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The Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition

Science and politics

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Acknowledgements

A long journey has (finally) come to an end...

When I started this project in 2010, there was no doubt that the topic of my thesis would be related to the Antarctic. Because there is *something* with that large, icy continent that sticks with you in a certain way. Not just the smell in your nose after visiting a penguin colony... but a feeling of insignificance, and yet momentousness, when looking out from your tent onto Windless Bight and Mount Erebus.

I have met obstacles along the way, and I've strayed off course. I've experienced white-outs, both in Antarctica and in my mind.

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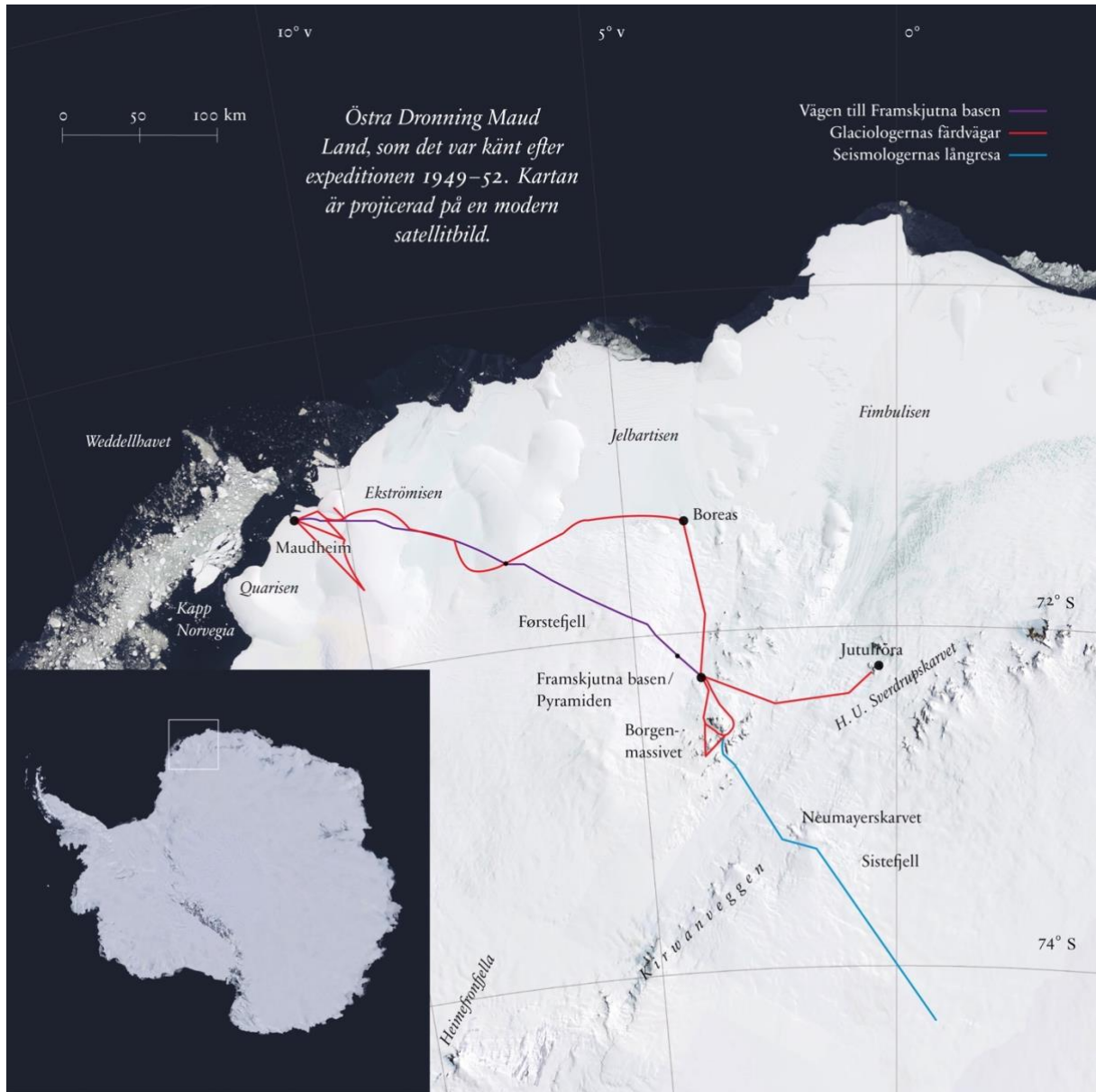
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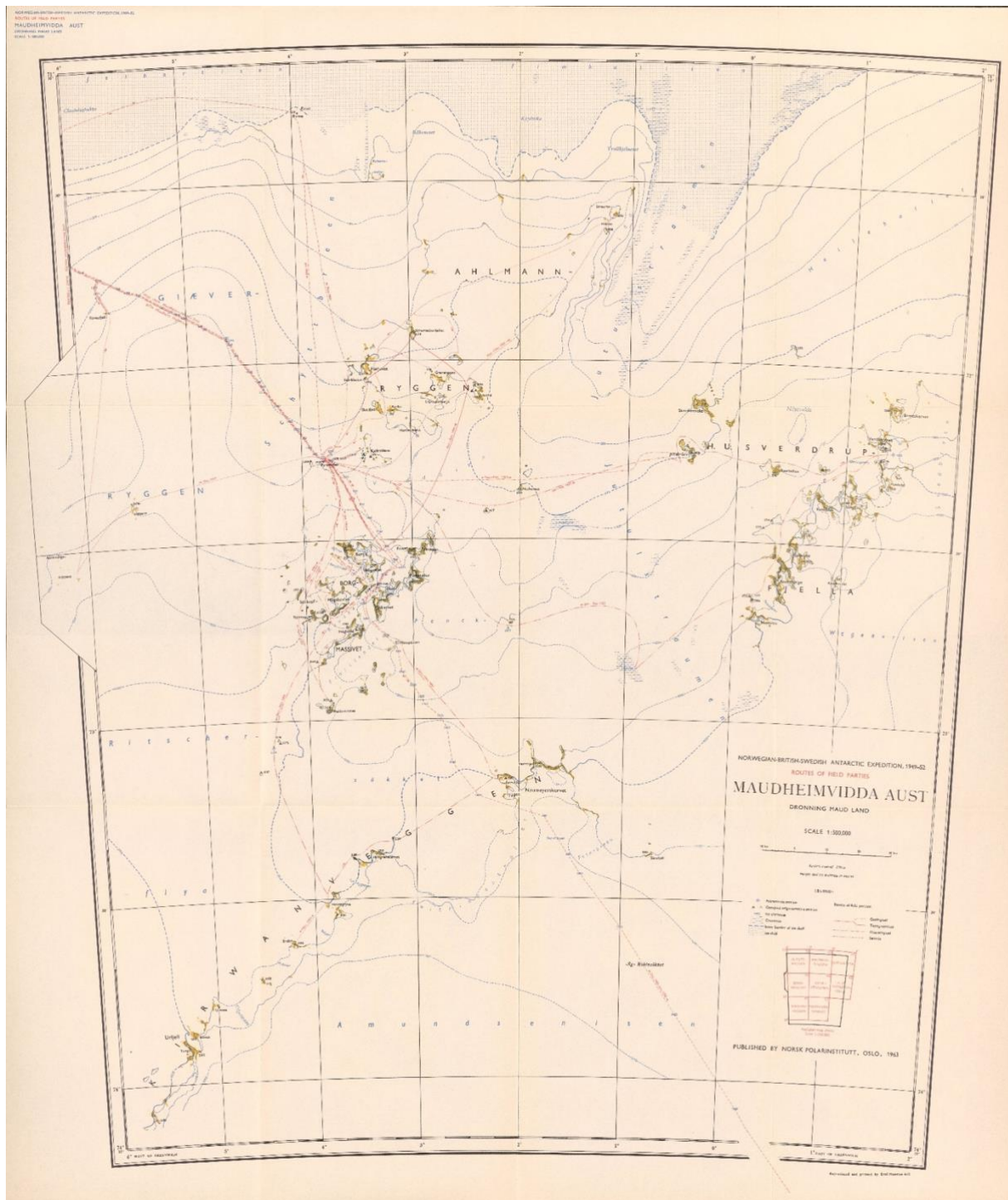
Abbreviations and Glossary

NBSX	Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition
AT	Antarctic Treaty
DML	Dronning Maud Land / Queen Maud Land
IGY	International Geophysical Year
NGS	Norwegian Geographical Society
NPI	Norwegian Polar Institute
NSIU	Norges Svalbard- og Ishavsundersøkelser
RGS	Royal Geographical Society
SATø	Statsarkivet i Tromsø / The regional state archive in Tromsø
SCAR	Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research
SPRI	Scott Polar Research Institute
SSAG	Swedish Society for Geography and Anthropology / Svenska Sällskapet för Antropologi och Geografi
UN	United Nations

Maps



Map 1 Routes of the field parties ©Anna Schytt ^a



Map 3 Routes of field parties © Norsk Polarinstitut^c
<https://data.npolar.no/map/archive/a0492403-14e0-56a5-8f12-86424c643938>

- ^a Anna Schytt, *Med känsla för is : om polarforskaren Valter Schytt och gåtorna hans Antarktisexpedition bidrog till att lösa* (Fri tanke, 2018)
- ^b Norsk Polarinstitut, "Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, 1949-52, Scientific results, Vol. V/VI/VI Part 2," (Oslo: Norsk Polarinstitut, 1958)
- ^c Norsk Polarinstitut, "Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, 1949-52, Scientific results, Vol. V/VI/VI Part 2," (Oslo: Norsk Polarinstitut, 1958)

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition (abbreviated NBSAE or NBSX) was an expedition set for the Norwegian claimed sector, Dronning Maud Land, in Antarctica in the years 1949 to 1952. The expedition was planned for three years, with several delays, and was not ready until 1949. In November 1949 the vessel *Norsel* and its crew left Norway and headed south to the Antarctic. On February 11th 1950, the “Maudheim” wintering base was established on the Quar ice shelf at 71° 02,6' S. – 10° 55,5' W. Because of this, the expedition is also referred to as the *Maudheim expedition*.

The expedition was conceived by the Swedish geologist Hans Wilhelmsson Ahlmann. After years of studying glaciers in the northern hemisphere, he wanted to investigate whether climatic fluctuations, similar to those he had observed in the Arctic, were also occurring in the Antarctic. His idea eventually resulted in a cooperative expedition between Norway, Sweden and Britain. Each nation was in charge of its respective science discipline: Norway was mainly responsible for meteorology and topographical surveys; Britain for geology; and Sweden for glaciology.¹ Botanical and oceanographical research was undertaken jointly.² For Norway this was the first opportunity to show what the newly established Norwegian Polar Institute (March 1948) could accomplish, and at the same time, strengthen national claims and economic interests.³ With the Norwegian Polar Institute, under the leadership of Harald Ulrik Sverdrup, as the main organiser, the expedition plans excelled. In cooperation with the other participating nations' Antarctic committees the scientific programme and dispatch-related issues were resolved. The personnel on the expedition hailed from Norway, Sweden and the British Commonwealth (United Kingdom, Canada, Australia) and were led by the Norwegian John Giæver.⁴ During the two years of wintering, a large number of journeys and expeditions were undertaken resulting in a vast amount of data being obtained. The geological, glaciological, meteorological and topographical surveys greatly improved the understanding of the role of the Antarctic ice-sheet on regulating the world's climate and the world sea levels.⁵

¹ Claude Cowan, "Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, 1949-1952." 25.04.2019. Scott Polar Research Institute, <https://www.spri.cam.ac.uk/resources/expeditions/nbsx/>

² Statsarkivet i Tromsø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199, 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.)

³ Knut Einar Eriksen et al., *Kald krig og internasjonalisering, 1949-1965*, vol. B. 5 (Oslo: Universitetsforl., 1997): 380

⁴ A full list of crew members can be found in Appendix I

⁵ Robert Marc Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store" in *Norsk polarhistorie: 2: Vitenskapene*, ed. Einar-Arne Drivenes, et al. (Oslo: Gyldendal, 2004): 349-353

The expedition is often described as the first explicitly multinational expedition to the Antarctic and as a predecessor and role model for later expeditions to the Antarctic and Arctic. The logistical groundwork and scientific activities/programme – and their results –, provided valuable knowledge for later use. The international cooperation aspect is also highlighted as a model, and a reason for its success. The perceived view is that the Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition (from now NBSX) was an apolitical venture with international cooperation of specialised scientific importance. Before and during the expedition it was highlighted that the expedition did not have any political aims, but that furthering science and cooperation were its sole mission. Later published works have looked further into additional motives and the discrepancy in the perceived and the actual motives of the expedition. This master thesis will follow in this tradition and be a contribution to give a more nuanced picture of the motives present at the NBSX.

1.1 Research questions and narrowing

The thesis' main research objective is to study the Norwegian-British-Swedish Expedition (NBSX) and map the motives present

- at the realisation of the expedition,
- during the expedition,
- after the return of the expedition, and
- to provide a careful analysis of the changes in motives during and in between these three phases.

The hypothesis is that the scientific motives were the driving forces in the realisation of the expedition, but that the large, and unrealised economic potential of Antarctica resulted in the presence of political interests. The escalation of the geopolitical situation in the Arctic and Antarctic forced politically and militarily motivated actions from all three participating countries in securing territorial interests.

But during and after the expedition the political interest was waning, and the high costs of the operation did not make up for the potential gain from the scientific results, presence or the cooperation between the countries.

The expedition was three-national. Thus, an analysis dealing with all three nations would be of great interest. Considering the task at hand I have chosen to narrow the scope of my thesis to

focus on the Norwegian perspective. The expedition was under Norwegian leadership and managed by the Norwegian Polar Institute (NPI), and by using the sources from the NPI archives it will bring insight to Norwegian polar politics at the formation of the newly founded NPI in combination with previous research on the topic.

1.2 Sources

When answering my research question, I will draw upon literature and sources sorted into the following three categories:

- Articles and minutes/correspondence about the expedition written by expedition members or involved committee members, and articles published for public interest, official statements, and news articles
- Personal diaries, books and personal statements
- Articles and literature that analyse the expedition in retrospect

One of the challenges of the source material is the location of the archives in which it is stored as well as the state of digitalisation and its availability. The expedition archives are located in the three participating countries, Norway, Sweden and United Kingdom. Although the main communication and correspondence were in English, part of the material is written in Norwegian and Swedish, creating a linguistic barrier for the non-Nordic reader.

Most of the primary sources used are located in Norway and are collected from the archive at the regional state archive in Tromsø (Statsarkivet i Tromsø - SATØ) which houses the old archives from the Norwegian Polar Institute (NPI) and Norges Svalbard- og Ishavsundersøkelser (NSIU). With the NPI (and NSIU) being involved in the management and leadership of the expedition, the main correspondence (including the internal Norwegian communication) between the three countries is stored here.

The Norwegian Polar Institute (NPI) holds the published scientific records from the expedition along with the expedition diaries and messaging books, several of the personal diaries and an extensive newspaper archive regarding polar affairs in its library. These sources give valuable insights into the everyday life at the base and the personal matters of the involved participants. Moreover, the newspaper articles show the perception of the expedition and how this interest is reflected nationally.

1.3 Previous research

Generally, this thesis will draw upon the work of others, whenever the political situation and the scientific climate during the conception of the expedition and the following period is portrayed. Recent works that deal with the expedition itself show that there is an interest in writing about the expedition, and that there are still elements around this topic not fully explored yet. This thesis and its approach will therefore contribute to elaborate on the driving motives of the expedition.

Susan Barr has written the most thorough analysis of Norway as a polar nation seen through the history of the Norwegian Polar institute in *Norway - a consistent polar nation?*. Barr gives an extensive historiography of the NPI and its predecessors, looking at the early expeditions and explorations under *De Norske Statsunderstøttede Spitsbergenekspedisjoner* (The Norwegian State-Supported Spitsbergen Expeditions) and further to the *Norges Svalbard- og Ishavsundersøkelser's* (NSIU) expeditions and organising in Svalbard. Describing the reorganisation of the NSIU and establishment of the NPI and the relocation of the institute to Tromsø. Although she only briefly covers the NBSX itself, Barr offers great insights into the political and scientific climate of Norway's polar research milieu during the conception of the expedition, giving a detailed account of the issues of state support for the expedition, how this relationship changed alongside changes in the scientific agenda, as well as the fluctuations in geographic focus on which of the poles to operate in. She furthermore discusses how Norwegian polar interests and politics have progressed, both in the Arctic and the Antarctic, due to global impact and personal impact by the likes of Hans Wilhelmsson Ahlmann, Adolf Hoel, Anders Orvin, Harald Ulrik Sverdrup, and Tore Gjelsvik.⁶

In *Norsk Polarhistorie* **Robert Marc Friedman** discusses the organisation of the new Norwegian Polar institute and how it was slated to become a prominent institute taking a leading role in European polar research as was necessary because of increased focus and activity in the Arctic and the Antarctic and its strategic roles in security and defence. Despite these plans, the NPI continued to suffer from understaffing and scarce resources. Here Friedman gives the first long elaboration around the political connotations of the NBSX and the aftermath. A topic that

⁶ Susan Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute* (Oslo: The Fram Museum, 2010): 31

has been understated when reviewing the expedition. He also clarifies several aspects of the Norwegian participation in the NBSX.⁷

The most extensive works written on the expedition and the period running up to it is found in **Peder Roberts'** dissertation *A frozen field of dreams: science, strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British empire, 1912-1952* and in his book *The European Antarctic: Science and Strategy in Scandinavia and the British Empire*.⁸ Roberts shows the different Antarctic relations and operations of Norway, Sweden and Britain, and how they merged in the NBSX. When discussing their historical background regarding the continent, he displays the diverging paths undertaken to seek leadership in the Antarctic and highlights the role of science in the colonialization.

