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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

The *Arctic & Antarctic International Journal of Circumpolar Socio-Cultural Issues* (A&A-IJCSCI), is an international, peer-reviewed, scholarly journal published annually on behalf of the International Association of Circumpolar Socio-Cultural Issues (IACSI) and the Foundation of High Studies on Antarctica and Extreme Environments (FAE, Argentina), under the auspices of the University of Iceland (Department of Sociology), the University of Jyväskylä (Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy, Finland), the University of Oulu (Thule Institute, Finland), and the Universidad del Salvador (Circumpolar Studies Program, Research Department, Argentina).

The A&A-IJCSCI has been created by scholars from Social Sciences, Anthropology and Humanities, and also from individuals with different backgrounds but interested in these perspectives and themes, to provide a forum for the study and discussion of the different and interdependent socio-cultural aspects of both circumpolar regions, promoting an international and interdisciplinary dialogue concerning the subjects thereof. In this sense, we privilege articles in the Journal with reference to:

- Local Communities and Extreme Environments
- Habitat, Social Interaction and Identity
- Social Problems and Policies
- Minorities and Aboriginal Cultures
- Migration and Socio-cultural Integration
- Prehistory and History
- Literature and Arts
- Geopolitics and International Relations

- Arctic and Antarctic Comparative Studies
- Other issues related to socio-cultural themes concerning circumpolar areas.

Thinking of the importance of a holistic understanding of the circumpolar phenomenon, we have also considered the need to study the "circumpolar theme" in its bi-polar dimension: the Arctic and the Antarctica, in order to look for convergences and divergences under the debates Local/Global, and North/South, and also looking for the production and transference of knowledge.

Considering the emerging planetwide ecological crisis, both an adequate diagnosis and prognosis are needed. The habitat (and the home) must be lived, but also dreamt of; the dream is another dimension of living. Otherwise, as the poet observes, reality lacks something more than reality itself. And this is so because we did not dream enough at home; as Rilke (*Vergers*, XLI) states in his poetry:

*"Oh, nostalgia of the places that were not
loved enough during that transient time!
How much I wish to give them back, as from a distance
the forgotten gesture, the supplementary act!"*

The home is the way in which we day-by-day settle down in our intimate corner of the world, the place where we "ruminate the primitive" (Bachelard: *La poétique de l'espace*), a turning point in the dialectical interplay of the universe and the house.

Editors wish you pleasant and inspiring moments with this first issue, ending this editorial with words of the famous Saami activist and artist Nils-Aslak Valkeapää (*Introductory poem to Trekways of the Wind*), trying to emphasize the importance of rich, multiple and deep understanding of southern and northern "extremes":

*Do I have to say
that I think about you and therefore write
Do I also have to say
that I like you
But you have probably heard that
already in the sound of the wind
When darkness fell
you became visible in the lines of the mountain
Until I no longer knew
was it you
or did my eyes delude me.*

Conceptualizing the North: Orientalism in the Arctic

Juha Ridanpää (University of Oulu, Finland)

Abstract

In this article the purpose is to illustrate how the concept of 'north' has gathered its meaning through the social and cultural process of regional stereotyping, exoticism and mythology, and to scrutinize how the concept attains its meanings through a certain aspect of binarism. This will be elucidated through the example of Finnish northernness and its geographical manifestations. The theoretical stance comes close to the context of postcolonial criticism. The aim is to view how the mechanism of social and cultural power relations has worked at the institutional levels of Finnish northern art (literature) and science and especially, what consequences there have occurred in terms of northern cultural life.

Keywords: northernness, Lapland, postcolonial theories, orientalism, otherness, stereotypes, exoticism, myths, literature, art.

Introduction: The Multitude of Norths

Considering northernness purely semantically, its definition comes from the cardinal point of the compass, the opposite of south. With certain provisions, a point of the compass can be approached as being an objective, universal manner of perceiv-

