



The Urban Arctic

Towards a new understanding
of the North

Friday, June 10, 2016 – Umeå



Celia Yoshida Ahlin, Master student in Geography and Economic History, Umeå University

Challenges and Potential of Peripheral Cities in Sweden - The case of Vilhelmina

This presentation will be about 'fragmented' development over time from the aspects of differences between individual places at different times. The case of Vilhelmina, in the countryside of northern Sweden, shows evidence of diversity and that not all locations in the area have had the same experience of 'decline'. The presentation aims to open discussions about what can we learn from history and what are the challenges and potential of peripheral cities in Sweden?



Alexandre Dubois, Researcher at the Department of Urban and Rural Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

Small town, boundless opportunities – Transnational entrepreneurship in Sweden's northern periphery

In its traditional form, Northern Development revolves around the exploitation and processing of the abundant natural resources of the Swedish North. In this presentation, I will discuss the role of local agency in creating new development trajectories for remote communities through the establishment of new activities related to science and technology. The presentation will investigate how external knowledge and resources as well as local social capital have been mobilized during this process.



Sébastien Gadal, Professor at the Department of Geography in Spatial Analysis and Geomatics, Aix-Marseille University

Metropolisation, urbanisation and flood debacle modeling exposures of Yakutsk (Russia)

Some circumpolar regions as Yakutsk in the North Eastern Siberia are characterised by an emerging process of metropolisation. The emergence of large urban areas in Yakutsk increases the level of vulnerability of the population of the Lena's river debacle flooding. A spatial model based on remote sensing measures the level of urban population exposure of flooding, the vulnerability to the spring breakup flood risk and potential consequences.

Key-words: Metropolisation, Flooding, Modelling, Vulnerability, Arctic, Yakutsk



[Brynhild Granås](#), Researcher at University of Tromsø (UiT)

The nature of the urban Arctic – Learnings from Kiruna

Over the years, the outside world has paid great attention to the town moving process in Kiruna, Sweden, while approaching this peculiar example of reurbanization as sensational. This presentation will describe some dynamics of the town moving process and argue for seeing Kiruna, not as an “exception”, but rather as a case that illuminate aspects of the nature of urbanization processes in the Arctic, both in terms of natural riches and power relations at play.



[Hannu I. Heikkinen](#), Professor of Cultural Anthropology, University of Oulu

Context sensitivity in local adaptation studies

Climate Change and Arctic mining boom are critical challenges of today. However, global reasoning and concepts are powerful frames and they easily suppress or distract other concerns under the curtain of global arguments. I will shed light on these problematics by the case studies on reindeer herding, tourism and extractive industries. Key conclusion is that research on globally formulating research agendas is important, but approaches should be kept sensitive and critical from the key conceptualisations to the practical research arrangements.

Keywords: Political ecology, climate change, vulnerability, tourism, reindeer herding, extractive industries, rural livelihoods, Fennoscandia.



[Torill Nyseth](#), Professor at University of Tromsø (UiT)

Urban identification and affiliation among city-Sami in Tromsø, Rovaniemi and Umeå

The presentation presents the particularities of arctic urbanism and arctic cities with a particular focus on urban indigenous issues.

[Rasmus Ole Rasmussen](#), Senior Research Fellow, Nordregio - Nordic Centre for Spatial Development

Urbanisation in the Arctic – new opportunities or challenges?

Urbanisation is a global trend and is the result of people seeking new opportunities. One way to look upon it is considering it being a threat to the way we are living now and have become accustomed to. Another way may be to look upon urbanisation as a way of adapting to the ever changing challenges in the world we live in. In this potential dilemma some communities are planning the process of urbanisation in a way where the maintenance of a rationale of economic growth and related land use changes may be an overarching guideline. Other countries and communities are focussing on the options of maintain land use characteristics and economic rationales based on traditional resource exploitations and socio-cultural structures and approaches. In this presentation the focus is on how these differences in approaches are showing in Greenland based on two sources. On one hand the overarching planning process reflected through the Comprehensive Land Planning (first plan presented in 2015, the second plan being generated in 2016). And on the other hand the reflections generated through the ongoing foresight analyses process being the core of the Nordic Working Group for Sustainable Regional Development in the Arctic (finalizing by the end of 2016).





Linda Sandberg, Researcher at Umeå Centre for Gender Studies, Umeå University

Gender-aware city planning in the Urban Arctic

Norrland is often represented and constructed as a “typical male” region, a region dominated by rural problems. The “male” power structure is often depicted as a static problem, a part of a rural traditionally bound periphery which cannot be changed. In public discourse, Kiruna is positioned as a town adjusted to men which is a situation in need of change; it is argued that gender equality is a necessity for Kiruna’s survival. Put differently: there are clear ambitions for change. By studying how gender equality is made and how gender equality is produced in different practices, this presentation will focus on the implications of these ambitions.



Kristina Sehlin Macneil, PhD student at Vaartoe - Centre for Sami Research, Umeå University

Urban obstacles or carriers of an important cultural heritage? The dialogue between Laevas Sameby and LKAB Mining

For over a hundred years Laevas Sameby (reindeer herding Sami community) has felt the impact of LKAB mining on their traditional lands. Reindeer grazing lands are constantly decreasing as different extractive industries want access to Sápmi. Laevas sameby are far from the only Indigenous group experiencing threats to their traditional livelihood because of industrial developments. In recent years Sami voices have reached the media more frequently and Sami perspectives on the power struggles between their traditional livelihoods and extractive industries show that both cultural and structural violence are present in these situations.



Olof Stjernström, Ass. Professor in Geography and Economic History, Umeå University

Labour income effects of the recent “mining boom” in Northern Sweden

The presentation is based on a recently published study by Sofia Tano, Örjan Pettersson and Olof Stjernström (2016) in Resources Policy (492016 31-40). The study investigates and analyses the income effects of the large investments made in the mining industry in the north of Sweden during the latest economic mining boom. The study shows not only rapid income growth for employees in the mining industry but also for employees in related branches or industries. The effect is much stronger in the mining towns but a certain geographical spread effect could also be observed.



Yvette Vaguet, Ass. Professor at the Department of Geography, University of Rouen

Urbanization in connection to oil & gas development in the Ob river area (Northern Russia)

The Ob river region (Western Siberia), lying mainly in permafrost area, is already urban for a couple of decades. Since the development of oil industry from the mid-1960s, the region has experienced an urban transition as a consequence of a functional bifurcation that represents its industrialisation. This implies a rapid pace and considerable in-migration. Nowadays, 23 out of about thirty cities have been created ex-nihilo. Because of its half-century-old experience, the region appears a key-area when questioning the urban fact in the Arctic.