Roberts devotes a whole chapter to the NBSX where he thoroughly examines the organisation of the NBSX and discusses Hans Wilhelmsson Ahlmann's hand in the making of, both, the expedition and the new Norwegian Polar Institute. He furthermore elaborates on how the organisers of the NBSX emphasised its scientific programme and the international cooperation through science. For him, the expedition becomes an example of the kind of specialised and professionalised science that was prevalent in this period. Roberts shows that the expedition's legacy is shaped and created not only by the deeds and scientific results, but also by how it is reviewed and written about.⁹

In **Lisbeth Lewander's** article she discusses the possible and additional political motives behind the Swedish (and, to a lesser degree the Norwegian and British) participation in the NBSX. She problematises the view, that apolitical, international cooperation, the scientific programme, and the expedition's outcome are still perceived as the primary legacy of the expedition. Instead, she highlights the political and military contexts of the expedition, such as foreign policy, security issues, and underlying sovereignty.¹⁰

⁷ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store"

⁸ Peder Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952* (Stanford, 2010), A dissertation submitted to the Department of History and the Committee on graduate studies of Stanford University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy; Peder Roberts, *The European Antarctic: Science and Strategy in Scandinavia and the British Empire* (New York, US: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011)

⁹ Roberts, *The European Antarctic: Science and Strategy in Scandinavia and the British Empire*: 117, 128

¹⁰ Lisbeth Lewander, *The Norwegian-British-Swedish Expedition (NBSX) to Antarctica 1949-52; science and security. Proceedings Of The 1st Scar Workshop On The History Of Antarctic Research*, ed. Cornelia Lüdecke, vol. 560, *Berichte Zur Polar- Und Meeresforschung* (Bremerhaven: Alfred Wegener Institut Für Polarforschung, 2007): 123-141; Lisbeth Lewander, "Den norsk-brittisk-svenska expeditionens okända sidor

Sverker Sörlin has written about Hans Wilhelmsson Ahlmann's personal life and struggles and how they affected his scientific career. Sörlin show how Ahlmann, throughout his career, devoted himself to science and diplomacy as a bridgebuilder between nations in a time where rivalry and conflict were prominent. Ahlmann's significant take on the sciences with a theoretical and methodical approach brought a specialization of science to the field. This gives valuable insight into the man whose vision and hard work resulted in the NBSX, and how he used his diplomatic skills and his hand in the making of the NPI.

Viewing the articles of **Hans Wilhelmson Ahlmann** on the plans and scientific programme of the NBSX gives insight into the ideas that were the basis for the expedition, and show the motives present and which were promoted.

The official account from the NBSX, *The White Desert: The Official Account of the Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition*¹¹, written by **John Gæver** and with contributions by Gordon de Q. Robin, E.F. Roots and Valter Schytt to the field trips and science chapters, tells the story of the expedition with the hindsight of sale to the public. Depicting the expedition from the start to the every-day-life on the ice.

Later accounts from participants like **Gösta H. Liljequist** where he writes about the NBSX in both *Sweden and Antarctica* and in *High latitudes: a history of Swedish polar travels and research*¹² and **Charles Swithinbank** in his story 50 years after the expedition in *Foothold on Antarctica: the first international expedition (1949-1952): through the eyes of its youngest member* one can make the connection with the legacy that follows the expedition to this day.

1949-1952," in *Ymer, Polarår*, ed. Gunhild Rosqvist and Sverker Sörlin (Stockholm: Svenska sällskapet för antropologi och geografi, 2009)

¹¹ John Schjelderup Gæver, *Maudheim : to år i Antarktis: den norsk-britisk-svenske vitenskapelige ekspedisjon til Antarktis 1949-1952* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1952); John Schjelderup Gæver, *The white desert: the official account of the Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic expedition* (New York: E.P.Dutton & Co., 1955)

¹² Gösta H. Liljequist and The Swedish Research Secretariat, *High Latitudes: A History of Swedish Polar Travels and Research* (Stockholm: The Swedish Polar Research Secretariat in collaboration with Streiffert, 1993): 499

1.4 Method and theory

By analysing the available sources and studying the actions and processes involved in the planning, the execution and the aftermath of the expedition, this thesis will reconstruct its motives throughout its existence.

The source material used for this thesis are the three categories laid out in part 1.2 and repeated below:

- Articles and minutes/correspondence about the expedition written by expedition members or involved committee members, and articles published for public interest, official statements, and news articles
- Personal diaries, books and personal statements
- Articles and literature that analyse the expedition in retrospect

In the mapping of motives and their analysis, I will be using Ingemar Bohlin and Aant Elzinga's methodological approach for studying polar research and describing the interests to invest in polar research. Bohlin & Elzinga marks the NBSX as the start of modern Antarctic research¹³ and by applying his "motive structure" to the expedition, I will make a *motivational profile* of the NBSX to map the different motives present.

Bohlin & Elzinga uses the concept of *motive* to distinguish between the practical use and the symbolic value of science to show the close link between science and politics in polar research and how the funding of science differentiates two different types of value derived from scientific endeavours;¹⁴

1. The *practical value* of science –
How science can input/supply military, economic or other knowledge
2. The *symbolic value* of science –
The value of science when recognised by others, which raises the esteem with which the institution is held in/ national esteem

¹³ Whereas the IGY 1957-58 marks the start of modern polar research in the Arctic.

¹⁴ Ingemar Bohlin, *Om polarforskning*, vol. 167, Rapport (Göteborg: Institutionen för vetenskapsteori, Göteborgs universitet, 1991): 64; Ingrid Schild, "The Politics of International Collaboration in Polar Research," (University of Sussex, 1996): 40f

He establishes how these types of value are linked to the parameters for his "motive structure". Identified by six institutional motives; which are the driving forces of Arctic and Antarctic research; classified as one scientific "internalist" motive and five non-scientific "externalist" motives:¹⁵

1. Basic Research Motives –

Driven by human curiosity, a research community, and /or an advantageous research area.

2. Political Motives –

Using science to mark national presence: Successful science programmes give international prestige and strengthen sovereignty claims.

3. Economic Motives –

A) Exploitation of natural resources such as marine and potential mineral resources

B) Technological development: new equipment and science for exploitation of 3A

4. Military Motives –

Testing and developing new technologies and "freeze" training of personnel in "neutral" area

5. Jurisdictional/Administrative Motives –

Exercising jurisdictional functions demands a continuously updated knowledge base.

6. Environmental Motive –

Probing and monitoring for global changes in climate, and environmental protection.

The Basic Research motive is "internalist"; i.e. it is driven by a group distanced from, and to a large extent not affected by, political, commercial, military and other "externalist" pressure. The non-scientific motives (Political, Economic, Military, Jurisdictional and Environmental) are "externalist", i.e. they are grounded in a quest for national prestige, economic gain, or power.¹⁶ All motives can act as driving forces in polar science, but they may vary in intensity. The motives are closely connected, and some may not appear without the other. The Political motive, for example, will only appear when other motives (e.g. the Economic and Basic motives) are already present, as an interaction with the other motives. The Environmental motive, on the other hand, is – at least in the short term – a contrast to the Economical motive.

¹⁵ Aant Elzinga, *Changing Trends in Antarctic Research*, vol. 3, Environment & Assessment (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1993): 7-27, Table on page 9; Bohlin, *Om polarforskning*, 167: 1-15

¹⁶ Aant Elzinga and Ingemar Bohlin, "The Politics of Science in Polar Regions," *Ambio* 18, no. 1 (1989): 71

Yet, both motives are similar in seeking and utilizing scientific knowledge (albeit to different ends).

What is more prominent in the Antarctic as opposed to Arctic polar research in the post-war era is the trade-off between science and politics, where one is serving the interest of the other. With a much higher degree of autonomy in the Antarctic compared to the Arctic.¹⁷ Science as an activity or presence, not for its scientific value, is supported by political institutions. Therefore, in executing their research, scientists become political actors performing a political and national task by advancing national interests. The symbolic value lies in the international recognition of science and makes it a buffer to the external pressure.¹⁸ This is favourable for scientists: only when politicians don't influence *what type* of science is carried out, science—with an internalist motive—influences politics.¹⁹

Research of high-quality results in the highest symbolic value as it elicits credibility from other states. Hence political motives are applied to and facilitated by the Basic Research motive. This credibility has given Basic research a high focus. Science, as a symbolic instrument, is *the* mean to promote national interests in the Antarctic. This stands in stark contrast to the Arctic where science is used as practical effect or function. On the other hand, if the symbolic value of science is *forced* into a political frame, it will lose its political value. The symbolic value is only valuable when it is recognised and approved by others.²⁰

Therefore, it is exactly its internalist nature that enables science to influence politics. This is also where its vulnerability lies; when scientific impacts fail to put enough pressure on the political agendas, causing fluctuations in the development of science.²¹

Politically initiated expeditions to Antarctica have been plentiful.²² Often, political conditions put strong geographical limits to areas in which scientific research was carried out, but not on the type of research itself. Although politically initiated expeditions often build the science around the political and national motives to justify their interests, in contrast to research-initiated expeditions where science lays the framework and the logistics of solving the scientific "problem" of interest, both are therefore inherently more similar than it might first appear.

¹⁷ Schild, "The Politics of International Collaboration in Polar Research," 43

¹⁸ Elzinga and Bohlin, "The Politics of Science in Polar Regions," (1989): 71-76

¹⁹ Uno Svedin and Britt Hägerhäll Aniansson, *Society and the Environment: A Swedish Research Perspective*, (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands: Imprint: Springer, 1992): 278

²⁰ Pierre Bourdieu and Annick Prieur, *Symbolisk makt: artikler i utvalg*, En Pax-bok (Oslo: Pax, 1996): 45

²¹ Schild, "The Politics of International Collaboration in Polar Research," 33f

²² Bohlin, *Om polarforskning*, 167: 88

Chapter 2: It all started with an idea

2.1 Historical retrospect

Because their inhospitably and inaccessibility made their exploration difficult, the areas around the Arctic and the Antarctic were mostly unknown until recent times. In the Arctic early discoveries from the 16th and 17th century had led to the revelation of fertile hunting grounds and mineral deposits. Later, the exploration of the areas was connected with the hunt for resources and desires to explain the world and gain knowledge as part of the development in nation-building. The sciences were the fundament of establishing sovereignty, and therefore tied to political and economic interests. In the late 19th century, there was a race for the expansion of the European states to secure their commercial interests in the Arctic. Cartography and naming previously unnamed territories became valuable political instruments in the quest for sovereignty. These tendencies continued into the 20th century (and are also prominent on the NBSX). Even the scientists themselves worked by a scheme of claiming the land, first economically and culturally and, lastly politically.²³ The polar sciences became important tools, both commercially and political, and thrived in this exploration period. In Norway, Adolf Hoel - the establisher and first leader of the NSIU - underlined the importance of science in his proposal from 1925 for the establishment of the NSIU.²⁴

Since the start of the 18th century, early explorers had set out to explore the polar regions in the southern hemisphere, but at the turn of the 20th century only a few areas around the great white continent were plotted on world maps. The area was regarded *terra nullius*, both politically and judicially. In 1895, Antarctic exploration was put in the spotlight at the International Geographical Congress meeting in London. With the technological advances, (improved vessels and engines, advances in hunting/fishing methods, improved meteorology and cartography), more expeditions were set for this area. Both privately funded expeditions, that were usually economically motivated and funded by seal hunters and whalers, and government financed exploration expeditions (science, political and economically motivated) existed. In the forthcoming decades, great advances in science and geography were made on the Antarctic continent and the commercial exploitation in the Southern Oceans rocketed.

²³ Einar-Arne Drivenes, "Ishavsimperialisme," in *Norsk polarhistorie: 2: Vitenskapene*, ed. Einar-Arne Drivenes, et al. (Oslo: Gyldendal, 2004): 199

²⁴ *Ibid.*: 203

Looking at the historical development in Antarctica, Odd Gunnar Skagestad draws a picture of three overlapping phases. These phases, along with their actors and motives are broadly reflected below.²⁵ The *exploratory phase (1890-1905)*; marked the onset of exploration and was dominated by the activities of sealers and whalers, scientific expeditions and exploratory expeditions. This was followed by a *nationalistic phase (1905-1949)*. Its starting point is marked by the end of the Norway's political union with Sweden. This phase is identified with the discovery of new areas and exploration, as well as, with the beginning of political engagement in the endeavour. While the phase was commenced by private commercial interest, governments showed political and national involvement in order to secure national interests, and further national prestige. The increase in whaling and the economic value it produced led to legal issues and issues of sovereignty. Great Britain was the first nation to claim a section of land in Antarctica in 1908; a start of an idea to include the whole Antarctic territory in the British Empire. Later, British claims were transferred to New Zealand and Australia. France made its own claim in 1924. Norway followed in 1927, 1931 and 1939. Thus, Antarctica had become "an additional site of European colonial rivalry".²⁶ The taxation on whaling had led to questions on sovereignty. With the annexations of land in the Antarctic, the economical motives were followed by a progression to secure military and scientific interests in the area. The third phase is described as the *international phase (1949 –1959)*. The NBSX marks the start of the transition from nationalist rivalry to international coexistence, characterised by international cooperation and scientific exploration. This phase peaked with the International Geophysical Year in 1957-58 and I choose to end it with the signing of the Antarctic Treaty in 1959. The period marked the modernisation of polar research, and a shift from the large resource harvesting towards environmentalism. Science and international cooperation in Antarctica became a part of protecting the continent from fluctuations in the political climate.²⁷

Norway, Britain and Sweden were all active in the early Antarctic exploration and had strong national traditions regarding polar exploration, which will be discussed in further detail below.

²⁵ Odd Gunnar Skagestad, *Norsk polarpolitikk : hovedtrekk og utviklingslinjer 1905-1974*, vol. 4, *New Territories in International Politics* (Oslo: Dreyer, 1975): 13ff; Schild, "The Politics of International Collaboration in Polar Research," : 8-12

²⁶ Tom Griffiths, *Slicing the Silence : Voyaging to Antarctica* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2007): 110

²⁷ Dag O. Hessen, "Klodens helse – sett fra polene," in *Norsk polarhistorie: 2: Vitenskapene*, ed. Einar-Arne Drivenes, et al. (Oslo: Gyldendal, 2004): 476

The fundament of the sustained Norwegian presence, and thus, Norwegian polar politics, in Antarctica was founded in the first of Skagestad's three phases.²⁸ Norwegian polar politics have arguably been characterised by a varying degree of consistency. Policies were often created *ad hoc* and case oriented, lacking institutionalised forethought and polar policy coherence.²⁹ An often-discussed example of this is the curious lack of Norwegian government involvement in issues regarding Antarctic continent sovereignty,³⁰ in the interwar years.³¹ This opened the arena for privately funded expeditions, often financially supported and encouraged by the whaling companies, to undertake scientific work.³² While several Norwegian expeditions had explored and mapped the areas around the mainland (in the Norvegia expeditions 1927-31), no official claim had been made since Norway had claimed Bouvet Island in 1927 and Peter I Island in 1929. While Hjalmar Riiser-Larsen and Lützow-Holm planted the Norwegian flag at Enderby Land and annexed the land on the Norvegia expedition of 1929-30³³, a statement from the Norwegian Prime minister Mowinckel in March 1935 later contradicted this claim and stated that the Norwegian Government had no intention to claim more land in Antarctica.³⁴ Although the Government had made an appeal to the British Government in 1934 to reveal its stand on a possible Norwegian claim in that sector of the continent, and received a positive reply.³⁵ When other interested nations made their entries³⁶ a demand for the Norwegian Government to act and secure national interests was made, both from political instances as the NSIU and commercial interests, underlining the economic importance of Norwegian whaling industry. When finally addressed in the Norwegian Government in 1939, matters urgently needed solving.³⁷ A German expedition *Schwabenland* was on its way to Antarctica, with the intention to annex the region that is today known as Dronning Maud Land.³⁸ The Norwegian government's reaction addressed other states³⁹, their activities and their potential threats upon

²⁸ Skagestad, *Norsk polarpolitikk : hovedtrekk og utviklingslinjer 1905-1974*, 4: 13ff

²⁹ Ibid.: 48-52; Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 168-170

³⁰ Norsk Polarinstitut, Klipparkiv fra Grustav Smedal: Bjarne Aagaard, Hjalmar Riiser-Larsen, et al.

³¹ Ibid.: 16/39

³² Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 134-137

³³ Smedal, Klipparkiv fra Grustav Smedal: 15/37

³⁴ Ibid.: 16/39 Aftenposten 132, March 13 1935

³⁵ Turi Widerøe, "Annekteringen av Dronning Maud Land." 18.04.2019. Norsk Polarinstitut <http://www.polarhistorie.no/artikler/2008/annekteringen%20av%20dronning%20maud%20land>

³⁶ Smedal, Klipparkiv fra Grustav Smedal: 15/37 and 16/38 Discussion on possible US claim by Byrd in newspapers from 1929 to 1931.

³⁷ Skagestad, *Norsk polarpolitikk : hovedtrekk og utviklingslinjer 1905-1974*, 4: 192

³⁸ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 27

³⁹ The US, Japan, USSR and Germany had plans of, or already sent expeditions to the Antarctic.