ing northerness, but when 'north' turns into 'the North', the objective cardinal point becomes regionalized, transformed into "a mental region conveying specific ideological, cultural and political connotations" (Hagen 2003: 490). From this point of view 'the absence of coniferous trees', as a suggestion for a regional definition of the Arctic (Young 1988: 13), can be approached as a perceptual characteristic from within the natural sciences employed to define northerness, possibly as an act of science policy. The North is much more than a cardinal point: the North, whether in terms of economics, military regimes or environmental protection, has its own contextual and conceptual worlds. Similarly, people in the small villages of Lapland, Helsinki, Sicily and Nairobi all have their different norths (cf. Shields 2002), not only because the physical locations of the hands holding the compass are different, but because the cultural, social and political standpoints from which the boundaries of the North are viewed are in different positions. In the Kenyan context, for instance, northerness may refer to the unjustified wealth of capitalist society and to the history of colonialism, while in a British context the North stands for regionalized stereotypes of industry, depression, a cold climate and *hoi polloi* (see Shields 1991: 231). All this accentuates how imaginative the concept of 'the North' actually is. It is not a region located beyond a certain line of latitude, but rather beyond the social and cultural ambitions of the human imagination.

Although the North attains its meanings in various contextual circumstances, one thing that is common to almost all of them is that they become meaningful through a certain aspect of binarism. This will be elucidated here through the example of Finnish northerness. Considered internationally, the whole country of Finland is often associated with northerness, so that it represents a northern dimension in EU politics, for instance (see Moisio 2003), but the same process of binarism which separates south from north is also accruing inside Finland. In a Finnish context the North is perceived as the remotest corner of the

world, an excessively romantic and mythical natural environment with its looming fjords, flaming northern lights, cold winds, reindeer and the ethnic minority of exotically primitive native Sami. Together these stereotypes form an imaginary contrast to culture and civilization, a homogeneous region without any contradictions, conceived by the southern culture for its own hegemonic needs. Even though cold winds, reindeer and northern lights can indeed be found there, you can still come across warm houses, cars and traffic lights. As mentioned, the contexts from which the North derives its conceptual meaning vary, but all the different definitions are a question of someone's power to signify someone else, and what is most important, on their own behalf. In post-structuralist approaches language is perceived more as a construction of reality than as a reflection of it, which means that because informed language is spoken within a certain historical, social and cultural contextuality, the information it carries is always somehow contorted (Bertens 1995: 6). Defining a region exclusively in terms of a binary opposition between nature and culture implies a multi-dimensional social process, an exercise of power in which culture and civilization justify their own existence by excluding their opposites. The outcome of this colonialist activity is an imaginary region with fluctuating boundaries - the region commonly known as 'the North'.

The point of view adopted in this article is mainly geographical: the focus is on the processes by which stereotypes and myths find their spatial manifestations. When the North is conceptualized as a binary opposition to the world of culture and civilization, an imaginative nature-world built up on over-exaggerating stereotypes, the point of view comes close to the postcolonial critique. The aim is actually not to discuss the inner meanings of the northern wilderness as such, but rather to view how the mechanism of social and cultural power relations has worked at different institutional levels and what consequences it has had, especially in terms of northern cultural life.

The reason why cultural life is specifically discussed here is that according to the stereotypes through which the North has attained its definition there should not exist any cultural life there. Thus all the difficulties encountered in the establishment of northern culture over time constitute a fitting example of what northern subjugation has meant in practise. The focus is directed especially on the institution of literature, which has played a central and multifaceted role in the history of northern colonization. Northern literature is perceived here both as a constructor and a deconstructor of northern myths and stereotypes. But first it is important to ponder over whether the thematics of northernness actually fits into the context of postcolonial criticism at all.

Northern Orientalism: a Conceptual Dilemma?

When looking at the history of northern imagination from the perspective of postcolonial criticism one is automatically confronted with certain problems, mainly conceptual ones. The semantics of the word 'postcolonial' or 'post-colonialist' refers simply to something which has come after the colonial or colonialist era. According to Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (1989: 1), the semantic basis of the term refers to national cultures developed after the departure of the imperial powers, European powers such as Britain, France, Portugal and Spain, from the colonized countries. Following this definition, national histories in colonized areas can be divided into periods before and after independence, into a 'colonial' and a 'postcolonial' period. In their volume *The Empire Writes Back*, Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin use the term 'postcolonial' to "cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of the colonization to the present day" (ibid.: 2). The arguments provided for this definition include "a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by European imperial aggression" and "the new cross-cultural criticism which has

emerged in recent years and the discourse through which this is constituted" (ibid.: 2). All in all, the North does not easily fit in with these definitions.

