.

Whether for economic or militaristic purposes, Canadian expansion into the Northwest Territories can be causally connected to developments in transportation. Flight techniques improved significantly during the First World War, and many men returned from the war to become northern bush pilots. Aviators helped companies like Imperial Oil transport workers and supplies into the North. For example, the industrial community of Norman Wells was established in 1921, when a small gasoline and diesel refinery began production. A railway was established in 1929 to link prairie grain fields with the northern port of Churchill, Manitoba, on Hudson Bay. In the 1930s, planes flew prospectors, investors, carpenters, mechanics, teachers, and nurses into the growing community of Yellowknife. By 1939, Yellowknife had expanded to more than 2,000 people, mostly on the strength of its abundant gold resources. But government administration was limited. At this time, "Ottawa's main interest in the North was not its people but its mineral resources" (Hamilton 1994, 33).

International conflict quickly intensified Ottawa's interest in the Arctic. Issues of sovereignty and defence necessitated this transition. As the United States, Russia, Denmark, and Norway all funded expeditions through the Northwest Passage and to the North Pole, Canada realized that its claims of Arctic sovereignty—devolved from the British Empire—increasingly held little sway. In 1922, the Canadian government funded a two-year endeavour under the leadership of J. D. Craig and J. E. Bernier to establish permanent outposts on Ellesmere and Baffin islands in the interest of sovereignty assertion. This resulted in permanent settlements, like Pond Inlet.

During the Second World War, North Atlantic flight routes demanded that air bases be built at secure locations for refuelling and emergency landings. In Canada, the locations selected included Cumberland Sound, Frobisher Bay, and Coral Harbour. The refuelling base at Frobisher Bay fiercely impacted the eastern Canadian Arctic. Part of the impact came from the size and capacity of the airport runway that was built. Large-supply planes could now transport substantially more equipment and personnel than had been possible with planes landing on floats and skis. At the same time, Inuit were being moved into permanent settlements, like Apex, a suburb of Frobisher Bay. This was the



## UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

result of a combination of influences, including an increased dependence on store-bought supplies and forced government relocation.

Strategic military considerations and the potential for the extraction of non-renewable resources caused a renaissance in Canadian northern policy after the Second World War. Evidence of this is the growth in spending on northern administration: between 1945 and 1949, the branch responsible for the Northwest Territories (notably the Department of Mines and Resources) had its annual spending increased from \$413,673 to \$2,477,904 (Dickerson 1992, 32).

Cold War tensions motivated Canada and the United States to build a string of enormous radar stations from Alaska to Baffin Island. The purpose of these radar stations was to detect a possible Soviet nuclear-missile attack before the warheads reached targets like Washington, D.C., and New York. The northern DEW (Distant Early Warning) Line employed Inuit alongside American soldiers at radar stations—for example, in Cambridge Bay, and Hall Beach. In the event of an attack, missiles would most likely be brought down over northern Canada, without regard for the inhabitants of the region.

### **Norway: Svalbard Resource Extraction**

Not all military or economic-development projects during this period had the same impact on circumpolar peoples—because not all of the Arctic is inhabited. The islands of Svalbard were, before early twentieth-century development, uninhabited. This Arctic archipelago is situated at lat 74–80° N, near the geographic North Pole. The archipelago is a collection of nine main islands, 60 per cent of which are covered by glaciers and snowfields. The largest island, called Spitsbergen, hosts the community of Longyearbyen, a community named not for its numerous long winter days, but after one of the original American investors, Alfred Longyear.

Before twentieth-century development, these islands were only known to seamen, whalers, and the odd trapper of Norse and Russian origin. Despite the extreme High Arctic location of Svalbard, the archipelago served as a useful landmark and occasional port for mariners. The First World War demonstrated the naval importance of having a safe harbour in a cold sea. Svalbard may serve as the first example of the Arctic's strategic military importance. Statesmen at the Treaty of Paris conference in 1919 debated control for sovereignty over Svalbard, and the Treaty of Svalbard was signed in 1920. The treaty assigned sovereignty over the islands to Norway, which formally accepted this responsibility in 1925; but all 41 signatures to the treaty have equal rights to exploit the islands' resources. Article 9 of the Treaty of Svalbard prevents future military occupation on the northern islands. It reads:



## UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

Norway undertakes not to create nor to allow the establishment of any naval base in the territories specified in Article 1 and not to construct any fortification in the said territories, which may never be used for warlike purposes. (Ostreng 1978, 102)

The world was thus granted an unmilitarized circumpolar region.

During the Second World War, Allied convoys carrying freight to Murmansk from North America travelled close to the archipelago. Before long, a small naval base was established there to prevent German occupation of the islands. Germany did bomb the mining facilities on the islands during the war, but the higher objective of maintaining Svalbard free from Axis occupation was achieved. (Armstrong et al. 1978, 225)

The commitment of Norway to honour the Treaty of Svalbard has been questioned from time to time, most vociferously by the Soviet Union. However, Soviet claims regarding Norwegian plans for military occupation have rarely gone farther than political accusations. In 1975, Norway was accused of violating the treaty provision quoted from Article 9 when the Norwegian government completed construction of a year-round airstrip at Longyearbyen. Yet, the complaint held little weight as long as Soviet companies also used the runway facilities. After the vision unveiled in Paris, Svalbard has remained a source for economic—not military—importance.