Norwegian whaling interests when the official claim of Dronning Maud Land was made on January the 14th in 1939. With the annexation of Dronning Maud Land, Norway recognised the Australian Antarctic Dependency and accepted a *modus vivendi* with the British. This marked the end of the long-lasting tension between the two countries regarding Antarctic polar politics and commercial interests.⁴⁰

Great Britain had up until the Second World War had hegemony in Antarctic polar politics.⁴¹ Through the British claim of the Falkland Islands Dependencies (FID) including South Georgia, where Britain had exercised *de facto* sovereignty since 1833, the British could effectuate a jurisdictional administration over the Antarctic whaling industry, as the shore stations were located there. By issuing concessions, they controlled which companies could establish stations, and by charging licence fees for whaling (including fees for Norwegian whaling vessels) in British territorial waters they enforced their jurisdictional powers. Both the jurisdictional, the economic and commercial motives in regulating the whaling industry were part of the reason for the formal annexation of the British Antarctic sector in 1908. In reality, this was rather an expansion of the FID to include the South Sandwich Islands and a sector of the Antarctic mainland.⁴²

The sensational endeavours of Shackleton and Scott had gained public interest for the Antarctic and their legacy brought national esteem. Their expeditions connected with Victorian and Edwardian British culture in showing drama, controversy and a quest for knowledge. Shackleton and Scott's scientific undertakings increased the perceived value of polar science and laid the foundation for the Scott Polar Institute (SPRI) which was established in 1920. Quickly, the SPRI became a meeting ground for polar scientists and an institution that started the professionalization of polar travel and specialization of polar men.⁴³ To increase control over British economy and the important natural resource industry – whaling – the British Colonial Office started the work on a state-financed whaling investigation programme in 1917. Whale oil was now of strategic value to the country, in the production of nitro-glycerine for the military and for oil in the margarine production. State interest was high, also in showing imperial authority within the FID.⁴⁴ Meteorological data collected for weather forecasts were

⁴⁰ Skagestad, *Norsk polarpolitikk : hovedtrekk og utviklingslinjer 1905-1974*, 4: 53

⁴¹ Odd Gunnar Skagestad, "Suverenitet, jurisdiksjon og samarbeid. Antarktistraktaten – forutsetninger og innhold," *Norsk statsvitenskapelig tidsskrift*, no. 03 (2009): 260-287

⁴² Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 24f

⁴³ *Ibid.*: 244

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*: 52-63

crucial to the whalers and contributed to the economic growth. With the Investigations, science therefore became an instrument of politics, and the economic and commercial interests a matter for policy-making, underlining British sovereignty in the Antarctic through this, rather than the previous expeditions in the spirit of discovery.⁴⁵

With the entry of pelagic whaling in the mid 1920's the hunt for whales was moved from land stations to the high seas. This threatened the existing concession and licence system, and British sovereignty in the area. There were suggestions of expanding the jurisdictional powers to include the high seas and remain control of the whaling industry. But this was difficult, as it could provoke an Argentinian reaction and there were ongoing discussions between Norway and Britain regarding the Exclusive Economical Zones (EEZ) in the Arctic.⁴⁶ In addition, Britain favoured the sector principle which Norway rejected due to their loss of Greenland to Denmark to the same principle.⁴⁷ The negotiations between Britain and Norway on the concessions both for the commercial value and for sovereign authority in the area were a delicate matter. With the rise in pelagic whaling, territorial control remained an important task. The Imperial Conference in 1926 extended the British claims in Antarctica for "their possible utilization for further developing exploration and scientific research".⁴⁸ The focus was on exploration and scientific research and downplayed commercial interests. The focus was. Furthermore, placed on scientific *activity*, not so much on its results, to justify the underlying territorial motive. With the entry of other nations' (e.g. Germany and Japan) interest in the region, whaling regulation was put on the international agenda in the 1930's, and rational management became the dominant mantra within British Antarctic policy. Science and research were utilized in the regulation of whaling and became of political significance in the struggle for keeping sovereignty.⁴⁹ The decline in whaling in late 1930's, due to low oil prices, led to the continuing drop in Antarctic interest, both politically and publicly. The era of sensational feats was over, and there was a low public interest in Antarctic travel. There was a decrease in British Antarctic activity in the years leading up to the war. With its onset, the British reign in Antarctica ended.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Ibid.: 70-74

⁴⁶ Ibid.: 86

⁴⁷ Drivenes, "Ishavsimperialisme,": 235-246; Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 102

⁴⁸ "Summary of Proceedings", (paper presented after the Imperial Conference, London, 1926): 21

⁴⁹ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 15, 100-108, 121

⁵⁰ Ibid.: 351

Sweden's polar interests and exploration were mainly focused in the Arctic, with Gerard De Greer, Lovén, Torell and Nordenskiöld. The Antarctic interest started with Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld's plans for an Antarctic expedition in 1889. Although the envisioned exploration was not realised, the growing polar interest eventually brought Otto Nordenskiöld to lead a different scientific expedition to the Antarctic Peninsula (1901-04), exploring large parts of Graham Land. While the expedition was both successful and scientifically rewarding, almost another 50 years would pass until the next Swedish involvement in an Antarctic expedition. Though there were discussions of an Anglo-Swedish expedition to the Antarctic in 1912-14, which would have resulted in the first explicit international expedition to the continent, the idea never materialised into more than great plans and many meetings.⁵¹ According to the Swedish science historian Urban Wråkberg, this drop in Swedish polar exploration is also due to the break-up of the Swedish-Norwegian union in 1905 in which Sweden lost its geographical Arctic connection to the newly independent Norwegian state.⁵² In contrast to Norway and Great Britain, the Swedish polar scientists mainly hailed from university institutions. Due to a lack of funding for science and expeditions from a national hold, they had to rely on private funding and foundations, such as the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation, which impeded their exploratory fervour.

During and just after the Second World War, the Antarctic and the Southern Oceans region became an arena for military warfare and strategy.⁵³ With the German entry in the pursuit of the natural resources in the Southern Oceans and the Antarctic the situation tightened. With the possibility of German submarines attacking allied fleets in the Atlantic and the Pacific Ocean, the United States turned their attention south. After the war, they launched several military operations to the continent.⁵⁴ In the German presence that took place in the Southern Oceans the Norwegians were particularly affected when the Germans attacked whaling ships and stations to get a hold of the whale oil and resources.⁵⁵

In an escalation of political instability regarding the situation of Antarctica, Britain, Argentina, and Chile disputed each other's claims on the area around the Antarctic Peninsula. All three states sent military expeditions to the continent in the period 1943-48. Britain sent

⁵¹ Ibid.: 14-15

⁵² Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 246

⁵³ Skagestad, *Norsk polarpolitikk : hovedtrekk og utviklingslinjer 1905-1974*, 4: 80

⁵⁴ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 351

⁵⁵ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 29

secret military expeditions, from 1943 to 1946, in the Operation Tabarin—later continued by the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey⁵⁶ (FIDS)—with the aim to strengthen British claims. The expeditions were launched under the pretence of patrolling as a countermeasure to German activity in the area. In 1942⁵⁷ and 1943⁵⁸, Argentina sent expeditions to Deception Island to protest the British presence and restore Argentine claims. On its part, Chile sent an expedition to enforce its territorial claims against British challenges into the Antarctic region in 1947 to 1948. Finally, Argentina and Chile signed an agreement on legal protection and mutual defence of their territorial rights in Antarctica in 1948 further protecting and consolidating their claims against the UK.⁵⁹

After the Second World War, the United States showed their powers in the Antarctic by sending the largest military expedition in history (Operation High Jump) to the continent in 1946. The fraught political situation in the Arctic had provoked the need for more knowledge on adapting technology and men to cold climate warfare, and the Antarctic was a less tense area for these trials.⁶⁰ Already in 1939, as a response to the Norwegian claim of Dronning Maud Land, the US had stated that they did not recognise any of the territorial claims by other nations up to this point and reserved all rights to the area on behalf of American citizens.⁶¹ And already in 1947 the US launched their next military training expedition, Operation Windmill.

Another dimension was the potential mineral resources in Antarctica, little was known about the distribution or extent of gold, silver, oil and coal, and the desirable uranium. Coal had been found on the peninsula, but not to an extent that would be of commercial and economic value. Uranium, a coveted resource for some countries, with large military and commercial interest at the time, fell into the media's concern, as the lack of information fuelled the media's interests and became a reoccurring topic. Neither Norway, nor Sweden had any state interest in exploiting it for the production of weapons whilst, in post-war Britain, the foreign policy was more focused in an aim to seek control of a natural resource pool to withstand potential outer threats, and in the case of Antarctica – keeping a potentially valuable corner of the empire or at least be a part of the controlling organ in the consideration of internationalization. Although the

⁵⁶ Changed to the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) in 1962

⁵⁷ Under the command of the captain Alberto J. Oddera

⁵⁸ The Argentine vessel ARA 1° de Mayo

⁵⁹ Wikipedia, "Chilean Antarctic Territory." 24.04.2019.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chilean_Antarctic_Territory#Bases,_stations,_shelters_and_settlements

⁶⁰ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 351

⁶¹ Skagestad, *Norsk polarpolitikk : hovedtrekk og utviklingslinjer 1905-1974*, 4: 52f

search for uranium itself was politically more a potential encouragement than a necessity for action.⁶²

During this post-war era, there was a rising interest in issues concerning Antarctica due to the growing friction, its resources – marine and potential mineral resources – and questions of sovereignty. The onset of the Cold War caused the Antarctic situation to escalate to an arena of security concern. Various ideas of international govern and initiatives for the equal utilization of the Antarctic had been fruitlessly put forward since 1939. Government proposals in resolving the sovereign matters brought the newly established United Nations, and the possibility of governing under the UN, onto the scene. Other organisations (e.g. the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the Commission to Study the Organization of the Peace) and individuals (e.g. Member of the British parliament Lord Edward Shackleton, President of the American Polar Society Dr. Dana Coman) also contributed in the discussion regarding the future govern of the Antarctic continent.⁶³ The issue of Antarctic govern raised several discussions in the US, set off by the intensified territorial dispute between their allies Britain, Argentina and Chile, and the increasing Soviet interest in the continent accompanied by a proposal of a new polar year from the Royal Society in South Africa. These political concerns led to a revision of US Antarctic policy and produced discussions about internationalism.⁶⁴ In 1948, the US put forward a suggestion of condominium govern under the United Nations (the Draft Agreement on Antarctica) with joint sovereignty between the eight engaged countries: the United States and the claimants: the United Kingdom, New Zealand, France, Australia, Norway⁶⁵, Chile and Argentina. This was intended to exclude the involvement of other nations and prevent "external interference" (from the USSR and its "satellite states") in Antarctic matters.⁶⁶ The matter was a paramount objective in both US and British interest. The proposal was met with scepticism and rejection from all claimants. Opposition and lack of approval also arrived from states not consulted (e.g. South Africa, Belgium, the USSR). Norway rejected the condominium and suggested working through existing relevant international bodies, with the forthcoming NBSX as an example. Britain - eager to find any solution that would keep the USSR out of the Antarctic - supported the idea of the NBSX as it was perceived as a symbol of

⁶² Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 326-331

⁶³ Marie Jacobsson, "Building the International Legal Framework for Antarctica," in *Science diplomacy: Antarctica, science, and the governance of international spaces*, ed. Paul Arthur Berkman and Institution Smithsonian (Washington, D.C: Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press, 2011)

⁶⁴ Rip Bulkeley, "The Political Origins of the Antarctic Treaty," *Polar Record* 46, no. 1 (2010): 9f

⁶⁵ Eriksen et al., *Kald krig og internasjonalisering, 1949-1965*, B. 5: 377-78 "Norway will not, by national and political reasons, give away its sovereignty over what is Norwegian territory."

⁶⁶ Skagestad, *Norsk polarpolitikk : hovedtrekk og utviklingslinjer 1905-1974*, 4: 52f

openness Britain could use to remain a closed group of stakeholders. While Norway viewed it as international cooperation for scientific knowledge, with Ahlmann seeking both the US and USSR for possible scientific cooperation.⁶⁷

In this post-war era all of the institutional motives Bohlin & Elzinga presents are occurring. The Basic research motive through the exploration in seeking knowledge of the area and its marine resources. Heavily reliant on, and in parts motivated by, the Economic motive due to whaling and the prospects of new marine and mineral resources. And when commercial interests forced political involvement when the competition for hunting grounds threatened the industry, the Political motive utilised the Basic research motive to assert the Jurisdictional motive through territorial claims and disputes. In the disputes over territorial claims the Military motive was omnipresent to substantiate the Jurisdictional motive. Lastly the Environmental motive through the scientific work undertaken for the negotiation of preservation of whales.

This fraught political climate formed the background on which the NBSX was conceived and into which it was planned.

2.2 Ahlmann – the master mind

Hans Jakob Konrad Wilhelmsson Ahlmann (1889-1974) was a Swedish geographer and, from 1929 onward, a professor at Stockholms högskola⁶⁸. Ahlmann had a strong interest in glaciology and was an active field worker. Through his marriage to Erica (Lillemor) Harloff, he became a part of the wealthy Bergen-family, which had connections to the local scientific elite and politicians.⁶⁹

During his field trips to study the glaciers in Norway in the 1920s, he was accompanied by Halvard Lange, who later became Foreign Minister⁷⁰ in Norway. In 1931, Ahlmann initiated the first joint Swedish-Norwegian expedition to Svalbard's Nordaustlandet and, in 1934, he conceived an expedition to Vest-Spitsbergen in collaboration with Harald Ulrik Sverdrup. Later expeditions in Iceland in 1936, in Greenland in 1939-40, and at Mount Kebnekaise in 1946 supported his results on the fluctuation of glaciers and the occurring retreat of the glaciers in

⁶⁷ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 318f

⁶⁸ Stockholm University from 1960

⁶⁹ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 334

⁷⁰ Halvard Lange was Foreign Minister from 1946-65, with a short break during Lyng's Cabinet in 1963.

the Arctic hemisphere. These findings led him to try and seek the causes and effects for this "climate improvement"⁷¹—as he described it from a Northerners point of view—although he underlined the possible negative effects elsewhere on earth.⁷²

During the war, Ahlmann proceeded to plan his polar fieldwork. And in March 1943 Ahlmann first proposed his plans of an Arctic expedition to J. M. Wordie, president of the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) in London. A suggested expedition set for the "European sector" of the Arctic, with cooperation between Britain and the Nordic countries (including Denmark and Iceland, not just Sweden and Norway). This idea was also mentioned to Olaf Devik in the Norwegian government (exiled in London). This exclusive arrangement of cooperation appealed both the Norwegians and the Brits but failed to elicit a positive result.⁷³

After obtaining maps and aerial photographs⁷⁴ of mountaintops in Dronning Maud Land taken by the Germans during the Schwabenland expedition in 1939, Ahlmann revised his plans in 1944, this time it was set to the Antarctic, with the Wohlthat massif in Dronning Maud Land as the base for the expedition.⁷⁵ An expedition to Antarctica would extend his glaciological work from the Arctic into the southern hemisphere. He originally planned it to Graham Land on the Antarctic Peninsula, as a continuation of Otto Nordenskjöld's prior expedition in 1901-04. Whereas Nordenskjöld's aborted plans for a new international cooperative in 1914, a new expedition was now set.⁷⁶ With this move, Ahlmann sought to continue the Swedish polar tradition. In addition, he expected to attract and convince British collaboration, as the country was in territorial dispute with Argentina and Chile in this region.⁷⁷

When presenting his revised plans to the Royal Geographical Society, in September 1945, it accepted his plan for collaboration. The photos of the snow free mountains with interspersed glacier tongues showed the area to be an ideal territory for geological and glacial science.⁷⁸ With the conviction that "to determine whether the contemporary climate changes are of

⁷¹ Ahlmann talks of "klimatförbättring" as the positive in shorter winters and a longer growing period in the Scandinavian areas.

⁷² Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 334

⁷³ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 284-286

⁷⁴ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Original photos at Statsarkivet i Tromsø; Db0195 10B/4 Antarktis (fly og luftkartlegging); Db0197 10B/13 Antarktis (Svenska Antarktiska Kommitten)

⁷⁵ Cornelia Lüdecke and C. P Summerhayes, *The Third Reich in Antarctica: the German Antarctic expedition 1938-39* (Norwich: Erskine Press, Huntingdon: Bluntisham Books, 2012): 118

⁷⁶ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 316

⁷⁷ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 334

⁷⁸ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0194/12 10B/1 (Antarktisekspedisjonene - Industridept: planlegging, budsjett mv.)

regional or universal character, it is of the utmost importance to study the glaciers in Antarctica”⁷⁹, Ahlmann turned to Norway as a potential partner in collaboration in 1945.⁸⁰

Ahlmann was also meddling in other affairs of Norwegian and Swedish polar politics. After his return from Moscow in July 1945, where he had attended the 220th jubilee of the Russian Academy of Science in late June, Ahlmann continued where he'd left off, now even more dedicated in securing Norwegian and Swedish polar interests. With growing Soviet initiative on polar research and exploration, Ahlmann urged the need for a Swedish and Norwegian involvement on Arctic and Antarctic science.⁸¹ Ahlmann's plan for Swedish polar research included Norway as a collaborator. He called the Soviet threat to Norwegian attention and argued for a strengthening of Norwegian polar activity, referring to its territorial interests. He agitated both privately and publicly to reinvest in the NSIU, a situation already put forward by Adolf Hoel before and during the war. In August 1945 Ahlmann held a meeting in Oslo with his old colleagues Birger Bergersen (professor in anatomy, politician and chair of the Whaling Association), Olaf Holtedahl (professor in geology at UiO) and Olaf Devik (geophysicist and expedition chief in the Ecclesiastical and Education Ministry) which formed a committee to work on the plans on the future of the NSIU.⁸² Ahlmann also met with Prime minister Einar Gerhardsen, who seemed very confused regarding Ahlmann's questions and referred him to Foreign minister Trygve Lie. Ahlmann met up with Lie at his house and discussed the necessity of an influential Norwegian polar institute to withstand the forthcoming threats. Lie was well aware of the tense situation regarding Svalbard and the Soviet Union after his own visit to Moskva in 1944 and saw the need for a strong Polar institute to assist the Norwegian government.⁸³ Ahlmann continued his travels and met with the RGS in London in September 1945 to present his Antarctic plans (where he received a positive reply as mentioned earlier). During his visit he learnt of the British discontent of the increasing US and Soviet activity in the Arctic and the escalating tension. Realising the upcoming threat, his fear was that the Nordic countries became side-lined in the Arctic.⁸⁴ When he returned to Oslo in December, he was

⁷⁹ Ibid.: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktisk (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.) “For å avgjøre om den nutidige klimaforandring er av regional eller universal karakter, er det av største betydning å få undersøkt breene i Antarktis”

⁸⁰ Giæver, *The white desert: the official account of the Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic expedition*: 11

⁸¹ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 336

⁸² Ibid.: 337

⁸³ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 168f, 217, 247f; Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 337-339

⁸⁴ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 339; Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 287; Scott Polar Research Institute and

briefed by Bergersen, Høltedahl and Devik of the slow processing in the Norwegian Government. Time was of an essence and Ahlmann reached out to top politicians and bureaucrats to expedite matters. He met with Hilmar Reksten (chairman of Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani) who promised to push forward the case and Lars Evensen (Ministry of Commerce) who immediately recognised the need to act.⁸⁵ They had several meetings and agreed that Reksten would comprise a report to underline the need for a new administrative organ in charge of both Arctic, and Antarctic interests, with the continuation of the NSIU under it. Ahlmann was in contact with Harald Ulrik Sverdrup and promoted his return to lead a new institute.⁸⁶ Reksten's report was forwarded to the Ministry and Ahlmann left Norway convinced he had a network of allies to get the ball rolling. Other forces, however, favoured the NSIU continuing under the leadership of Anders Orvin, as it was currently run. With Ahlmann impatiently waiting in Sweden, the issue was deferred for several months.⁸⁷

When Ahlmann met up with his previous field assistant Lange - now Norway's new Foreign Minister - in Stockholm in April 1946, he was promised a swift decision from the Norwegian Government. Lange understood the necessity of scientific activity to support the Norwegian claims.⁸⁸ In late May the same year, H.U. Sverdrup was offered the position as director of the new institute called the Polar Institute (see below for further details).⁸⁹ Lange's reassurance led Ahlmann to continue his plans for an Antarctic expedition and he contacted the RGS and met up with Lord Rennell and Commander Kirwan.⁹⁰ Ahlmann also presented his plans to the Norwegian Geographical Society (NGS) and gave a detailed description of the scientific programme, what could be expected to be accomplished, and the value of this science. His wish was to promote knowledge and insight and he pointed out that his interests were purely scientific. He also underlined that the area in Dronning Maud Land was of exceptional interest for his research.⁹¹ The British agreed to the plans on the condition of a Norwegian participation and underlined the importance in strengthening the Norwegian claim in Dronning Maud Land.⁹²

B.B. Roberts, "Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, 1949-52," *Polar record* Vol. 5, no. 39 (1948) 463-466

⁸⁵ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 339f

⁸⁶ Ibid.: 343f

⁸⁷ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 246ff, 159

⁸⁸ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 346

⁸⁹ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 252

⁹⁰ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 344

⁹¹ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db0197 10B/13 Antarktis (Svenska Antarktiska Kommitten) Promemoria May 1946

⁹² Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 344

In Norway, the Norwegian Geographical Society took the responsibility for the preparation for the expedition, while the RGS and The Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI) formed a committee in Britain. Unsurprisingly, Ahlmann formed and led the Swedish committee.