In terms of social inequality, postcolonial research can be regarded more as an emancipatory strategy directed at the processes of maintaining otherness than as an objective analysis of it (Spivak 1988; Crush 1994: 334-335; Kahn 1995: 8; Philips 2001: 125-126). Postcolonial research explicitly admits that its conscious goals are to criticize the unevenly developed world and actively participate and intervene in discussions on social problems (Young 1990; Said 1993; Barnett 2005). From that perspective the postcolonial analysis of northernness is easily admissible, as any representation of otherness can be approached as a proper subject for postcolonial analysis (see Kahn 1995: 2). The postcolonial manner of perceiving history can be adapted to any relationship between centres and margins, such as the marginal position of northern art in relation to urbanized Southern Finland, regardless of the fact that there is certain lack of 'global relevance' or any history of colonialism acknowledged on an Anglo-American scale in this particular case (Savolainen 1995; Lehtola 1997: 26). The Finnish North has been colonized by the 'southern civilization' just as the African jungles were subordinated to the order of the European Empires.

Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) is a well established and remarkably worthwhile volume for research into the interrelations between social order, cultural practices and their geographical outcomes. Said gives particular recognition to the social power of culture by stressing how different scales of space and regions exist only because of history, the tradition of thought, human imagery and human vocabulary (ibid.: 4-5). According to Said, the spatial distinction between the East and the West, the Orient and Occident, exists only because of human creativeness; in this case because of 'orientalism', the (political) power of western man to imagine and articulate 'the Orient' on its own behalf (ibid.: 57). The consequences were not

always only political, but could be seen in other fields of culture as well. Said stresses how famous 19th century novelists such as Gustave Flaubert, Gérard de Nerval and Walter Scott, for example, were often severely constrained in giving descriptions of the Orient. In fact, their cultural way of understanding what the Orient was actually about was, according to Said, politically determined. Orientalism was a political way of perceiving the world as split in two, the known and the unknown, ours and theirs, two distinct halves that could be separated from each other conceptually (ibid.: 5, 43-44).

Said's research has stood for a long time as a perceptual signpost in the field of postcolonial studies and on the conceptual level 'orientalism' has moved away from its original context and turned into a general abstraction under which all discussion concerning imagined spaces and otherness can be gathered. In the same way as the representations of the African jungles and their history can be approached as an example of orientalism (Arnold 2000), so Kirsten Thisted (2002) has used the concept of 'arctic orientalism' in her narrative analysis of northern literature. She explains her choice of words by noting how the literature she is analysing, even though operating as a social criticism of Danish colonial politics, is also re-establishing same basic structures of otherness and marginalization which Said has considered the main causes behind social and cultural injustice. The rephrasing of the idea of polar postcolonialism in the form of 'arctic' or 'northern orientalism' is simply an act of putting one's research and criticism into the right theoretical framework.

The easiest way to connect postcolonial criticism with the case of the northern imagination is probably to analyse the social position of Sami minorities. The marginality of ethnic groups has been the most popular and probably the most comfortable way to adapt postcolonial theories (e.g. West 1994; Hall 1995; Lane 1996). At the conceptual level 'ethnicity' and 'race' are defined through colonialism and therefore are also 'natural'

subjects for postcolonial research, and in the case of Northern Finland, questions such as why Sami literary history is based on the doctrine of Christianity (see Seurujärvi-Kari et al. 1995: 120) are interesting and important, but also an easy way of combining social and cultural injustice with an emancipatory strategy. Whether postcolonial research actually means 'honest' political criticism or the nostalgia and romanticism of colonialist history is quite another question (see Cosgrove 2003: 852-853). Along with the globally noticeable ethnic renaissance of the 1990s, in which being marginal became something to be proud of, and with some discounters, even fashionable, the main reason behind this boom, the desire to approve 'the other' among 'us', was a representation of some old yearning for exotic cultural differences. The growing boom of tourism has transformed ethnicity into a transparent, easily approachable form of colonialism (Tuulentie 1999: 108), and this has also left its mark on postcolonial research. The emancipatory strategy is directed at social and cultural 'destruction', which often causes only unnecessary (and from the critic's point of view often harmful) pity for the minorities (see Ridanpää 2000). To be precise, if research is focused only on underdeveloped regions, counties and their subjugated minorities, on 'classic colonialism', as it were, the important question of the linkages between the problems of western society, colonialism and its own history will inevitably be pushed into the background (see Nash 2002: 227-228). The Sami people are a minority in Finland, but also a minority in Northern Finland, and therefore when the public image and identity of the North becomes entwined around myths, exoticism and the mostly untruthful stereotypes of Sami people, the colonialism of Northern Finland turns into a still more multifaceted social process.