The first coal mine on Svalbard was established in 1904. Though American companies made early investments in coal production, the islands were populated primarily with Russian and Norwegian labourers. Governed by Norway's Mining Code, Svalbard has produced significant wealth for Russian-, Norwegian-, and American-owned coal companies. For example, since 1916, the Great Norwegian Spitsbergen Coal Company has extracted over 400,000 tonnes of coal, annually. This is remarkable productivity from a non-renewable-resource base only 900 kilometres from the North Pole. It is especially appreciated by Norwegians, as their mainland is lacking in coal resources. Local Russian operations were centred at Barentsburg and Pyramiden. In total, during the years 1969–1974, more than 800,000 tonnes of coal were shipped from the islands.

Much of this productivity is owing to the development of cold-weather technology in non-resource-based sectors. In 1950, the population of Svalbard (concentrated at Longyearbyen) stood at more than 3,500 people, mostly of Russian or Norwegian origin. Each of those individuals had to be equipped with the tools and clothing necessary to work in severe Arctic temperatures. They also needed reliable and warm shelter to house them and possibly their families on, at least, a semi-permanent basis. This feat required major innovations in building construction and home heating. As well, coal had to be shipped out, while supplies like food, medicine, and heavy machinery all had to be shipped



## UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

in. Innovations in naval and air transport allowed for larger, more dependable shipments.

As coal is one of the dirtiest resources to mine and burn, the archipelago's natural environment has suffered. In 1971, Norway enacted the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act. This act guarded against some abuses of the natural landscape and legally preserved all traces of human endeavour prior to 1945 as protected cultural relics. Svalbard may not serve as an environmental model, but may be worth further study as a model of international co-operation in the Arctic.

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### Student Activity

Imagine your favourite place on the land. Could an oil refinery or radar station be built there tomorrow? Why not? Consult national and regional legislation and make a list of the legal rights and protections your community and your people have against megaprojects. Do you believe existing laws provide enough protection, or would you prefer to see this type of economic development emerge?

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### Social Welfare and Relocation

The effects of consolidation and organization on circumpolar peoples are neither uniform nor decisively clear. Examples like the Thule air base construction demonstrate cases where circumpolar peoples experienced forced relocation as a result of state occupation. This is a clear case of forced resettlement for state-centred purposes, but other government decisions—often under the guise of social welfare programs—also affected northern residents.

Some social welfare programs arose as a result of reasonable concern for the health and well-being of northern indigenous peoples. As television and other forms of media conveyed to a southern public the reality of northern living, public pressure convinced governments to institute programs dedicated to improve the standard of living in the North. Other programs evolved from less benign intentions. Consider the words of one oil industry executive in reference to the Khanty of Russia:

All Khanty are alcoholics and die by age thirty, far too young to absorb any wisdom from any elders, who do not exist anyway. . . . Let the few pitiful Khanty who are left on this earth live in town. Russian villages are dying too. The world needs gas. You need all we can pump. (Balzar 1999, 5)



## UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

Those making large capital investments in northern hinterlands certainly influenced government economic and social policy in those regions. Across the circumpolar world it can be generally stated that government program intentions, benign or not, were imbedded with ideas of assimilation and modernization.

Canadian northern history offers numerous examples of resettlement plans and social welfare policies. As Keith Crowe remarked, in

1939 Soviet Inuit were piloting aircraft, Alaskan natives were running businesses, and Greenlanders were electing their own people to their own councils. Canadian Indians, Metis, and Inuit of the north in that year were without a voice in economics, religion, education, laws, or politics. (Crowe 1991, 172)

In the 1930s, Canadian colonial administrators (Royal Canadian Mounted Police, medical personnel, etc.) found Inuit names, like Egeesiak and Attagoyuk, difficult to spell and harder still to pronounce. In addition, they found that an individual may hold different names, depending on the speaker. This was owing in part to the Inuit tradition of naming children based on personality traits and the similarity of those traits to someone the children resembled (e.g., a late great uncle or cousin). In the minds of those from the south, some level of uniformity was required to rectify the resulting bureaucratic confusion. The decision was to assign to Inuit an “Eskimo number” on engraved discs that Inuit wore around their necks. That way, Inuit could more easily be referenced by their number, rather than by their name. Three decades later, the task of undoing this policy was assigned to Abe Okpik, who administered Project Surname and, through consultation, returned full legal names to Inuit. However, the legacy of reducing people to a file number remains.