The Norwegian Geographical Society formally invited Anders Orvin on behalf of the NSIU to participate in a meeting to discuss these plans of an Antarctic expedition in October 1946⁹³ after the Norwegian Ministry of Trade had granted the NGS and the expedition 625 000 NOK to buy a ship to use for scientific work in Antarctica. The Ministry wished for the NGS to continue the scientific preparations for the expedition and the NSIU to take care of all dispatch-related preparations connected to the NBSX. Originally the idea was a small expedition under the leadership of major general Riiser-Larsen (a polar aviator), with Ahlmann drafting a scientific programme for the expedition. Funding for the expedition cost were to be proposed later⁹⁴ Due to unexpected problems in acquiring a ship and other delays, the start of the expedition was postponed. The newly founded Norwegian Polar Institute (NPI), with H.U. Sverdrup in charge took over the planning in March 1948.

Ahlmann was well connected and cultivated his network for later use. Which he used both directly in his scientific work relying on assistants and help in the field and in a more discreet and tactical way when presenting his vision for the sciences. His passion for science as a mean of cooperation gave him a high-ranking position and prestige in Sweden. Sverker Sörlin points out in contrast to his Nordic colleagues Adolf Hoel (NSIU), H.U. Sverdrup (NPI) and Niels Nielsen (Danish Geological Institute), who were tied to their institutions and their national policy, the Swedish lack of national polar politics and a polar institution at the time, made it possible for Ahlmann to meddle with polar affairs in an unofficial manner, without any set boundaries. He played his role as a policy actor well, achieving his wish for a reinvestment and strengthening of the Nordic in the polar sciences.⁹⁵

As for the NBSX, his participation in the expedition was only in the preparation phase, and although he had expressed a wish to join the vessel for the second summer visit, his plans changed when he accepted the position of becoming the Swedish diplomat in Oslo in 1950.⁹⁶

⁹³ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.); Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 250f

⁹⁴ Handelsepartementet, "Om bev. 1946—47 til overtakelse av et skip til bruk ved vitenskapelig arbeid i Antarktis, kap. 546, bsj.innst. S. nr. 408 c, S.tid. 2255—56.", (Oslo: Regjeringen, 1946)

⁹⁵ Sverker Sörlin, "Polare jubileer: kunnskap og politikk i nord," in *Ottar (Tromsø : trykt utg.)*, ed. Marit Anne Hauan (Tromsø: Tromsø museum - Universitetsmuseet, 2011): 12-18

⁹⁶ Sverker Sörlin, "The Anxieties of a Science Diplomat: Field Coproduction of Climate Knowledge and the Rise and Fall of Hans Ahlmann's "Polar Warming",," *Osiris* 26 (2011): 81

2.3 The establishment of The Norwegian Polar Institute

On September 20th in 1946 an official statement from the Ministry of Industry revealed the plans of a Norwegian Polar Institute (NPI) to be established January 1st in 1948, as an offshoot of the former Norges Svalbard- og Ishavsundersøkelser (NSIU), new visions and strategies were laid out. The new institute was expected to excel in two aspects: professionalisation and expansion.⁹⁷ The Ministry of Industry stated as the prerequisite for sufficient funding, the institute was to do research on both poles and establish Norway's role as a leading country on polar research, especially considering Norway's "actual, historical and national interests" in the polar areas.⁹⁸ The Foreign Ministry expressed the plans of an expansion in scientific ventures in the Antarctic as a continuance of Norwegian defence politics.⁹⁹

A key piece of the puzzle was to place professor Harald Ulrik Sverdrup (1888-1957) as the director of the new institute. Sverdrup was a world-renowned polar explorer and oceanographer who sought to continue the work on mapping and geology, as well as commencing geophysical surveys and climate research. Sverdrup's international merits would activate international recognition of the NPI. Sverdrup was aware of the rise in polar interest from other nations after the war. Although he knew that Norway would never be able to afford the same involvement as larger nations such as the US, the USSR, and Canada, he noted that by raising the quality of its work, Norway could maintain a high position within polar research.¹⁰⁰

On the 14th of November 1947 the bill concerning the establishment of the NPI was presented to the Parliament by the Ministry of Industry, receiving its recommendation on December 10th. There had already been made arrangements with H.U. Sverdrup, who then was officially elected for the position on December 12th. As for the organisational structure of the NPI, this would be decided later, and as Susan Barr points out, it seemed more important to ensure H.U. Sverdrup's arrival and capture him in the Norwegian polar cause.¹⁰¹

On his travel to Norway to begin his new position in the spring of 1948, H.U. Sverdrup visited several institutions interested in the Arctic and Antarctic in the US and Canada. He noted that all polar research was strongly military. This however also motivated scientific work, as all science, but especially meteorology, would be of great military importance in case of a new

⁹⁷ Skagestad, *Norsk polarpolitikk : hovedtrekk og utviklingslinjer 1905-1974*, 4:184ff

⁹⁸ Handelsepartementet, "St. prp. nr. 170. Om opprettelse av et Norsk Polarinstitut og om tilleggsbev. For terminen 1947—48 under kap. 545, Norges Svalbard- og Ishavsundersøkelser", (Oslo: Regjeringen, 1947)

⁹⁹ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 348

¹⁰⁰ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 250-284

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*: 282

war. When arriving in Norway and starting his new position, H.U. Sverdrup envisaged copious funding and an extension in the activities and an increase in positions with the new institute. But the funds from the Ministry of Finance were scant due to the post-war economic circumstances. Already from the start, the institute lacked the resources to solve its assigned tasks.¹⁰² On H.U. Sverdrup's return, the NPI took over the responsibility of the NBSX and a fruitful cooperation with the participating countries.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Ibid.: 250-284

¹⁰³ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/15A Antarktis (pressetjeneste, pressetvisten)

Chapter 3: **And so it begins**

3.1 **The Antarctic committees – cooperation across borders**

While Chapter 2: covers the development in Antarctic politics, the initial idea for the expedition and the start of cooperation, this chapter will present the administrative structure to further illustrate the intricate bureaucratic situation in the three countries with regards to the planning of the expedition.

Ahlmann's plans had matured during the war and as mentioned in the previous chapter he had been in contact with the Brits regarding his then, Arctic expedition plan, and further with Olaf Devik (member of the exiled Norwegian government) who had envisaged an approval after the war. When Ahlmann returned to Oslo after the war in 1945, he met with fellow scientists Bergersen, Holtedahl and Devik in August to discuss his revised plans for an international Antarctic expedition and ascertain support for Norwegian participation.¹⁰⁴ During the war, Olaf Holtedahl had communicated with the polar veterans Hjalmar Riiser-Larsen and Helmer Hansen about further exploration of Dronning Maud Land. Addressing the Norwegian Geographic Society, in September 1945, Holtedahl expressed that he "hoped Norway would quickly resume its engagement with the polar regions".¹⁰⁵ He furthermore stated that cooperation with the NGS would be beneficial, due to its history of connections to the previous nationalistic polar explorations (e.g. the *Norvegia* expeditions). These connections included the whaling pioneer Lars Christensen (the man who funded the *Norvegia* expeditions) in hope of receiving financing of an expedition. Holtedahl had little hope in regard to receiving state funding, as the post-war reconstruction costs were massive. In his traditional pre-war view, Holtedahl saw the nationalistic value of charting the Norwegian territories and was reluctant to include other nationalities, especially because cartography continued to be a political tool to express authority. Nonetheless, he remained a close ally to Ahlmann in his continued efforts to advocate Norwegian presence in polar exploration.¹⁰⁶

When Bergersen, Holtedahl and Devik met up with Ahlmann again in Oslo in December 1945, Ahlmann relayed the positive response from the RGS to them and was updated on the situation in Norway. Clearly upset with the handling of the Norwegian interests in the Arctic, or the lack

¹⁰⁴ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 337

¹⁰⁵ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 300

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*: 300f

thereof, Ahlmann put his network of allies to work promoting a new polar institution while continuing to plan for his expedition to the Antarctic.¹⁰⁷ In March 1946 Ahlmann left for London to discuss further with the Brits on including Norwegian in participating on the expedition. He met with Lord Rennell and Commander Kirwan from the RGS and representatives from the British Navy and Royal Air Force. They agreed upon an area of exploration was Dronning Maud Land, as Britain wished to strengthen the Norwegian claim in the sector. After an official proposal and Norway's acceptance, Britain would constitute a committee to coordinate the plans.¹⁰⁸ Ahlmann returned to Norway and met with scientists, commander captain Lützow-Holm (from the Norwegian expeditions 1927-31) and the Norwegian-American polar pilot Bernt Balchen.¹⁰⁹ He also asked the NGS to launch an Antarctic Committee.¹¹⁰ This committee consisted of three members: Erling Christophersen (NGS President), the meteorologist Sverre Pettersen¹¹¹ and Bernt Balchen.¹¹² Further, Ahlmann met with Foreign Minister Lange, who agreed to the plans, and insisted on a Norwegian-led expedition, under Norwegian flag. Others (Bergersen, Holtedahl and Christophersen) favoured reducing British participation to a minimum, fearing that it could threaten Norwegian whaling prospects by increasing the competition for whaling areas. Bergersen, Holtedahl and Christophersen fronted a purely Norwegian expedition and what started as a plan of a Swedish-British expedition (reviving the plans from 1914) and continued as a Norwegian-British-Swedish expedition suddenly turned into plans of a purely Norwegian expedition in the hands of the NGS.¹¹³ Yet when Ahlmann proposed his plans in Oslo in May 1946 at the Norwegian Geographical Society (NGS), he presented a joint Norwegian-British-Swedish expedition to Dronning Maud Land. The plan was also presented at the RGS in London and the SSAG in Stockholm¹¹⁴ Ahlmann declared the expedition to be under Norwegian flag, due to Norway's territorial rights in the area. While he did not specify the countries of cooperation when mentioning the realisation of his plans (the original pre-war idea mentioned a possible cooperation including Denmark and Iceland), Ahlmann sought the support from his closest circle. He finishes by highlighting the uniqueness

¹⁰⁷ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 339; Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 287; Scott Polar Research Institute and Roberts, "Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, 1949-52,"(1948): 463-466

¹⁰⁸ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 344

¹⁰⁹ He accompanied Richard Byrd on his many interwar expeditions.

¹¹⁰ Det norske geografiske selskaps antarktiske komite

¹¹¹ Pettersen and Ahlmann had worked together in the 1920s.

¹¹² Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 301

¹¹³ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 344-346

¹¹⁴ Scott Polar Research Institute and Roberts, "Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, 1949-52,"(1948); SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/18 Antarktis (norsk-britisk-svensk komite)

of the research area in reference to the expeditions main objective, climate change, and that it should be investigated preferably "by scientists and from circles in whom I've gotten to know, cooperate with and deeply appreciate".¹¹⁵ On the Norwegian side, the NGS overtook responsibility for the preparation of the expedition and put its committee to work planning the expedition. Ahlmann informed the Norwegian Ministry of Trade that the NGS Antarctic Committee was operational, on May 21st, 1946. In his official briefing, he argued that the imminent British recognition of the Norwegian claim in Antarctica made them a natural collaborator for the expedition and asked if Norway had any political objections to a British participation. By underlining his "purely scientific interests" when presenting the research programme, he defined his role as a scientific expert, leaving it to the NGS committee to push the potential outcome and political gains for the Norwegian state forward.¹¹⁶ The decision in favour of a Norwegian participation gave Foreign Minister Lange sufficient reason to execute and expedite the plans for a new Norwegian Polar Institute. The expedition plans also were a driving force in Ahlmann's plan of bringing Harald Ulrik Sverdrup back to Norway.¹¹⁷ Ahlmann's wish was to ensure Nordic leadership in the geophysics, which is frequently mentioned in his correspondence, and ties with his view of "science as a marker of a modern state's power".¹¹⁸ And in September 1946 the plan for the Norwegian Polar Institute was revealed by the Ministry of Trade.

¹¹⁵ SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0197 10B/13 Antarktisk (Svenska Antarktiska Kommitte)

¹¹⁶ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 301f; SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: DB 199 10B/13

¹¹⁷ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 346

¹¹⁸ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 302f

Meanwhile the Royal Geographical Society and the Scott Polar Research Institute established the British Committee in late 1946. The Committee was also known as the Joint Polar Research Committee, because the two actors shared responsibility for its operation. The aim of the committee was "...to facilitate scientific cooperation in Antarctic exploration and research with similar committees or institutes abroad...".¹¹⁹ It consisted of 12 members led by Lord Wakehurst, and included liaison officers and representatives from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.¹²⁰ A smaller sub-committee consisted of:

L.P. Kirwan (The Royal Geographic Society)

J.N. Wordie (Professor Cambridge)

Brian Roberts (Scott Polar Institute)

This smaller committee ended up with the responsibility of the preparations, as the Joint Committee was "too cumbersome to deal with".¹²¹

The Swedish Committee consisted of: ¹²²

Professor Hans Ahlmann (Stockholm College)

Professor B. Lindblad (State Board of Natural Science)

Dr. C. Mannerfelt (Svenska Sällskapet for Antropologi och Geografi)

Commander N. Unnérus

Naturally, Ahlmann became the main representative at meetings and in promoting the emblematic scientific justification of climate change.

The NGS Antarctic committee continued its work in planning for the expedition. While the Norwegian government had given its support to a Norwegian-led international expedition, strong figures in and connected to the NGS wanted a different say in the matter. Olaf Holtedahl and Erling Christophersen still favoured an exclusively national expedition, while Bergersen (now a Norwegian envoy in Stockholm) now pressed for cooperation with Britain and Sweden. Christophersen led the plans in the nationalistic direction, wanting the Norwegian committee in charge of the expedition, he even discouraged contact with Ahlmann. As president of the NGS and part of the Antarctic committee, Christophersen acquired the lead in the scientific

¹¹⁹ Previously the Antarctic Research Committee, where cooperation especially in the Dominions and in the United States are mentioned. "The Monthly Record," *The Geographical Journal* 108, no. 4/6 (1946)

¹²⁰ "The Monthly Record," *The Geographical Journal* 108, no. 1/3 (1946) 112; The Lord Rennell Of Rodd, "Address at the Annual General Meeting of the Society, Held on 16 June 1947," *The Geographical Journal* 109, no. 4/6 (1947)

¹²¹ SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/18 Antarktis (norsk-britisk-svensk komite)

¹²² Ibid.: Db 0199 10B/18 Antarktis (norsk-britisk-svensk komite)

planning. In reality, he scrapped Ahlmann's plan in favour of his own.¹²³ His (and the NGS') views were coloured by political lens of the interwar area, when privately funded expeditions and strong connections to the whaling industry had prevailed. Perhaps, Christophersen had little faith in receiving government funding, as there was no tradition for it, and trusted the cooperation with the whaling companies to sponsor his plans instead. This would have meant a trade-off with science to secure potential whaling areas. Christophersen and the NGS were already negotiating with the Whaling Association for a separate expedition departing in 1947, which Christophersen saw as the prelude to the larger undertaking to Dronning Maud Land in 1948-49. The *North Star* expedition was set for the Amundsen Sea and Peter I Island with the interests of the whaling industry in focus. Continuing on the pre-war tradition, Christophersen envisioned the *North Star* expedition as the start of a continued exploration programme in cooperation with the whaling industry.¹²⁴ When asking for government funding to charter a ship for the *North Star* expedition, the NGS and Christophersen assured Trade Minister Lars Evensen of the "self-evident" scientific value of the expedition, underlining the importance of training new scientists as reasons to grant the proposal.¹²⁵ Anders Orvin at the NSIU disputed Christophersen's plans of a prelude (whaling-sponsored) expedition in his letter to the Ministry of Trade on October 18th 1946, concluding that the exploration of new whaling areas should be left to the whalers themselves and not involve state financing. Still the NGS was granted funding to procure a ship for this prelude-expedition on October 24th. When Christophersen contacted the NSIU and Orvin to assist in the logistics of the proposed joint expedition (as was wished by the Ministry and Foreign Minister Lange), Orvin announced that the office was too busy with its own Arctic expedition preparations.¹²⁶ The NGS was now left with the full responsibility of the preparations of both expeditions. In its current state, the ship *North Star* was not suitable for Antarctic exploration. And the funding for the second expedition to Dronning Maud Land awaited government decision. In a letter to H.U. Sverdrup in February 1947 Christophersen summarised the NGS expedition plans and asked him to lead the organising committee of both expeditions—which H.U. Sverdrup declines. Christophersen lays out the NGS's wishes to expand its work within the field of geography and establish its position

¹²³ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 303-305; SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.) 1946-48

¹²⁴ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.) 1946-48

¹²⁵ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 304

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*: 303-305; SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.) 1946-48

nationally in its new headquarters at *Polhøgda* (Fridthjof Nansen's house). He underlined that the NGS expansion was not to compete with the new Polar Institute (which Harald Ulrik Sverdrup was appointed to run), but, rather, a favourable start of cooperation between the two, with the NGS doing the ground work to financially secure geographic research, especially considering the upcoming expedition. The NGS' view of the expedition was nationalistic and heavily reliant on private funding from the whaling industry, while Sverdrup (and the Ministry of Industry) envisaged a state financed international operation.¹²⁷ As Christophersen left for Washington to take on the work as cultural attaché at the Norwegian embassy in early 1947, a new NGS Antarctic committee was formed, consisting of:¹²⁸

Sverre Petterssen (leader of the committee)

Bernt Balchen (pilot/aviator)

Finn Lützow-Holm (commander captain)

Prof Olaf Holtedahl (geology)

Prof W. Werenskiold (glaciology)

Captain H.E. Hansen (topography)

Hjalmar Riiser-Larsen (Major general)

The new committee continued the plans of Christophersen, however, slightly more benevolent towards international cooperation. A public statement in April 1947, tells of an international expedition to Dronning Maud Land in 1948-49. Heavily focusing on the Norwegian leadership, and the fact that "... there is at present a shortage of trained personnel, and it would be difficult for Norway alone to find all needed specialists." The international expedition would be preceded by a reconnaissance expedition with the *North Star* in 1947-48.¹²⁹ The international expedition would be led by the nationalistic polar veteran Hjalmar Riiser-Larsen.¹³⁰

When the Ministry of Industry had made no proposition to the Norwegian parliament by June 1947, John Giæver at the NSIU (now proposed as leader of the wintering party of the NBSX) expressed his concerns in a correspondence with Riiser-Larsen when he could not receive a

¹²⁷ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 305; SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.) 1946-48

¹²⁸ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 287

¹²⁹ SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/15 Antarktis (pressen, annen publisering)

¹³⁰ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 308-310; Riiser-Larsen on the question "what is it that attracts you to the polar regions?" answered Norway's name and flag. From the Norwegian Polar Club's 1933 yearbook.

reply. Giæver was concerned that the Norwegian government was backing out.¹³¹ The Ministry continued to postpone their decision.