Northern Mythology I: Scientific Legitimation

To make a myth believable requires there to be an enormous institutional guarantee behind it. Literature is one route for making stereotypes feel natural, but the institution of science makes them appear to be 'officially true'. Scientific information is a system of cultural, historical and social power structures (see Foucault 1972, 1973). The process of mapping, the intellectual colonizing of the unknown, can be perceived as an in-built vocation of geography. One of the most crucial motives behind all colonial activities, including science, has always been some form of spatial exoticism, mythology and romanticism. Regions are romantic before their romance is even discovered (cf. Van Noy 2002). For centuries it has been the continuing mission of scientists and novelists to explore strange new worlds, and it has been characteristic for the collected knowledge on these to come up against the problem of making distinctions between exact facts and fiction. On the other hand, this may have not been actually 'a problem', but rather a motive for conducting research. Making a difference between fact and fiction was not the purpose of the colonial explorers of the 19th century (see Driver 2001).

In spite of Edward Said's (1978) manner of perceiving orientalism as a fictive and distorted generalization of various social and cultural arguments, it is still important to emphasize that each shady myth requires an enormous amount of realism in order to become believable. In this context it is important to make a distinction between the concepts of 'fact' and 'fiction'. As Patricia Waugh (1985: 28) has suggested, 'fact' and 'fiction' can be perceived as abstract frames that form a continuum from where 'real' or something conceived as being real becomes defined (cf. Hutcheon 1992a: 113). From that perspective reality is always imaginative, although not fictive, but rather a myth, indistinguishable from the frameworks of both fact and fiction. As Roland Barthes (1973: 109) has rephrased it, every object in

the world can stand for a myth in that a myth is limited only formally and not according to its substance. A myth is depoliticized speech, which does not define or deny things, but rather “it purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification, it gives them a clarity which is not that of an explanation but that of a statement of fact” (ibid.: 143).

In the Finnish case the mapping of the unknown was mainly a practical question of politics and economics. The currently known version of the Lapland myth arose during the years between the world wars, a period when the Petsamo region, formerly and currently a part of Russia, belonged to Finland and offered attractive economic possibilities with its reserves of nickel and its important access to the Arctic Ocean. These economic and industrial possibilities were reflected in other fields of culture and society as well, and suddenly it was being emphasized, in the field of geographical studies, for example, how this unknown land must be thoroughly scrutinized. The economic exploitation of Lapland was possible only after more spatial and environmental data had been collected and, as sufficient topographical maps were drawn, for example. Suddenly the necessity to map Lapland turned into a written declaration among the Finnish geographers (see Rosberg 1919; Tanner 1928), and similarly it was the mission of literature to collect ‘data’, to map the unknown wilderness in order to lend more credibility and authenticity to northern romanticism. The northern explorations bore obvious similarities to the British colonial effort to conquer the Tropics in the 19th century. The idea of the Tropics can be perceived as a conceptual construct produced by the scientific institutions of the times, which along with the African expeditions of David Livingstone and the like, turned into the worship of mythology (Driver 2001: 68-89). For Alexander von Humboldt, the Tropics served as an exquisite demonstration of how holistic explanation required a simultaneous combination of artistic methods (fiction) and scientific accuracy (fact). Fact and fiction entwined into mythical and

romantic travelogues, which were also transformed into a paradoxical dualism between the aesthetics of the garden of paradise and a pestilential landscape of primitiveness, violence and destruction (Arnold 2000: 7-8). Science in the Tropics was not based on an interest in a certain climatic zone, but rather it functioned as a tool for making a categorical distinction between civilized culture and primitive nature (see Martins 2000: 22).