After the Second World War, Canada’s primary northern policy question concerned sovereignty. The United States was making scientific (mostly concerning weather) and military ventures into the Arctic, particularly the High Arctic. The Government of Canada was increasingly pressured to demonstrate that the Arctic Archipelago was not a distant, unknown, and unoccupied land. To this end, the government, without consultation, enlisted Inuit to be active representatives for Canadian sovereignty. Forcing Inuit from the land and into settlements was one aspect of this policy; the relocation of families was another. The most spectacular of these relocations occurred in the early 1950s, when several families were shipped from the northwest coast of Quebec to Devon and Ellesmere islands in the High Arctic. The relocation resulted in the settlement of current-day communities like Grise Fiord. The move, although voluntary, made for a difficult adjustment. Martha Flaherty, the granddaughter of filmmaker Robert Flaherty (*Nanook of the North*), recounts,



## UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

[My father] used to go hunting in –40 to –60 weather in the dark for days at a time without eating. . . . I don't think I even had a childhood between the ages of 7 to 12 because I had to hunt with my father for food, in very cold weather, with absolutely no daylight. . . . Sometimes I used to cry knowing how cold it was going to be, but then my father would just say, Do you want us to starve? (Flaherty 1986, as cited in Marcus 1995, 98)

In northern Europe, the impact of state-centred colonization arrived earlier and with greater force. As early as the seventeenth century, Sami in the northern portions of Norway, Sweden, and Finland were infiltrated with settlers enticed by the government's offer of exemption from military service and taxation. It was during the period 1880–1920 that a coherent nationalist northern policy was implemented. As in other regions, non-indigenous settlers were often lured to colder and more sparsely populated areas by government offers of exemption from regular burdens, like taxation. In the usual Nordic mix of public and private enterprise, the extraction of resources, like iron ore, or megaprojects in hydroelectricity also invited settlement. These enterprises also caused the resettlement of Sami peoples occupying potential wealth-generating lands. Land use and expropriation was regulated through policy and legislation, like the reindeer-grazing acts of Norway and Sweden.

Conflict over land usually resulted in the expulsion of Sami. Under the rubric of modernization and individualism, landownership in the northern region of Norway was limited to those who could read and write—in Norwegian. The Lapp Administration controlled not only land use, but also instituted programs in education and welfare.<sup>1</sup> From the Sami experience one is given a sense of the assimilationist pattern that affected most—if not all—circumpolar indigenous peoples during the era of consolidation and organization. In order for the state to maximize natural-resource exploitation, indigenous peoples first had to be removed from the land in question and then pacified into accepting state-corporate theories of modernization and progress.

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### Student Activity

Imagine what it was like to be relocated. Write a short (one- or two-page) description of how you might cope if your family and community were suddenly forced to move to a new settlement.

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<sup>1</sup> An overview of this period is provided in Sven E. Olsson and Dave Lewis (1995), *Welfare Rules and Indigenous Rights: The Sami People and the Nordic Welfare States*. In *Social Welfare with Indigenous Peoples*, edited by John Dixon and Robert P. Scheurell (London: Routledge), 149–152.



## UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

### Summary

Circumpolar way of life and the appearance of the Arctic landscape radically changed during the period of consolidation and organization. States and private investors were drawn to the North for its wealth of untapped, non-renewable, natural resources. Meanwhile, the military, particularly Soviet and American forces, viewed the polar region as a strategic component of Second World War and Cold War conflicts. Northern expansion policies resulted in the construction of numerous megaprojects designed to extract valuable resources and to establish an Arctic military presence. As a consequence, circumpolar peoples faced the imposition of government administration, forced relocation, and an infringement on their self-reliance. During this period, northern expansion was heralded as progress in the name of national advancement and modernization.

### Suggested Readings

Armstrong, Terence, George Rogers, and Graham Rowley. 1978. *The Circumpolar North: A Political and Economic Geography of the Arctic and Sub-Arctic*. London: Methuen.

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### Study Questions

1. Describe the characteristics of an Arctic megaproject, and provide one example from the consolidation and organization period.
2. Why was the Arctic considered a strategic resource during the Cold War?
3. Name three groups of people who were relocated during the consolidation and organization period, and identify the forces that caused their relocation.

### Glossary of Terms

archipelago	a large group or chain of islands, particularly in a large body of water.
capital investment	funds dedicated to fixed assets, such as buildings and machinery.
consolidate	<b>1</b> make or become secure, strong, or solid. <b>2</b> reinforce or strengthen (one's position, power, etc.) <b>3</b> combine (territories, companies, debts, etc.) into a single or unified whole.



**UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC**

megaton	a unit of explosive power equal to one million tons of TNT.
piecemeal	<i>adverb</i> piece by piece; gradually; separately. <i>adjective</i> consisting of pieces; done bit by bit; gradual; unsystematic.



## UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

polar cap	a region of ice or other frozen matter surrounding a pole of a planet.
reserve	( <i>in singular or plural</i> ) assets kept readily available as cash or at a central bank, or as gold or foreign exchange ( <i>reserve currency</i> ).

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