Up until the first meeting of representatives was held in Oslo in July 1947, with the three nations present, the expedition had only consisted of informal discussions and plans on paper, finally these plans had started to materialize. Attending this first meeting were:¹³²

Reverend Fleming (chairman) (GB)

Mr Kirwan (GB)

Squadron leader J.F. Davis (GB)

Prof Ahlmann (SWE)

Dr. Sverre Petterssen (NO)

Mr Bernt Balchen (NO)

Mr Thv. Einang (NO) (Ministry of Industry)

Prof Olaf Hortedahl (NO)

Major N. Jørstad (NO)

Commodore F. Lützow-Holm (NO)

General H. Riiser-Larsen (NO)

Prof W. Werenskiold (NO)

At this first meeting of representatives, Sverre Petterssen was elected chairman of the meeting, He stated that although there was great interest shown by the scientists in each country, none of the participating governments had yet "...formally undertaken to co-operate or to provide funds.". The main purpose of the meeting therefore consisted of planning the expedition programme and examining the total costs and how it would be distributed between the three countries.¹³³ Contributions from the Geographical Magazine Trust Fund and the Swedish Society for Geography and Anthropology had covered the initial expenses.¹³⁴ The Norwegian NGS committee would press for a dialogue with the Ministry of Industry in acquiring the ship *Svalbard*¹³⁵, and Major general Hjalmar Riiser-Larsen was appointed leader of the expedition,

¹³¹ SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.) 1946-48

¹³² "The Monthly Record," 108, no. 1/3 (1946)

¹³³ SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktis (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

¹³⁴ Scott Polar Research Institute and Roberts, "Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, 1949-52,"(1948)

¹³⁵ A fishing smack purchased by Adolf Hoel in 1916 for one of his expeditions to claim land with promising mineral fields at Svalbard for the Norwegian state.

due to his knowledge of the area. The British air representative offered assistance and a complete air crew from the Royal Air Force, but further communication between the British and Norwegian representatives underlines at least one of the aerial surveys would have to be Norwegian, due to the national element and political importance that cartography held. The preliminary budget was presented, and the rough estimates divided between the countries. As the expedition was under Norwegian leadership and working on Norwegian territory, Norway agreed to shoulder the largest share. A sub-committee for the detailed preparation of the scientific programme was established, consisting of the following members: ¹³⁶

Dr. Petterssen

Prof Holtedal

Prof Ahlmann

Reverend Fleming

Agreeing to reunite when the financial contributions from each country was settled, no later than December 1947, the representatives left to continue on the plan. But, despite the support from the Foreign Ministry and Lange, the NGS failed to raise the money for the expedition and the problems of acquiring a *suitable* ship further impeded the plans. As many ships had been lost during the war, and the production of new ships and repair of damaged ones was slow, there was an overall shortage of ships. Most of the fishing fleet vessels were too small, and the merchant fleet was occupied elsewhere. In September 1947 it was clear that the expedition had to be postponed, and the Swedish and British governments were informed of the situation.¹³⁷ After failing to obtain the *North Star* for the trial run, the NGS equipped the small whaler *Brategg* in October, and sent it on a Whaling Association-sponsored expedition led by the NGS to explore the area around Peter I Island. Under the pretence of obtaining scientific results and investigating the whale and plankton stocks, the findings were ultimately confiscated by the Whaling Association due to its commercial value.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktis (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan) Minutes from the first meeting of representatives; Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 310

¹³⁷ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktis (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan); Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 311

¹³⁸ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 313-315

Still hoping to achieve government funding on its own, a note from the NGS committee to the Ministry of Industry on November 7th in 1947¹³⁹ presented the plans for a scientific expedition to depart in the fall of 1948. It was a revised and downscaled expedition meant to chart the coast of Dronning Maud Land as a reaction to the news of Finn Rønne's proposed expedition to establish stations in the area.¹⁴⁰ Ahlmann objected to the plans, as he could not see its scientific value and, in a correspondence with Kirwan, he expressed his qualms towards the NGS.¹⁴¹ In February 1948 he further agitated the NGS by holding a lecture for the Whaling Association about his Antarctic plans without consulting with the NGS first.¹⁴² In April 1948, while the Ministry of Industry still deferred the proposition for the expedition, the NGS and its committee advocated that because of other interested nations' large activity in Antarctica, it was of the utmost importance for Norway's position in the Antarctic that this case was settled soon, although realising the departure had to be postponed until 1949.¹⁴³ The financial delay put the final nail in the coffin for the NGS committee. A summary by Sverre Petterssen of the expedition plans and scientific values, sent to the Ministry, states that the NGS recommended the new Polar Institute taking full responsibility of the planning upon Harald Ulrik Sverdrup's arrival.¹⁴⁴

3.2 Sverdrup executes the plan

In March 1948, when the newly formed Norwegian Polar Institute—and Harald Ulrik Sverdrup himself—took over the planning, the (snow)ball started rolling. Sverdrup was informed in April by the Ministry of Industry of the wish to delay any decision of funding the expedition until a re-organisation was carried out and a revision of plans had been made.¹⁴⁵ Sverdrup started working on a revised plan and met with Ahlmann on April 23rd to discuss further.¹⁴⁶ There had

¹³⁹ Industridepartementet, "Bev. til Norsk Polarinstitutt, kap. 545, S.tid. 855—56.— Tilleggsbev. til en antarktisk vitenskapelig ekspedisjon", (Oslo: Regjeringen, 1948)

¹⁴⁰ SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.)

¹⁴¹ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 311f

¹⁴² Ibid.: 314f

¹⁴³ SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/16 "Oversikt over arbeidet i tiden mars-mai 1948 med å fremme planen for en norsk-britisk-svensk ekspedisjon til Dronning Maud Land"

¹⁴⁴ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 315; SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.)

¹⁴⁵ SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/18 Antarktis (norsk-britisk-svensk komite)

¹⁴⁶ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 315; SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.)

been "considerable unofficial discussions" between the three participating countries in 1947 and 1948 to organise and plan of the expedition.¹⁴⁷ Sverdrup fully immersed himself into the preparations before the second meeting of representatives from all three countries was held in Cambridge, in May 1948. There, the new revised plans for the expedition were proposed to the attendees:¹⁴⁸

Prof Ahlmann (SWE)

Reverend Fleming (GB)

Mr Kirwan (GB)

Dr. Brian Roberts (GB)

Mr Wordie (GB)

Prof Sverdrup (NO)

Dr. Sverre Petterssen (NO)

Sverdrup proposed that the expedition land directly by ship, not by aircraft, with assistance from whalers—which the NGS had dismissed as impractical.¹⁴⁹ The aircrafts would be used for reconnaissance only. The presented scientific plans based on the suggestions at the Oslo meeting in 1947. The cost of a large wintering party (15 members), with reservations that there were suitable scientists available, would be justified by the scientific work since the expedition already was a costly and ambitious undertaking.¹⁵⁰ The choice of expedition members were to be made on a national level, with international consultation.¹⁵¹ Previous commitments regarding expedition personnel were not considered binding, but it was agreed that the expedition leader would be Norwegian, due to the fact that the expedition was under Norwegian leadership, sailed under the Norwegian flag to strengthen Norwegian interests in Antarctica. A Swedish or British leader would have been politically unacceptable.¹⁵² John Gæver was later appointed leader of the expedition.¹⁵³ Regarding funding, it was considered reasonable that Britain and Sweden took

¹⁴⁷ Scott Polar Research Institute and Roberts, "Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, 1949-52,"(1948)

¹⁴⁸ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.); *ibid.*: Db 0199 10B/18 Antarktis (norsk-britisk-svensk komite)

¹⁴⁹ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 312

¹⁵⁰ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktis (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

¹⁵¹ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 320

¹⁵² SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.)

¹⁵³ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 355

responsibility of 1/5 of the cost each.¹⁵⁴ Norway would make the "...major financial contribution in view of their leadership and in recognition of their prime responsibility for the area". The British representatives indicated the need of an official invitation to participate before they would approach their government in asking for funding.¹⁵⁵ The details of the plans now rested on Sverdrup and the NPI. The representatives agreed to constitute an International Co-ordinating Committee - consisting of four members from each country and Harald Ulrik Sverdrup ex-officio, that would come into operation after an official invitation had been made. The committee furthermore had the possibility to bring in other experts or send deputies to meetings.¹⁵⁶ Now it was up to Sverdrup to prove the value of his new Institute and raise the money in Norway.

On May 14th, Sverdrup presented his proposal to the Ministry of Industry. While the proposal for funding was handled by the Ministry in early June, word of the joint expedition reached the media which published a story. Kirwan corresponded with Sverdrup and was upset because the meeting had agreed to keep the plans confidential until an official invitation had been made. Sverdrup replied that he had, without luck, tried to stop the publication and stated that "...some publicity is desirable now, in order to build up a public opinion in favour of the expedition".¹⁵⁷ Sverdrup then successfully secured the government grant for the expedition on the 21th of May 1948 on the premise of the expedition sailed under Norwegian flag and under Norwegian leadership.¹⁵⁸ Sverdrup was thrilled by the quick decision of the Norwegian Parliament – later realising this was the exception.¹⁵⁹ The Ministry made it clear the Polar Institute was responsible for the planning and execution of the expedition.¹⁶⁰ With the expedition thus having received the blessing of the Norwegian government, official invitations to participate in the expedition were sent from the Norwegian Foreign Ministry to Britain and Sweden in the summer of 1948, although it was originally a Swedish idea and Ahlmann had invited Britain before Norwegian participation. The Norwegian invitations highlighted the focus on scientific cooperation and stated that the scientific staff of the wintering party would

¹⁵⁴ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0197 10B/13 Antarktis (Svenska Antarktiska Kommitten)

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.: Db 0199 10B/18 Antarktis (norsk-britisk-svensk komite)

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.: Db 0199 10B/18 Antarktis (norsk-britisk-svensk komite)

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktis (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

¹⁵⁸ Industridepartementet, "Bev. til Norsk Polarinstittutt, kap. 545, S.tid. 855—56.— Tilleggsbev. til en antarktisk vitenskapelig ekspedisjon", (Oslo: Regjeringen, 1948), SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.) (Sverdrup to the board of Det Norske Geografiske Selskab, July 3rd 1948)

¹⁵⁹ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 349

¹⁶⁰ Industridepartementet, "Bev. til Norsk Polarinstittutt, kap. 545, S.tid. 855—56.— Tilleggsbev. til en antarktisk vitenskapelig ekspedisjon", (Oslo: Regjeringen, 1948)

consist of equal number of participants from each nation but be executed under Norwegian leadership.¹⁶¹

Sverdrup contacted the NGS in order to appoint a new revised committee next. Due to its knowledge of the previous planning, it was necessary for Sverdrup to have the NPI on board. At the very least, he hoped to establish the goodwill of the NGS for his planning. He asked Petterssen to consider suitable members reflecting the scientific programme of the expedition, and to help with the preparations.¹⁶² The new members in the reconstructed NGS Antarctic committee of July 1948 were as follows: ¹⁶³

Prof Olaf Holtedal (geology)

Prof W. Werenskiold (glaciology)

Captain H.E. Hansen (topography)

Director Hesselberg (meteorology)

Harald Ulrik Sverdrup's diplomatic handling of the NGS failure and his strong hand on the planning soon made the NGS committee redundant. Hansen thus stepped out of the committee in September due to his workload, leaving the topography work for "the competent staff at the NPI".¹⁶⁴

When the three leaders of the national committees (Sverdrup, Ahlmann and Kirwan) and their respective representatives met in Stockholm, in September 1948, further steps towards the finalisation of the scientific programme were undertaken. Substantiating the research and scientific value of the results were set to be the main motive for the expedition. A press release from the September meeting notes that if other planned expeditions¹⁶⁵ to Antarctica would be executed, the value of research done on the NBSX would multiply.¹⁶⁶ This statement was meant to put pressure on the Swedish and British governments to grant money for the expedition, not just for the value of science, but also for the presence it would show in Antarctica.

Finally, the plans for the expedition seemed to come true. In October 1948 Ahlmann wrote to Giæver and expressed Liljequist's, Schytt's and his own excitement that after 2,5 years of hard

¹⁶¹ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0197 10B/13 Antarktis (Svenska Antarktiska Kommitten)

¹⁶² Ibid.: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.); *ibid.*: Db 0197 10B/13 Antarktis (Svenska Antarktiska Kommitten)

¹⁶³ Ibid.: Db 0199 10B/16 Antarktis (Antarktiskomiteen, Norsk geografisk selskap, forberedelser mv.)

¹⁶⁴ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 315

¹⁶⁵ Plans of an American, an Australian and a French expedition to Antarctica in the following year.

¹⁶⁶ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/15 Antarktis (pressen, annen publisering)

work the expedition finally seemed to be realised.¹⁶⁷ The Swedish funding of 300 000 Swedish kronor was settled late 1948 (October 22nd).¹⁶⁸ In late November 1948, however, the British contribution was still not settled.¹⁶⁹ Sverdrup wrote in a letter to Ahlmann on December 4th that he was disappointed and that the unsettled British contribution delayed the plans at this point.¹⁷⁰ Kirwan corresponded with Sverdrup regarding a meeting held at the Foreign Office regarding the British grant held in early December. The discussion had become "tied up in political considerations" with concerns regarding the Norwegian attitude towards the project of the UN Trusteeship for the Antarctic and how this affected the expedition.¹⁷¹ At the end, however, scientific arguments and the value of friendly cooperation won the votes. The British government granted 20 000 £.¹⁷² A later addition of 13 000 £ from the RAF was to cover the expenses of the aircrew.¹⁷³

The problem of finding a suitable ship for the expedition was still an ongoing affair. Several possibilities had been discussed; the original plan had been hiking with whaling ships but resulted in costing the same as hiring a sealing ship specifically for the expedition. Although the NPI had gotten several offers from sealers, most ships were considered too small to fit the expedition crew and their equipment. A request for additional funding was submitted in the summer of 1949 in order to alter and fit the newly acquired seal hunting vessel *Norsel* from the Jacobsen brothers. In his letter to the Ministry of Industry on June 1st, Sverdrup stated that the *Norsel* was crucial for the departure of the expedition. Norway had promised to arrange transportation for the expedition and a further delay would be very unfortunate considering the other participating countries and advancement in preparations.¹⁷⁴ While the undertaking eventually was felicitous, Sverdrup had his hands full in coordinating the three committees, organising the equipment, and seeing to the training of the expedition personnel. A press release on August 3rd telling of the soon-to depart expedition—a departure date was set in about three months—, reports that "the cooperation between the three countries has run very smoothly".¹⁷⁵ But at the meeting between the representatives in September 1949 plans were far from settled. There were continuous discussions on who (and if) to cooperate with. The uncertain situation

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.: Db 0197 10B/13 Antarktisk (Svenska Antarktiska Kommittén)

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.: Db 0197 10B/13 Antarktisk (Svenska Antarktiska Kommittén)

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktisk (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktisk (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

¹⁷¹ Ibid.: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktisk (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

¹⁷² Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 317f

¹⁷³ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktisk (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.: Db 0195 10B/3 Antarktisk (fartøy og sjøtransport)

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.: Db 0198 10B/15 Antarktisk (pressen, annen publisering)

in Europe with increased Soviet power had led to the formation of a Western Union alliance with Britain and France in charge. In April 1949 this was expanded with the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty (NATO), in which Norway joined.¹⁷⁶ This left Sweden side-lined, as the discussions of a Scandinavian defence union between Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland were aborted the same year. Sweden continued its neutrality policy, with informal cooperation with the US and Western Union alliance.¹⁷⁷ With US involvement in Antarctica, Britain wished for a stronger cooperation within the Dominion. For the first season a collaboration with a South African meteorologist was made to join the *Norsel* as an observer and an official invitation was sent from the Norwegian Foreign Office.¹⁷⁸ Australia had a desire to have greater participation in the expedition, but it was noted that the already agreed Australian observer would do, at least for the first season, as planning was already well under way. Later, when planning the second (midtrip) visit, a wish to add another glaciologist was proposed by Ahlmann, and that this could be an opportunity to expand the Australian participation.¹⁷⁹ In regards to a cooperation with the United States (as were indicated as a wish from the US, but never put forward as a formal request), the committee was reluctant to send out invitations or appoint an official observer as "...then we might well have to extend similar invitations to other nations which might be very undesirable."¹⁸⁰ The unwelcomed nation they aimed at was the USSR. At the meeting in May 1950 the question on observers was raised again, and an agreement to "follow the same procedure ... to refrain from sending out invitations, but consider each request for sending an observer on the basis of its merits".¹⁸¹ As for the scientific cooperation, arrangements were made for radio communication and coordination of the meteorological recordings with the French Antarctic Expedition, and further extension to the Australian Expedition and the FIDS.¹⁸² The weather data and knowledge of weather system was of great strategic value, both military and commercial. At the final meeting in October 1949 the finishing touches were put on the expedition plans. The *Norsel* would sail south on December 1st at the latest. Carrying most of the men and supplies, catching up in the south with the whaling factory ship *Thorshøvdi*, which carried the rest of the crew and the 60 dogs. The *Norsel* would then head south towards the barrier and

¹⁷⁶ Originally the Treaty of Alliance and Mutual Assistance between France and Great Britain in April 1947, expanding with the Benelux countries in 1948, and United States, Canada, Portugal, Italy, Denmark, Iceland and Norway in 1949.