The distortion of language means simply that it became basically impossible to separate facts, stereotypes and myths from each other, which in a northern context would refer to historical processes in which 'reality' and exotic fantasy have been squeezed in together. The 'Petsamo boom' materialized in the form of an increasing amount of non-fictional works and travel books, but in terms of northern stereotypes and Lapland identity, semi-fictive Lapland literature played more substantial role. As an example, we may consider Arvi Järventaus' novel *Risti ja Noitarumpu* (The Cross and the Shaman Drum, 1916), a work considered to have kick-started the genre of Lapland literature, which first emerged at the time of the Lapland romantics. Sami terminology played a significant role in the rhetorics of this novel, as the authentic feel of mythical strangeness is mainly constructed through the continuous repeating of unfamiliar Sami terminology. Sami expressions are unfamiliar to the southern reader, but what Järventaus has done is to opened up their meanings and semantics slightly and by the same token provide a certain authenticity and feel of realism for a story which otherwise would probably be too unfamiliar and strange to be believed in or identified with. Järventaus makes voluminous use of Sami rhetoric, while here and there he translates occasional words and expressions into Finnish, as if enlightening readers as to what being a Sami is all about, revealing the truth behind the unknown. The novel is full of strange Sami words, but as a concession to the readers, their semantics are explained thoroughly, though not as a fluent part of the narrative itself but in the form of separate footnotes, a literary con-

vention commonly used in scientific works. In some cases the rhetoric makes it seem as if the book was actually an ethnic dictionary. For example, the clause “and the last time he was given a saivo baptism was when he became a witch” (Järventaus 1916/1928: 116) is accompanied by a footnote: “Saivo, orig. meaning ‘holy’, a commonly occurring appellation in the ancient Lappish religion. Saivo, Saivoland = underworld. Saivo baptism = the baptism by means of which witches were ordained”; like an extract from an explorer’s diary. The manner in which Järventaus interweaves ordinary prose with rhetoric and the methods of science is somehow a similar literary style to that used by Herman Melville in his revolutionary *Moby Dick* (1851), where the exoticism of whale-hunting is conveyed by mixing mythological elements together with scientific narration and rhetoric (of the time), and Järventaus applies basically the same formal strategy to the exoticism and romanticism of Lappish primitiveness, an interesting way of eliminating the strangeness without losing its mythology. In the same way everyday expressions such as “burist, burist! = Hello” (ibid.: 45) and “Ibdel adde = Good evening” are intentionally translated for the readers, in case they were unaware of the backgrounds of Sami identity and northernness (as they mostly were) and Järventaus’ mission was to be their guide. Instead, the equally unfamiliar Latin expression “Audiatur et altera pars” (“let us hear the opposite side”) has been left without any explanatory footnote. Järventaus poses as an expert on northernness, while the Latin culture is not a territory to which his authority extends.

When looking at the North in the context of Finnish regional systems, it is intriguing to discuss the imaginative aspect of the scientific institution of regional geography. It is not that scientific institutions had been consciously active in the processes of northern romanticization. Felix Driver (2001b) has implicitly noted how current geography, both as an institution and in terms of the scientific work done inside it, is firmly grounded in the romantic colonialism of the 19th century. In the

Finnish context the geographical 'facts' that the scientific institution brought along with the research results fitted perfectly with the imaginative maps of the northern romantics. When the Finnish geographer J. G. Granö, for instance, considered the categorization of regions, a needful subject for study, the outcome was a map on which Finland was split into 65 geographical sub-regions, and what is more interesting, into 2 major regional categories: Culture-Finland and 'Nature-Finland' (Granö 1951: 379). This latter categorization naturally makes it easier to justify the exoticism of northern nature and at the same time to hinder the activity of northern culture life, to make its appearance a semantic paradox. The primary motives behind colonial activities may have been ambitions to obtain financial benefit, but the motive for colonial romanticism lies basically in the urge for modernized society to re-establish its paradise lost. As a conceptual definition, nature is primarily subaltern, a semantic lifeline to culture, history and society, dependent on dualism between the concepts of 'gained' and 'lost', 'modern' and 'primitive'. The existence of society requires the conceptual distinguishing of 'history' and 'order' from 'traditional' and 'mythical' (Said 1978; Willems-Braun 1997; Clifford, Dominguez & Min-ha 1987), and the outcome is a paradoxical abstraction, 'nature'. James D. Proctor (1998: 354-358) has emphasized how the social construction of the ideal of pure virgin nature is a conceptual impossibility, simply because all conceptualizing means semantic touching and the untouched can certainly not have been touched already. In fact, it was actually Granö's specific problem to discuss the difficult position of the town of Rovaniemi, a populated anomaly in the throes of an unpopulated wilderness. At the same time the imaginative and harshly simplified conception of the North as a categorical counterpart to the world of culture and civilization attained its institutional justification.