¹⁷⁷ Lewander, "Den norsk-brittisk-svenska expeditionens okända sidor 1949-1952," : 168-171

¹⁷⁸ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktis (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktis (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktis (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

¹⁸¹ Ibid.: Db 0199 10B/18 Antarktis (norsk-brittisk-svensk komite)

¹⁸² Ibid.: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktis (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

unload the expedition on the barrier in the vicinity of 10°W (close to Selbukta, an area previously mapped), alternatively further east. As a last alternative they would establish a meteorological station at Bouvet Island for the first winter season. The main objective was to establish the wintering base and undertake a general aerial survey of the area around the main base. The *Norsel* would then return north, stopping by Cape Town unloading the air crew and observers before heading to the seal hunting grounds outside Newfoundland. The rest would have to be provided during the second season visit.¹⁸³

3.3 Heading for the south

In mid-November 1949, the expedition left Norway and reached Dronning Maud Land on the 11th February 1950, establishing the wintering camp. When naming the winter camp, names like "Triad" and "Trio"¹⁸⁴ had been suggested during the planning sessions, to display the joint cooperation between the three countries. Especially Ahlmann had been insistent on having a camp name displaying the three-state cooperation. Harald Ulrik Sverdrup on the other hand had favoured a name that displayed the Norwegian leadership, like "Little Norway".¹⁸⁵ None of the suggestions had been favoured by all involved parties and the decision was left up to the wintering party.¹⁸⁶ Giæver noted that the naming of the base had been an issue amongst the crew for some time, and suggestions like "Little United Nations" and "Nor-Brit-Svea" were not received with joy. When suggesting the name "Maudheim" to Giæver, Sverdrup states that the name "Maudheim" was fitting for several reasons.¹⁸⁷ In a correspondence letter to J.M. Wordie, he elaborates: "This is a short name which will locate the base geographically as lying on Queen Maud Land".¹⁸⁸ A press release following the naming decision stated that "the name is a commemoration to the deceased Norwegian Queen Maud¹⁸⁹ and has a form that reminisces names used by earlier Norwegian expeditions". Framheim was the name of the base on Amundsen's 1911 expedition to Antarctica, to which he sailed in Fridtjof Nansen's ship *Fram*.¹⁹⁰ and Queen Maud was also the origin of the territorial name of Dronning Maud Land.¹⁹¹ The

¹⁸³ Ibid.: Db 0199 10B/18 Antarktis (norsk-britisk-svensk komite)

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktis (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.: Db 0199 10B/18 Antarktis (norsk-britisk-svensk komite)

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktis (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

¹⁸⁷ Giæver, *Maudheim : to år i Antarktis: den norsk-britisk-svenske vitenskapelige ekspedisjon til Antarktis 1949-1952*: 86 Quote: "Maudheim" var jo av flere grunner det riktige navnet

¹⁸⁸ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktis (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

¹⁸⁹ Maud was Queen of Norway 1905-38

¹⁹⁰ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/15 Antarktis (pressen, annen publisering)

¹⁹¹ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 289

base name, with strong connection to earlier Norwegian explorers can be seen as a political motive to solidify Norway's territorial claim and to show a continued presence in the area.

The composition of the expedition members was first and foremost based on their scientific qualifications, still most of the Norwegian and British members possessed military backgrounds, bearing in mind the world war had ended 4 years earlier (John Gæver was captain in the Norwegian Air Force reserve, and Alan Reece and Gordon Robin FIDS-veterans).¹⁹² And when arriving at Maudheim Schytt (SWE) was placed as 2nd in command and Robin (GB) as 3rd. In a note explaining this decision, Gæver apologised for the use of this military terminology, saying that they were popular at the base and that he considered it the best way to favour all three nations.¹⁹³ This apology accentuates the wish to maintain a civil venture, and by highlighting their devotion to cooperation and science build upon the constructed image for the expedition as an apolitical expedition.¹⁹⁴

Yet in the context of the accompanying observers and aerial crews, other motives become apparent. On the way south in the first season, the *Norsel* was carrying several observers. The South African observer (Joe A. King) was a senior meteorologist and head of the weather forecasting and aviation branches of the Union Weather Bureau. His presence was explained by arrangements on transmissions of daily weather reports coordinated by the weather services in South-Africa and in cooperation with other countries¹⁹⁵ and the whaling fleet. Upon its return, the expedition was to create a synoptic weather analysis, complimenting other international studies on weather systems. But at a daily basis, it provided vital weather data from the Southern Oceans to the whaling industry and all other ships and operations in the southern hemisphere.¹⁹⁶ This was of interest for both the military and commercial investors, and the methods and results would profit operations not only in the Antarctic, but also in the Arctic.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹² Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 320; Gæver, *Maudheim : to år i Antarktis: den norsk-britisk-svenske vitenskapelige ekspedisjon til Antarktis 1949-1952*:373

¹⁹³ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/15 Antarktis (pressen, annen publisering)

¹⁹⁴ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 332

¹⁹⁵ Argentina, Chile and British sector (FID). The French Expedition to Terra Adélie would also contribute.

¹⁹⁶ Lewander, *The Norwegian-British-Swedish Expedition (NBSX) to Antarctica 1949-52; science and security. Proceedings Of The 1st Scar Workshop On The History Of Antarctic Research*, 560: 129; Scott Polar Research Institute and Roberts, "Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, 1949-52,"(1948)

¹⁹⁷ Lewander, *The Norwegian-British-Swedish Expedition (NBSX) to Antarctica 1949-52; science and security. Proceedings Of The 1st Scar Workshop On The History Of Antarctic Research*, 560: 129

The Australian observer (Philip G. Law) was a lecturer in physics at Melbourne University and an officer-in-charge in Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition (ANARE).¹⁹⁸ He took interest in studying the expedition's logistics and transport for further Australian exploration of the Antarctic.¹⁹⁹

Also joining was a Times journalist (John H Marsh) and a cameraman from British Crown Film Unit (Tom Stobart) to report on the expedition for the general public.

From a British perspective this was also in the interest of strengthening relations within the Commonwealth, where the NBSX could be an arena of securing political relations.²⁰⁰

Aerial support was required for the realisation of the expedition and its research programme. Cartography was one of the main surveys of the programme, as maps were valuable to both the whalers and the Norwegian government. By charting unknown areas of the coast and inland and placing Norwegian names on mountains and ice sheets, and replacing the previously given German names, made the foundations of Norwegian sovereignty in Dronning Maud Land. In the first season, the aerial support was provided by the British Royal Air Force (RAF), bringing a crew of two pilots, three n.c.o. ground crews and two Auster aircrafts. It was the first time that the RAF operated in the Antarctic, and the crew and their aircrafts were put to good use in finding a suitable landing place for the expedition and in surveying the coastline and hinterland, and sketching and photographing the coast and crevasses.²⁰¹ Under the leadership of Squadron leader G.B. Walford, the crew spent an overall 50 hours in the air and surveyed as far as 200 km from the base, discovering new mountain range. Aircraft modifications had been required on the motor and radio to operate in cold weather conditions, and testing of ski-plane handling were done. In addition, clothing and other equipment were tested, including additional RAF radio equipment on board the *Norsel*.²⁰² One of the RAF corporals – Quar – joined as assistant radio operator and became the 15th man on the

¹⁹⁸ Leading Australia's Antarctic Program Australian Antarctic Division: 26.04.2019. Australian Government <http://www.antarctica.gov.au/about-antarctica/history/stations/mawson/biscoe-hut-1954>

¹⁹⁹ Lewander, "Den norsk-brittisk-svenska expeditionens okända sidor 1949-1952,": 167

²⁰⁰ Ibid.: 167

²⁰¹ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/15 Antarktis (pressen, annen publisering); Db 0199 10B/15A Antarktis (pressetjeneste, pressetvisten)

²⁰² Ibid.: Db 0195 10B/2 Antarktis (Utenriksdepartementet: avisutklipp, korrespondanse) The Times 22.02.1950; Db 019910B/18 Antarktis (norsk-britisk-svensk komite)

expedition.²⁰³ Upon his return Walford writes in *The Times* that he found the expedition "an enjoyable and profitable adventure".²⁰⁴

For the second summer season, Harald Ulrik Sverdrup and Brian Roberts joined the *Norsel*. On their way south, they stopped by South Africa to overlook the gathering of meteorological data and the results J. King had created at the Union Weather Bureau. Joining as an observer was British Naval officer (Forster), who was training in ice navigation. In his report after the expedition, he notes that it was very convenient to join a civilian vessel for his research on ice and ice navigation in both polar areas.²⁰⁵ A second observer came from the Swedish Air Force: Captain Reinhold von Essen who later was put in charge of aircrafts and crew on the 3rd season. He had similar plans as Forster, in proceeding north with the *Norsel* to the Canadian Arctic on the return from the Antarctic. There he planned to meet with the Canadian Air Force in Halifax and gain additional knowledge on planes and flights, aerial cartography and survey and radio communication. But *Norsel's* tight schedule made a visit to Halifax impossible and the ship left for Newfoundland. When von Essen contacted his superiors to ask if he could change his plans and meet up with the Air Force north of Hudson Bay, he was not granted a tour to Canada. Looking into the reasons why he was denied this trip, Lewander proposes it is as a reaction from the Swedish Air Force and Foreign Office as to what is on the brink of the Swedish neutrality doctrine, and what could be seen as a breach to this.²⁰⁶ Following the *Norsel* down to Maudheim was an additional joining member of the wintering party John Jelbart, an Australian observer and physicist.²⁰⁷ To assist in the forthcoming field work, as the workload at Maudheim was extensive. Also with the *Norsel* was Stig Hallgren, a Swedish photographer from Artfilm of Stockholm hired to produce a motion picture film. During the stay he expressed a wish to join as the 17th man of the wintering party, and his wish was granted. Sverdrup saw the value of acquiring good professional photographs and film material and an additional man to help with the workload.²⁰⁸

In the second summer Norway was responsible for the aerial surveying programme. Conducted by Widerøes Flyveselskap and Polarfly AS with one C-5 Polar and one KZ.III for shorter

²⁰³ Lewander, *The Norwegian-British-Swedish Expedition (NBSX) to Antarctica 1949-52; science and security. Proceedings Of The 1st Scar Workshop On The History Of Antarctic Research*, 560: 123; SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/15 Antarktis (pressen, annen publisering)

²⁰⁴ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0195 10B/2 Antarktis (Utenriksdepartementet: avisutklipp, korrespondanse) *The Times* 22.03.1950

²⁰⁵ Lewander, "Den norsk-brittisk-svenska expeditionens okända sidor 1949-1952,": 167

²⁰⁶ Lewander, *The Norwegian-British-Swedish Expedition (NBSX) to Antarctica 1949-52; science and security. Proceedings Of The 1st Scar Workshop On The History Of Antarctic Research*, 560: 133-134

²⁰⁷ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 289

²⁰⁸ H. U. Sverdrup, *NBSX : dagbok fra Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition (1949)*: 81, 83f

flights.²⁰⁹ A crew of five, with Kaare Friis-Baastad and Anders Jacobsen as pilots, Sigvard Kjellberg as air photographer and two mechanics. The plan was to survey and photograph the area between 20°W and 15°E, to chart the ice barrier, the areas of the field parties and the region in the east – for comparison with the German work of 1939.²¹⁰ Widerøe also performed testing of their own equipment (newly installed and untested radio and radio compass) and military equipment provided by the Norwegian Air Force.²¹¹

The weather at Maudheim the second season was exceptionally bad, making the aerial surveys difficult. Adding to the fact that the Norwegian pilots were inexperienced and ill-equipped made matters worse.²¹² Sverdrup expresses his annoyance in his diary on several occasions. An episode where Friis-Baastad is confronted with the deviation of his compass and Forster steps in to correct it, showing a 7° deviation, infuriates Sverdrup. And when the C-5 crashes 10 days later with Friis-Baastad and Liljequist, both with only minor injuries, Sverdrup is agitated. Clearly wanting to make a better result next season Sverdrup writes a five-page summary of errors and improvements and hopes the Swedish Air Force has better luck.²¹³

On the last and third season the *Norsel* was accompanied by two British Naval observers (Blair – Naval Aviation and Higgins – Submarine service).²¹⁴ Together with topographer Nils Roer from the wintering party, Higgins and Blair charted the coast of Kronprinsesse Märthas Land – 1200 km.²¹⁵ This work, with combining measurements and charting from the ground and photography from the aerial surveys gave reliable maps of the region to support the Norwegian claim in Dronning Maud Land.²¹⁶

Along with the *Norsel* was a Norwegian journalist from Aftenposten (Halvdan Hydle) who sent short stories from the happenings during this last trip down and the return of the wintering men. In this last summer the Swedish Air Force were in charge of the aerial surveys. This was the first time operating outside Swedish borders. The crew of 6 men was under the leadership of captain Reinhold von Essen, who followed as an observer on the second season. With the

²⁰⁹ Giæver, *Maudheim : to år i Antarktis: den norsk-britisk-svenske vitenskapelige ekspedisjon til Antarktis 1949-1952*: 196; Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 289

²¹⁰ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/18 Antarktis (norsk-britisk-svensk komite)

²¹¹ Sverdrup, *NBSX : dagbok fra Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition*: 86

²¹² Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 340

²¹³ Sverdrup, *NBSX : dagbok fra Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition*: 47f, 66f, 68-70, 77-80, 86, 92f, 103-107

²¹⁴ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktis (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan); Norsk Polarinstittutt, "Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, 1949-52, Scientific results, Vol. V/VI/VI Part 2," (Oslo: Norsk Polarinstittutt, 1958), <https://data.npolar.no/map/archive/b7fb3374-2502-5e00-bafe-7a6ae69d8daa>

²¹⁵ Ibid.: Db 0198 10B/15 Antarktis (pressen, annen publisering)

²¹⁶ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 367

aircrafts (one Beechcraft 18-R and one SAAB Safir) and accompanied by Widerøe's air photographer Helge Skappel they photographed half a million square kilometres.²¹⁷ The Swedish Air Force returned with great results. Not only to the expedition, but also considering the military interests. They originally operated to aid the survey work and in emptying the base, but also tested their equipment, obtained experience on cold weather operations and communication and received information on the system of weather reports. This was especially important considering the ongoing military build-up in the Arctic.²¹⁸

Although there had been discussions in the committees regarding the advisability of military attendance (fighting services) on the expedition, it was agreed that so far as possible it should be operated on a civilian basis.²¹⁹ Still the military presence (air forces) was a necessity to carry out the expeditions scientific programme.²²⁰ Further research in the military archives could expand upon this topic and give useful insight of the internal Military motives.

²¹⁷ Ibid.: 367; SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/15 Antarktis (pressen, annen publisering)

²¹⁸ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 340; Lewander, *The Norwegian-British-Swedish Expedition (NBSX) to Antarctica 1949-52; science and security. Proceedings Of The 1st Scar Workshop On The History Of Antarctic Research*, 560: 123-134; Lewander, "Den norsk-brittisk-svenska expeditionens okända sidor 1949-1952,": 166f

²¹⁹ SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/18 Antarktis (norsk-brittisk-svensk komite)

²²⁰ Lewander, "Den norsk-brittisk-svenska expeditionens okända sidor 1949-1952,": 171

Chapter 4: **The aftermath**

4.1 **Science versus the cost**

On *Norsel's* return from Maudheim in 1952, an additional grant for the expedition was given by the Norwegian Government. The funds were granted along with a statement that described the expedition's "according to the received rapports [...] excellent cooperation between the three nations" and stated that "the scientific goals for the expedition have been more than 100% obtained".²²¹ But was this really so? The scientific programme had been comprehensive and the data was compiled diligently.²²² Even though there had been money allotted for after the expedition's return in order to prepare the results for publication, upon its return, most of the money had already been spent to cover expedition costs. Several additional requests for funding were sent to the Norwegian Government in the years to come to finalise the scientific results.²²³ Upon their return, the scientific members of the expedition started the task of working up the results. Many of them had their future careers at stake. Even though they had acquired field experience from the Antarctic, these skills were of was advantage in the academic environment they now found themselves in. After all, the work conducted afterwards was of much more importance.²²⁴ In February 1953, Kirwan wrote to Sverdrup that the British crew member Charles Swithinbank needed an additional three months to complete his work writing up his results on glaciological study satisfactorily.²²⁵ At the NPI, on the other hand, Nils Roer—the expedition's topographic surveyor—and others were still working on the Maudheim material in 1957-58. After Sverdrup's sudden death in 1957, Orvin stepped in as chief of the NPI. At this point, the case of the unfinished and unpublished results from the NBSX was a hot political topic, and a bit of a national scandal. One could risk other nations putting their names on mountains and glaciers as it was still "unmapped" as long as the material was unpublished.²²⁶ Which led to the realisation of more government funding to the institute. The topographical work was prioritised, as it could be used as political currency in questions on sovereignty in the polar regions and in the planning for the forthcoming *International Geophysical Year (IGY)*.²²⁷

²²¹ Industridepartementet, "Tilleggsbev. av kr. 424 000 for budsjett-terminen 1951—52 under kap. 545, Norsk Polarinstitut, post 7, Ekspedisjon til Antarktis", (Oslo: Regjeringen, 1952)

²²² Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 290

²²³ SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/18 Antarktis (norsk-britisk-svensk komite)

²²⁴ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 347f

²²⁵ SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/15 Antarktis (pressen, annen publisering)

²²⁶ Lewander, "Den norsk-brittisk-svenska expeditionens okända sidor 1949-1952,": 173

²²⁷ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 405

Yet, temporary assistance had to be employed to compile materials from the expedition until the beginning of the 1960s. Nils J Schumacher, the chief meteorologist, for example, worked on the Maudheim material for ca. 12 years while on leave from Det Norske Meteorologiske Institutt (the Norwegian Meteorological Institute). When the IGY started in 1957, the scientists were asked to supply advanced copies of their work as they were still writing up the results.²²⁸ In a 1958 review of the [then] recently published research papers from the expedition, W.H. Ward commented that "...it was an exceptionally good expedition; [...] so we can only hope that it will prove exceptional in its publication record and become a model expedition in all respects."²²⁹

While the last chapter of the six-volume expedition report was not concluded and published (in a limited number) before 1998²³⁰, the expedition nonetheless had more immediate scientific consequences. The results from the expedition facilitated five of the members of the expedition (Liljequist, Robin, Wilson, Swithinbank, Schytt) earning academic degrees due to the scientific work done on the NBSX.²³¹ Many of the scientific staff went on to successful careers, thus personally benefiting more from the expedition than the organisations that had backed it.²³² For the Norwegian scientists on the other hand, the situation was less profitable. Already holding academic degrees, they simply returned to their day-work. What had been a prerequisite in obtaining government funding – the importance of training new scientists – was not achieved in Norway.²³³

The total joint costs for the expedition and the after work was estimated from at least 2,14 million Norwegian kroner to a maximum of 3,1 million in 1948²³⁴, with the Norwegian cut being between 1,5 to 2,5 million.²³⁵ A cost that turned out to be highly underestimated. In the

²²⁸ Charles Swithinbank, *Foothold on Antarctica : The First International Expedition (1949-1952) : Through the Eyes of its Youngest Member* (Lewes: Book Guild, 1999): 227

²²⁹ W. H. Ward, "Scientific Research in Antarctica: Review," review of Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, 1949-52. Scientific Results; Vol. I, Meteorology: Part 2, Surface Observations; Sub-Part A, Air Pressure, V. Hisdal, O. Amble, N. J. Schumacher; Vol. II, Meteorology: Part 1, Energy Exchange of an Antarctic Snowfield. Sub-Part A, Short-Wave Radiation, 1956; Sub-Part B, Long-Wave Radiation and Radiation Balance, 1956; Sub-Part C, Wind Structure in the Low Layer, 1957; Sub-Part D, Surface Inversions and Turbulent Heat Transfer, 1957, G. H. Liljequist; Vol. II, Meteorology, Part 2, Special Studies. Sub-Part A, Halo-Phenomena and Ice Crystals, G. H. Liljequist, *The Geographical Journal* 124, no. 2 (1958): 238

²³⁰ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 290

²³¹ Schytt, *Med känsla för is : om polarforskaren Valter Schytt och gåtorna hans Antarktisexpedition bidrog till att lösa*: 152

²³² Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 350

²³³ *Ibid.*: 304

²³⁴ SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/15 Antarktis (pressen, annen publisering)

²³⁵ Industridepartementet, "Bev. til Norsk Polarinstitutt, kap. 545, S.tid. 855—56.— Tilleggsbev. til en antarktisk vitenskapelig ekspedisjon", (Oslo: Regjeringen, 1948)

first proposal for funding submitted in May 1948, it was highlighted that the costs would run for several years after the expedition and that the publishing of the material would take about five years to finish. Norway would be responsible to "carry the cost" for publishing of the results, and each country was to set aside funds to cover the expenses for the preparation of these results.²³⁶ The expedition was also expected to receive great income from articles being sold and the production of a movie from the expedition (e.g. as Thor Heyerdahl did on the Kon Tiki).²³⁷ These prospects of profit, however, soon turned sour as public interest in the continent far south was waning and the material for the movie was not good enough to be used in a cinematic movie even though it had been shot by one of the Artfilm company's own photographers (Stig Hallgren who joined the expedition in the midseason trip).²³⁸ In 1950, the expected cost of the expedition had risen to nearly 3,9 million. More proposals asking for further funding were sent to the foreign and constitutional committees, in which they were not very pleased with. Yet since the original proposal had had the foresight to state that all the costs of the expedition could not be known in advance, they planners of the expedition could not be criticised. When applying for more funding,²³⁹ Sverdrup had also unsuccessfully asked the Whaling Foundation to contribute financially on the expedition before the departure.²⁴⁰ In October 1950, he again approached the Foundation and several ship owners in Vestfold to ask for donations, as the meteorology and maps were of economic value to the whalers. This time around, he received several donations, mostly due to the fact that he had convinced the Ministry of Industry to allow the donators claim the expense for tax purposes.²⁴¹ The organisational part of the expedition, with the Committees in each country, as showed in 3.1, had proved costly and awkward. The three-nation cooperation increased the expenses as there were three administrations, each with its individual and national requests.²⁴² Giæver noted that there was less hassle with the expedition members (considering their different backgrounds) than with the administration of the expedition.²⁴³

²³⁶ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0199 10B/18 Antarktis (norsk-britisk-svensk komite)

²³⁷ Ibid.: Db 0194 10B/1 Antarktis (Industridepartementet: planlegging, budsjett mv.)

²³⁸ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 288f

²³⁹ Ibid.: 288f

²⁴⁰ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0194 10B/1 Antarktis (Industridepartementet: planlegging, budsjett mv.)

²⁴¹ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 345

²⁴² Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 288f

²⁴³ Swithinbank, *Foothold on Antarctica : The First International Expedition (1949-1952) : Through the Eyes of its Youngest Member*: 226

The discussions on payment settlement in the aftermath of the expedition turned into a diplomatic problem between Norway and Britain, as the predicted income failed to materialize and both countries were short on funding. The original pledge that Norway would cover the cost overruns were dismissed by Sverdrup.²⁴⁴ In 1954, Sverdrup reported that the expedition costs totalled NOK 3 180 000 for the Norwegian cut alone. Sweden had contributed with SEK 421 500 and Britain with £11 185.²⁴⁵ These numbers did not include some of the equipment—the British cut was mostly given in equipment, not in cash—aerial crews and machines, salaries and other supplies contributed to the expedition by Sweden and Britain.²⁴⁶ Harald Ulrik Sverdrup continued to ask the Ministry of Industry for more funding in the following years.²⁴⁷ He had realised long before the return of the NBSX that receiving satisfactory funding for the Polar Institute would prove difficult. The NPI was chronically understaffed and there was no prospect of hiring new staff in the near future. The funding from the Ministry allotted the scientific grants elsewhere, making the NPI uncompetitive compared to the universities and museums.²⁴⁸ Although the NBSX showed that international cooperation was a fruitful way to follow, when scientific work and results were considered, it was not enough to justify the costs for operations in the Antarctic.²⁴⁹ Other (non-claimant) countries (e.g. South Africa and especially Soviet and the US). were the most active, better equipped and with possessed greater logistic means for such operations. With sovereign disputes flaring up again, the 1950s were coloured by national rivalries in the Antarctic. The superpowers' (US and Soviet) entry to the continent followed and the NBSX marked the end of western Europe's leading position in Antarctica.²⁵⁰ This dissipated the hope and intention of making the NPI a leading actor internationally.²⁵¹

²⁴⁴ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 345-348

²⁴⁵ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 289

²⁴⁶ SATØ, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0198 10B/14 Antarktis (Britiske komiteen: Kirwan)

²⁴⁷ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 290

²⁴⁸ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 369

²⁴⁹ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 290

²⁵⁰ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 350; Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 290

²⁵¹ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 350

4.2 Symbolic legacy

"Of what I've seen, there is good reason to believe that the scientific results will be plenty and valuable. The expedition shall be written in to history as an exceptional venture..."²⁵²

These lines were written down by Harald Ulrik Sverdrup in his diary on his visit of the camp in the second summer season. It proved true. The literature on the expedition constantly classify the expedition as a success. Still, the expedition had failed to find evidence for rapid glacial retraction and climate change in the Antarctic. Thus, the expedition was not able to establish it as a global phenomenon and as result, was unsuccessful in providing answers to its emblematic research motive. Other scientific ventures were highly successful, however. The expedition was marked by were several firsts: the first 100m ice core drilling, sending photos by radio from the Antarctic for the first time, measuring the ice depths on the plateau the expedition occupied, the first time living land fauna was recorded in the area (including new species), the first detailed survey of the topography of inland Dronning Maud Land and the first time measuring ice-velocity to compare with Northern hemisphere. The last activity mentioned, led to a growing understanding of how the Antarctic ice sheet controls the world sea level, and how it is regulating the world climate.²⁵³ The scientific results from the expedition were far from insignificant, but its success was worsened by the slow speed that information became public due the backlog of data to be processed and the understaffing in the aftermath of the expedition. It took over 10 years before (most of) the results were published. The administrative framework offered additional work and problems rather than establishing a possible template for future international cooperation. All its flaws and failings considered, why was the NBSX considered as such a success in its time and why has this evaluation persevered?

The official story of the expedition is that of a science focused venture, not a political or nationalistic, or even commercial expedition as the previous eras of expeditions had been. This was still true even though the territorial assertion was a premise for the existence of the expedition, that was promoted by both the British and the Norwegian government. Its scientific programme and its potential significance, however, were the motivators for mobilizing resources in all three countries.²⁵⁴ Thus, the expedition existed in a state characterised by a trade-off between science and politics. The emblematic research motive for the expedition – climate

²⁵² Sverdrup, *NBSX : dagbok fra Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition*: 112

²⁵³ Swithinbank, *Foothold on Antarctica : The First International Expedition (1949-1952) : Through the Eyes of its Youngest Member*: 225

²⁵⁴ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 324

change – and its result could give answers to the then present changes in the (rest of) world. Its relevance was of great importance and was enhanced by the international cooperation. Ahlmann's vision of polar scientists pursuing specialised science contributed to the professionalisation of polar science and enhanced the scientific programme of the expedition.²⁵⁵ The NBSX originated from and was built on a research motive. The long delay in its departure, created possibilities for more careful preparations, both with the scientific programme and its equipment than expected originally.²⁵⁶ Through Sverdrup's administrative leadership, and their combined diplomatic efforts, Ahlmann and Sverdrup saw to the realisation of the expedition. When it failed to find direct evidence for climate change this was effaced by enhancing the international cooperation and collaboration.²⁵⁷ The results of the other scientific programmes (especially in cartography) were emphasized to be able to highlight the expedition's scientific significance and the valuable knowledge it produced.²⁵⁸ But the promised maps, the most important political currency for the territorial claims, were, ironically, held up by lack of funding from the government. As the crew members and their scientific staff at home were still writing up results, the International Geophysical Year took place in 1957-58 and the scientists were asked to supply advanced copies of their work.²⁵⁹ The ambitious future of the NPI, that was envisaged Harald Ulrik Sverdrup at his return to Norway in 1948, was long gone, and he turned his focus to his main field of interest – oceanography – following the geopolitical trend of world aid.²⁶⁰ As for the contribution to Norwegian relations to the other participation countries, the effect of the expedition proved of minimal importance. Instead it weakened the bilateral cooperation between Norway and Britain due to the administrative difficulties and the disagreements on settlement in the aftermath.²⁶¹ Still the expedition provided a line of communication for Sweden with the west alliance, without the apparent cooperation eliciting Soviet reaction. As the idea of a Scandinavian defence union dispersed with Norway entering the NATO in 1949, Sweden remained with its neutral line in politic, albeit leaning towards the

²⁵⁵ Sverker Sörlin, *Hans W:son Ahlmann, Arctic Research and Polar Warming: From a National to an International Scientific Agenda, 1929-1952*, vol. no. 14, Reprint (Umeå universitet, Northern Studies Programme) (Umeå: Umeå University, 1997): 389

²⁵⁶ Ward, "Scientific Research in Antarctica: Review," (1958): 238

²⁵⁷ Roberts, *The European Antarctic: Science and Strategy in Scandinavia and the British Empire*: 117, 128

²⁵⁸ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 343

²⁵⁹ Swithinbank, *Foothold on Antarctica : The First International Expedition (1949-1952) : Through the Eyes of its Youngest Member*: 227

²⁶⁰ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 349f

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*: 356

west.²⁶² Even though the turbulence following the expedition, especially the disputes over settlement with Britain, nearly causing a diplomatic fall-out, the projected public image of harmony consisted.²⁶³ The later stories of the expedition builds to this view; with the stating the NBSX as a scientifically motivated expedition with the world's climate in focus²⁶⁴, which put scientific investigation before geographical discovery.²⁶⁵ The legacy of its expedition members and their later work and impact (e.g. Schytt as the first Secretary of the Special Committee on Antarctic Research²⁶⁶, Gordon Robin as Director at SPRI) has also contributed to the symbolic image created around the expedition.²⁶⁷

As the International Geophysical Year, brought the superpowers and their state-financed, professionalised research to Antarctica, the created image of the NBSX, made it fit the description as a worthy forerunner.²⁶⁸ And despite the bitter arguments between the participating countries after its return, the NBSX has a powerful symbolic legacy.²⁶⁹

4.3 Focusing north

The NBSX returned to a changed world. The acute Soviet threat had diminished and with Norway entering the NATO, western allies were close by. Stalin's death in 1953 gave hope at furthering détente between the east and the west. This was reflected in the minimal NPI budgets, as there was no reason for the previously expected expansive presence and activity. The short-staffed situation at the NPI, together with the decreases in government funding (except for the additional grants for the NBSX, the NPI received less funding every year during Sverdrup's ten years as director and the funding for the planned Norway Station during the IGY was paid in addition over the Ministry of Church Affairs and Education budget), made Sverdrup's visions difficult to implement. The operations in Svalbard and Northeast-Greenland continued, (as the had under the NSIU) occupying most of the staff and resources. With the newly established

²⁶² Lewander, "Den norsk-brittisk-svenska expeditionens okända sidor 1949-1952,": 170f

²⁶³ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 348

²⁶⁴ Schytt, *Med känsla för is : om polarforskaren Valter Schytt och gåtorna hans Antarktisexpedition bidrog till att lösa*: 10

²⁶⁵ G. E. Fogg, *A History of Antarctic Science*, Studies in polar research (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 168

²⁶⁶ Later Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research

²⁶⁷ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 332

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*: 349

²⁶⁹ Sverker Sörlin, *Science, Geopolitics and Culture in the Polar Region: Norden Beyond Borders*, (London, England, New York: Routledge, 2016), <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tromsoub-ebooks/reader.action?docID=1336211>. Chapter 4 – footnote 66. See Roberts, *The European Antarctic: Science and Strategy in Scandinavia and the British Empire*: 139

Research Councils (NTNF and NAVF), responsible for distributing the research funds, and channelling the funds directly to the universities and museums, the NPI was left without the possibility to build up a scientific research institute and its influence diminished. The organisational structure—NPI placed under the Ministry of Industry added to the gap between the NPI and the universities and research institutes. Instead of being a supplier of projects, the NPI became a logistic supplier for research institutions.²⁷⁰

As for Antarctica, H.U. Sverdrup had already given up on the idea of the NPI becoming a "centre for the international meteorological studies in Antarctica"²⁷¹ on his return from the midseason trip to Maudheim in 1951. He noted in his diary that it was best to "give the land back to the penguins".²⁷² Although South Africa wished for a continuance of meteorological surveying at Maudheim, Sverdrup was tired of the administrative challenges and costs an operation so far away accumulated. When the questions of a Norwegian participation in and plans for the forthcoming IGY were raised by the Foreign Office in 1954, Sverdrup simply replied "No". With limited funds there were no plans of a second operation to the Antarctic.²⁷³ But with the rise in tensions between the east and the west, the Norwegian sovereignty claims in the polar regions became a political issue yet again. Increased Soviet activity in the Arctic, other interested nations entering the Antarctic, interspersed with the US fear of Norwegian lack of attending to its territorial claims, forced the plans of a new operation in the Antarctic during the IGY.²⁷⁴ The pressure to perform science in the Antarctic became more of a burden for the participating countries of the NBSX than a privilege.²⁷⁵ Norway Station was erected in Dronning Maud Land in December 1956. It had originally been planned for two years, but was prolonged for a third season due to the continuance of Soviet and US activity and a fear of losing the possibility of influencing the future of Antarctic governance.²⁷⁶ The international cooperation led to the forming of the Special Committee on Antarctic Research with Schytt as its first Secretary. This resulted in the establishment of the Antarctic Treaty in 1959, to "ensure a peaceful use of and scientific cooperation in Antarctica".²⁷⁷ Norway participated due to its

²⁷⁰ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 369-372; Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 296-306

²⁷¹ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 307

²⁷² Sverdrup, *NBSX : dagbok fra Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition*: February 20th 1951

²⁷³ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 374

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*: 375-378

²⁷⁵ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 359

²⁷⁶ Sörlin, *Science, Geopolitics and Culture in the Polar Region: Norden Beyond Borders*: Part I, Chapter 4: 85

²⁷⁷ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 290-294

prolonged activity during the IGY. With the growing political attention on Svalbard due to the ongoing Cold war, and the waning (need for) Norwegian interest in the Antarctic, due to the Antarctic Treaty and a decline in whaling, Norway Station was transferred to South African authorities in November 1959.²⁷⁸ And as for the working-up of the large-scale cartography undertaken at Norway Station by the Norwegians: it suffered the same fate as the NBSX results. Because of a lack of funding and resources, they were published well over 10 years later. Norwegian polar policies in these years showed an inclination on losing sight of the value of science and its results as a symbolic value in politics. Science only became important to science itself. The politicians contented themselves with presence in the region itself.

²⁷⁸ Sörlin, *Science, Geopolitics and Culture in the Polar Region: Norden Beyond Borders*: Part I, Chapter 4: 91f

Chapter 5: **The Motives**

5.1 **Working together**

The perceived view is that the NBSX was an apolitical venture with international cooperation of specialised scientific importance. But this thesis shows that the motives of the expedition were multifaceted. All the motives prompted research in the polar areas, built on ongoing processes and operations, policies and geopolitical events. The motives are intertwined, influencing each other, and their intensity changes on a temporal scale. Therefore, it is difficult to separate them. In this chapter, I will therefore follow the motives during the three phases; before, during, and after the expedition.

From the early discoveries, to the hunt for marine resources, the Antarctic was an area of exploration, commerce and politics. Onset by a wish to seek more knowledge, the Basic research motive prompted the Political and Economic motives upon the discovery of fertile lands and seas and the wish for control over these areas. The onset of pelagic whaling in the Antarctic and the technological advancements of the interwar era changed the whaling industry. The Economical motive was –together with the Political and Jurisdictional motive—highly present in the Antarctic. When whaling picked up in the post-war years, it necessitated more restrictive quotas for the "development of the industry".²⁷⁹ This action was founded on the Economical motive and prompted the need for knowledge of whale-stocks. With science, the Basic research motive, again, emerges, as the Antarctic was an advantageous area for research. Research influenced jurisdictional decisions and the political involvement with regards to whaling restrictions. The difficulties regarding the enforcement of jurisdiction in the Antarctic turned the Basic research motive into the justification for exercising the Jurisdictional motives. In addition, the Political motive utilized science as a means of strengthening sovereignty claims. This resulted in a trade-off between science and politics. The interwar focus on polar logistics spurred the Military motive in the Antarctic.²⁸⁰ With the FIDS, Britain already had a military presence in the area and engaged in active research with the Whaling Investigations in the Southern Oceans (discussed on page 13-14), leaning on both the Jurisdictional and Economic motive. During and after the Second World War, the strategic value of the polar regions came into focus, leading to a mobilisation around the Military motives in the Antarctic. The military

²⁷⁹ "The International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling," in *Whaling and International Law*, ed. Malgosia Fitzmaurice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015)

²⁸⁰ Roberts, *A Frozen Field of Dreams: Science, Strategy, and the Antarctic in Norway, Sweden, and the British Empire, 1912-1952*: 321

presence and activity also supported the Political motives in marking national presence, both for claimant and non-claimant countries.

The need to strengthen sovereignty claims laid the premise for what was to become the NBSX. With the British need to strengthen its claims in the dispute with Argentina and Chile, a collaboration with the Nordic countries was desirable. The imminent British recognition of the Norwegian claim aspired for a cooperation. Yet, the idea for the NBSX originated from and was based on the Basic research motive and Ahlmann's wish to collect data that could spread light on the ongoing climatic changes: "one of the most powerful natural phenomena of our generation".²⁸¹ Ahlmann was driven by his previous glacial research, and inspired by photographs from the *Schwabenland* expedition. The scientific results from the venture would produce knowledge that was essential to understanding the past and address the present changes. The Environmental motive is found in the expedition's emblematic scientific question: climate change. Research was needed to find out whether it was a global phenomenon. The melting of glaciers in the rest of the world had already been confirmed leading to questions about what would happen to the earth if the same glacial retraction and ice melting also occurred in Antarctica. More research was needed. Potential discoveries of mineral resources due to melting spurred the Economical motive and acted as a motivation for the need for jurisdiction and political action. As for the global consequences – Ahlmann had envisioned that climate change and rising temperatures would co-occur with positive effects like longer growing seasons and more tree growth due to a rise in tree line. Simultaneously, he also predicted drought as a negative effect. This influenced Norway and Sweden's Economic and Political motives: the scientific programme and its potential significances were primary motivators for mobilizing resources. The possible global effects of climate changes were closely tied to the Political, Environmental and Economic motives fuelling the need for research. Science brought knowledge; knowledge that was essential to understanding the past and predicting the future. Science became the instrument to legitimate Antarctic presence and validate the Jurisdictional motive. For Norway, science was a mean to consolidate its claim, thus giving rise to the Political motive. Unlike previous Norwegian ventures to the Antarctic, the NBSX was government-funded, and operated with an official statement of national presence and consolidation. The Political motive was the premise for the realisation of the expedition, even though the expedition was not highlighted as a political expedition. Still, science was the instrument of marking national presence. Although there were forces driving forward an all-Norwegian

²⁸¹ SATø, Arkiv fra NSIU og NP: Db 0197 10B/13 Antarktis (Svenska Antarktiska Kommitten)

expedition in the wish to state national presences, the Political motive was bound to the *symbolic value* of science. Thus, the need to perform specialized science where its credibility was needed to underwrite political credibility.²⁸² And with the shortage of trained personnel, an international cooperation was preferable for gaining the wanted results. The principle of effective occupation and nationalism, where sciences and their activity created the base for any claim, and the following scientific knowledge strengthened these.²⁸³ This was the legacy from Hoel and the early whalers, which loomed in the halls of politics, although the international visionaries Ahlmann and Sverdrup sought openness and cooperation.

In the planning phase of the expedition, we find military presence in the composition of the committees. All three countries had military representatives and held contact with their respective military administrations.²⁸⁴ The scientific programme was constructed to support national interests, with cartography as the main objective. Charting unknown areas and naming land translated into printed and published maps that could be used as hard political currency in the disputes over sovereignty.²⁸⁵ The possibility of testing new equipment and train personnel was of great military interest. A scientific programme with planned excursions supported the Military motive, which drew funding from the military to the sciences.²⁸⁶ The emblematic research on climate change could reveal areas becoming more accessible due to glacial retraction. These findings were expected to benefit military and industrial operations and lead to advances in weather forecasts and communication. The use of military air crews was a necessity for the execution of the expedition and for the scientific surveys, with the Political, Jurisdictional and Economic motive adherent. The NSBX's show of presence in the area, the activity and the results from science added to the Jurisdictional motive. In addition, potentially gained knowledge about how to secure sovereignty in these areas led to a spark in the Political motive. The science programme also spurred the Economic motive, as well as the Political motive: development within meteorology and aircraft technology created strategic interest in the polar regions.²⁸⁷ So, the *practical use* of science was utilized in strengthening the Norwegian claim in the Antarctic.²⁸⁸ The Basic research motive substantiated the Political motive, resulting in a trade-off between the two. Ahlmann stressed the disciplinary specialisation to find useful

²⁸² Svedin and Aniansson, *Society and the Environment: A Swedish Research Perspective*: 277f

²⁸³ Drivenes, "Ishavsimperialisme," : 206f

²⁸⁴ Lewander, "Den norsk-brittisk-svenska expeditionens okända sidor 1949-1952," : 164

²⁸⁵ Friedman, "Å spise kirsebær med de store": 405

²⁸⁶ Sörlin, "Polare jubileer: kunnskap og politikk i nord," : 12-18

²⁸⁷ Barr, *Norway, a Consistent Polar Nation?: Analysis of An Image Seen Through the History of the Norwegian Polar Institute*: 251

²⁸⁸ Schild, "The Politics of International Collaboration in Polar Research," : 38-40

results, and that cooperation was a key part.²⁸⁹ The cooperation was linked to mutual interests (and gains) for the three countries driven by Political, Economic, Military and Jurisdictional motives. In regards to these motives, there existed not just a potential, symbolic value of cooperation itself (between the nations and military), but the results from the scientific collaboration would also bring forth *practical value*. The *symbolic value* of science, on the contrary, took part in raising the international esteem of the new Norwegian Polar Institute. In addition, the Political motive was a part of the strengthening of specific geopolitical constellations, between the Nordic countries and Britain, but was soon overshadowed by US and Soviet domination.²⁹⁰ In the course of the planning of the expedition all motives were present, with the Basic research and Political motive as initial triggers for the others.

During the execution of the expedition, the scientific activity and presence verified Norwegian sovereignty and the Political motive was achieved. The scientific programme was set beforehand, but ultimately modified and prioritized "on the spot" due to challenges provided by the location and the available the personnel. New equipment and working methods were tested on the expedition and ground-breaking new information about the continent was found. This *practical value* of science brought forward the Military and Economical motives. The NBSX delivered both knowledge to support the jurisdictional functions and to prompt the Economical motive further. The meteorological work performed during the expedition, contributed valuable knowledge of weather systems both in the short term – with daily weather forecasts going out– and in the long term – with the understanding of southern hemisphere weather systems improving significantly. The meteorological data proved valuable to whalers and especially to South Africa and other interested nations (Argentina and Chile) who employed this them in military operations. The possibility of the discovery of mineral resources, which was hyped by the media, also contributed to the Economical motive. The surveying of both marine and on land resources, were of interest to the Norwegian government and the industry. With the use of new equipment on the expedition and the development of technology both the Political and Military motive were in focus due to the potential *practical value*. Although operating at the end of the world, the reverberations of changes in the geopolitical situation caught up with the expedition. The high expectations set for the newly established NPI did not persist and the envisions of fruitful cooperation had resulted in a hefty administration. The *practical value* derived from the expedition was not enough to maintain the political interest.

²⁸⁹ Sörlin, *Hans W:son Ahlmann, Arctic Research and Polar Warming: From a National to an International Scientific Agenda, 1929-1952*, no. 14: 389

²⁹⁰ Roberts, *The European Antarctic: Science and Strategy in Scandinavia and the British Empire*: 154

And so, the trade-off between science and politics only lasted until the money ran out. As for the Environmental motive, this was partially debunked when the scientific results showed no signs of glacial retraction in the Antarctic but remained highly present in the discussions of whaling restrictions.

At the return and in the aftermath of the NBSX, the Basic research motive naturally lost its advantageous position. Whilst unsuccessful in the search for global warming, the other disciplines and results were highlighted, and the *symbolic value* of science remained. The continued highlighting the research had motivated innovation and interest in other areas as well. The Political motive, for example, was dependent on a successful scientific programme to maintain the prestige to strengthen its claim and the Jurisdictional motive needed the updated knowledge base to continue its jurisdictional functions. As for the young scientists, their academic degrees depended on the working up and publishing of material. In the aftermath, the issue of unpublished results diminished the pay-out for all these motives. Still, the *symbolic value* of the highly successful scientific programme increased the Political motive and was a factor in the continued additional funding for the working up of results—although funds were insufficient to result in publications within a reasonable time frame. The Economical motive decreased by the lack of potential resources—including a decline in whaling. The need for an updated knowledge base to exercise the jurisdictional functions along decreased along with an economical pay-out. Thus, the Jurisdictional motive lost its ground when the working up of the results after the expeditions return did not materialize or were delayed. The Military motive though, received value for money: personnel returned from a "civilian" expedition trained in arctic survival and equipment had been sufficiently tested.

The highlighting of the scientific relevance, together with the continued unknown of the Antarctic made it an advantageous research area, and the Basic research motive inspired further scientific exploits. The scientific results still produced a *practical value* in the preparation for the upcoming IGY. In 1954, when the issue of lack of a Norwegian presence in the Antarctic was raised, again, a new round of scientific and political trade-off began. The old and familiar principal of efficient occupation became the driving force for the Political motive, in addition to the strengthening of specific geopolitical constellations.

5.2 Basic Research Motive

The NBSX originated out of the Basic research motive and Ahlmann's idea. This occurred in a trade-off with the Political motive so that it could attain the necessary funding. This trade-off made little restrictions to what type of research was to be undertaken, as the actual presence of scientists during the expedition was sufficient to underpin sovereignty claims. The plentiful scientific results promised long-term gain and *practical value*, but in the aftermath the delay on working up of scientific results made the costs of finishing it too high to justify its value. Only when forced by political pressure prior to the forthcoming IGY, the *practical value* emerged, again and grants were given to publish (some of) the results.

5.3 Political Motive

The need to strengthen the Norwegian sovereignty claim in the Antarctic (which was demanded from Britain fearing other nations' encroachment) triggered the Political motive and was the premise for the realisation of the expedition. By utilising science to mark national presence and underlining the scientific value, the *symbolic value* from the results gave international prestige and strengthened the sovereignty claims as a trade-off between science and politics. The international cooperation during the expedition was part of the Political motive's way to strengthen the ties between the Nordic countries and Britain. But ripples from the geopolitical situation and the bulky administration led to a strained relationship between the nations in the aftermath. The Political motive of presence in the Antarctic had been achieved. Considering the cost of the settlement upon the return, the *symbolic value* did not justify the cost. Still, the principal of efficient occupation resonated high among politicians. When external pressure questioned Norwegian sovereignty, money was allotted for the working up of the results that would provide political currency and save the Norwegian honour in the sovereignty question.

5.4 Economic Motive

The Economic motive was closely linked to whaling and its commercial interests and with subsequent jurisdictional functions. The scientific programme contributed to the commercial interests mostly through meteorological work. Even though there were speculations of possible mineral resources, these were never openly considered for economic exploitation. Still there was a precautionary policy to secure the jurisdictional functions in case of future possibilities. The Economic motive advocated the use of new technology and equipment on the expedition and spurred the Political, Military and Jurisdictional motives. In the years following the expedition, the decrease in whaling and the ensuing drop in the need for jurisdictional functions led to the weakening demand of economic factors.

5.5 Military Motive

The full extent of the Military motive cannot be accounted for, as the sources I have used only give an overview of the external communication from the military to the committees. Nevertheless, these communications show a desire for cooperation due to the gain of experience and the possibility of training testing new equipment in an attractive arena. In addition, military cooperation was necessary for the execution of the expedition and its scientific programme. The potential results from the emblematic research also appealed to the Military motive, as future possibilities could be revealed.

5.6 Jurisdictional Motive

The Jurisdictional motive is intertwined with the Political motive and was necessary to enforce the territorial claims in the Antarctic. The expedition and its scientific programme gave valuable results to the demanded knowledge base of the Jurisdictional motive. In the aftermath of the expedition, the delay of published results negatively affected the Jurisdictional motive. It lost its ground when the working up of the results failed to be accomplished within a reasonable time frame. An external push of the Political motive, in connection to the quickly approaching IGY, was required to recover the much-needed jurisdictional functions in the Antarctic.

5.7 Environmental Motive

The expedition's emblematic scientific question, born from the Basic research motive, prompted the Environmental motive. Its investigations of global climate change caused the results and findings of the expedition to be of great potential and value. The possible glacial retraction bore interests to the Political (and subsequent the Jurisdictional motive), the Economic and the Military motive. Although the results published found an absence of warming trends that mirrored the ones encountered in the arctic and thus, ultimately refuted Ahlmann's original motivation for undertaking the expedition, the NBSX and its legacy still resulted in polar and global warming becoming a socially constructed environmental problem.²⁹¹

²⁹¹ Sörlin, *Hans W:son Ahlmann, Arctic Research and Polar Warming: From a National to an International Scientific Agenda, 1929-1952*, no. 14: 396

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The main research objective for this thesis has been to study the Norwegian-British-Swedish Expedition (NBSX), focusing on the Norwegian perspective and map the motives present. In order to give an account for these motives, the structure of presentation was set to follow the chronology of the expedition. Chapter 2 presents the period around the realisation of the expedition. It lays out the historical setting in order to explain the contemporary political and economic situation and the scientific interests and exploration in the Antarctic. The scientific interest resulted in Ahlmann's idea of an international operation set for Dronning Maud Land. The expedition to Antarctica was meant to extend his glaciological work from the Arctic to determine whether the contemporary climate changes were of regional or universal character. The possible global effects and his beliefs of Scandinavian obligation to participate in the quest for knowledge made him focus on international cooperation to realise his plans. Ahlmann's idea and plans are discussed thoroughly in 2.2. Ahlmann also had an influence in the establishment of the Norwegian polar institute in 1948. The institution that was to become the Norwegian flagship and secure Norway's role as a leading country on polar research. Due to the slow progress and lack of realisation of the expedition within the Norwegian Geographical Society, the NPI ended up with the organisational leadership of the expedition at its initiation.

Chapter 3: describes the planning and realisation of the expedition. The administrative construction of the expedition proved costly and bulky, and the committees established in the three countries show the political and military interests in the scientific venture. The international cooperation was founded on what benefited the nationalistic interests: Norway strove to uphold its sovereignty claims; Sweden desired a cooperation with western allies and Britain withed for imperialistic strengthening. Still, the NBSX was constructed and broadcasted as a purely scientific venture, although the only explanation for its realisation lies in the political motives for funding and on the military for the realisation of the scientific programme. Though, the sciences proved valuable both with its activity in the area and in the long term with its results for the motives.

In Chapter 4: the aftermath of the expedition is presented and the problems with a lack of funding for the working up of the research material appear. The ambitious future of the NPI was long gone, and the fruitful cooperation turned into a diplomatic affair between Britain and Norway in a dispute over monetary settlement. The scientific value was no longer a priority to the political motives, but still important to the researchers. Several of them achieved academic degrees with the results from the scientific work undertaken on the expedition. A few years

later the planned IGY, again, sparked the need for political engagement through scientific work. Money was allotted to finish the topographic work and yet another expedition was planned for the Antarctic. Thus, throughout the turbulence following the expedition, the projected public image of harmony consisted, the scientific focus remained, and its legacy was constructed.

Chapter 5: presents the chain of motives and links different aspects of the expedition linked to them. The expedition had several motives prompting the scientific work undertaken and ensuring the execution of the venture. It shows that the motives are closely connected. The Basic research motive and the Political motive acted as the source; the other motives derived from these. Changes in the geopolitical situation impacted the expedition and the after-work, causing fluctuations in the different motives. By pointing out the different motives and showing connections to external factors this thesis gives a more nuanced picture to the perception of the expedition.

Let us now return to the hypothesis posed in 1.1, which I will divide it into four parts when answering. The first part stated that the scientific motives were the driving forces in the realisation of the expedition. As addressed in 2.2, the idea for the expedition originated from Hans Wilhelmsson Ahlmann. His field studies of glaciers in the Nordic uncovered glacial retraction and reports from other studies indicated the same happening in Africa and South America. During the Second World War, he laid the plans for an expedition to Antarctica to extend his glaciological work and find proof for his theory that the climate changes were a global phenomenon. Driven by his search for knowledge, Ahlmann laid the foundations for such a venture, building an extensive network and relying on international cooperation for the execution. As further discussed in 5.1 the conception of the idea for an expedition was rooted in the Basic Research motive, and in the trade-off between science and politics. Further planning involved the Political and Military motives for the practical realisation of the expedition.

The second part of the hypothesis stated that the large, and unrealised economic potential of Antarctica resulted in the presence of political interests. As shown in 2.1, the Political motive was already present before the realisation of the expedition, due to existing commercial interests and competition for hunting grounds and the expanding search for marine resources. But in the planning of the NBSX a new vision of mineral resources appeared. These unrealised potential resources were highlighted, and hyped up, by the media, but stood in contrast to the official branding of the expedition. The excessive media representation led to the organisers to denounce any plans of exploring for such. Instead, the novelty of an international expedition,

aiming at answering global climate questions was put in the spotlight. Still it can be argued that the political involvement regarding the strengthening of sovereignty was a part of a precautionary policy to secure the jurisdictional functions in case of future possibilities.

The third part of the hypothesis states that the escalation of the geopolitical situation in the Arctic and Antarctic forced politically and militarily motivated actions from all three participating countries in order to secure territorial interests. Already during the Second World War there had been military operations in the Antarctic. With the onset of the Cold War in the post-war era, the Antarctic situation escalated to an arena of security concerns as mentioned in 2.1. Disputes over sovereignty, and the involvement from non-claimant countries also contributed to the strained situation. The future govern of Antarctica was uncertain and different ideas of global administration had been presented. This forced a political engagement, which is further discussed in 4.3. It was important to secure territorial interests and a possible say for any of the participating countries in the future. In utilizing the NBSX and its scientific programme, Norway (and Britain) could mark their national presence, as a political trade-off with science, and securing territorial claims. As presented in 3.3, the internationalism of the expedition also made it possible for military observers from all three countries (including the Dominions) to join a "civilian" ship, collect data, experiment and test equipment on a more "neutral" ground, than in the tense circumstances around the Arctic. The training of personnel and testing of equipment was key in a potential escalation of the situation in the Arctic. And it was a possibility for Sweden to reach out to the western allies, without the apparent cooperation eliciting Soviet reaction.

The final statement presents that during and after the expedition the political interest was waning, and that the high costs of the operation did not make up for the potential gain from the scientific results, presence or the cooperation between the countries. As discussed in Chapter 4:, the reverberations in the geopolitical situation in the Arctic caught up with the expedition. As the costs increased, the circumstances were wearing on the political motivation and on the administrative apparatus. At the expedition's return, the envisaged ambitious future of the NPI was curtailed, with minimum funding and focus on the continuation of operations in Svalbard and Northeast-Greenland. The previously expected demand for an expansive presence and activity in the Antarctic was no longer needed, as the NBSX had accomplished to (at least temporary) secure national interests with its presence in the Antarctic. In the aftermath of the expedition, the disputes over settlement and the continuous requests for funding for the working up of the massive amount of scientific results, put restraints on the aspiring cooperation between the countries. The administration had proved costly and cumbersome, adding to the difficulties

in the wake of the expedition. The lack of government funding was a reflection of both the difficult post-war economy and a diminished wish (and need) to support activity in the Antarctic.

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Appendix

Members of the expedition:

- John Giaever (49), Norwegian, leader of the wintering party
- Valter Schytt (30), Swedish, chief glaciologist, second-in-command
- Gordon de Quetteville Robin (27), Australian, geophysicist, third-in-command
- Nils Jørgen Schumacher (30), Norwegian, chief meteorologist
- Gösta Liljequist (35), Swedish, assistant meteorologist
- Ernest Frederick Roots (26), Canadian, chief geologist
- Alan Reece (27), British, assistant geologist
- Charles Swithinbank (22), British, assistant glaciologist
- Nils Roer (34), Norwegian, topographic surveyor
- Ove Wilson (28), Swedish, medical officer
- Bertil Ekström (29), Swedish, mechanical engineer
- Egil Rogstad (41), Norwegian, radio operator
- Peter Melleby (33), Norwegian, in charge of dogs
- John Snarby (28), Norwegian, cook (replaced Schølberg Nilsen)
- Leslie Quar, (27), British, radio mechanic (hired when the wintering party were put ashore)

Additional members 2nd season:

- Stig Hallgren, (26), Swedish, photographer and handy-man
- John Jelbart, (24), Australian, physicist and AU observer
- Bjarne Lorentzen, (51), Norwegian, cook (replaced John Snarby)

Ekström, Quar, Jelbart and Hallgren were in a weasel accident in February 1951 and only Hallgren survived.