Northern Mythology II: Literary Legitimation

The institution of science has had a specific role in the process in which northern stereotypes and myths have been regionalized, transformed into two opposing regional categories of Culture-Finland and Nature-Finland. The other and probably more multi-faceted 'actor' in this process has been the institution of art, especially literature. Finnish literature, 'national literature', as it was defined when it originated, was born in the South and simply did not live in the North (Lehtola 1997). Following the red line of northern stereotypes, it would be a paradox for culture to live in the North. This didn't mean that there weren't any writers in northern regions - there were. The problem was that just as Goethe's concept of 'Weltliteratur' precludes a huge quantity of European literary classics (Said 1993: 52), the northern literature was unable to fulfil the criteria for national literature. It may be that these works were never presented, because of the lack of northern publishers, which may have been linked with and converted into the stereotypic image of Lapland having certain lack of cultural credibility. But the most important thing is that the dividing line between the centre (the South) and the margins (the North) was drawn in accordance with these literary choices and that at the same time northern Finland received one of its regional and cultural definitions, no matter how imagined or imaginative that was.

One of the key reasons why it has been a difficult task for all northern literature to ascend to the context of the national literary canon has lain in the stereotypes concerning Sami culture. As an object of stereotypes associated with Nature-Finland, it has been basically impossible to regard the Sami culture as a culture at all. The Sami people were expected to occupy the role of the 'noble savage', the idea familiar from all centre-margin relationships, based principally on the colonial paradox of 'culture in nature' (see Hall 1997; Young 1990; El-

lingson 2001; Kuklick 1991). In a national context the Sami identity has been associated with the concepts of primitive fishing and hunting communities, but on the other hand this has also been connected in a positive manner with originality and indigenesness, qualities which the decayed southern modernity had already lost. Primitiveness was related to excitingly mystical features of nature's children being dependent on their instincts, living in their own unique elemental world where moral and sexual values were on the level of puerility, as was the case with all primitive people (Lehtola 1999: 19). Interestingly, the history of Sami primitiveness is entwined together with the history of the Finns in that the first literary references to 'the Fenns', a race that hinged on the resources of hunting and fishing, appearing in the recognised classic *Germania* (98 AD), written by the Italian explorer-adventurer Publius Cornelius Tacitus (c. 55-120 AD), was taken it's model from the Sami people of the time. One interesting point in this relatively short and mainly fictional excerpt (Niemi 2000: 17) was that the stereotypes of primitiveness and northernness were grouped together for the first time (Julku 1985: 85). Tacitus' descriptions of the Fenns and the common European race discussion of the 17th century, in which the Finns were represented as Mongoloids, turned out to be a problem for a nation striving for its independence, self-esteem and identity (Tuulentie 2001: 82-84). The stereotypes concerning the Sami came too close to those of the Fenns, a Finnish, Mongoloid identity, and therefore the Sami were given the role of marking the distinction between civilization and primitiveness, standing for a juxtaposition with the discourses of developing Finnish nationality. In the literature of Lapland the Sami identity was presented as an opposite to civilization and what lay inside its cultural features was never even intended to be described (Lehtola 1997: 163-164).

'The golden age' of northern literature was the period when the Petsamo region was a part of Finland, a time when an overtly exoticized perception of northernness was generated.

Although the writings of the 1920s and 1930s did not form any solid group with a given aesthetic programme, common name, known leader or common forum, Veli-Pekka Lehtola (1997: 9-10) considers these 'Lapland writers' to have constituted some form of circle with shared topics and themes. He notices that the reason why these 'Lapland writers' were marginalized and peripheralized relative to the literary canons was more a matter of intellectual distance than physical distance. On the one hand, the northern literature of that time was regarded only as a manifestation of one geographically limited region and the criticism was often infused with the critics' own opinions about what Lapland is about and what writings about it should be about (ibid.: 234). The romanticized concept of the North was politically determined, although the politicality of those days was a slightly different question from what the politicality of literature institution currently means, for example (see Bhabha 1984; Ploszajska 1999). In the case of the Lapland writers the literary 'discrimination' was more about ignorance and ostracism than systematic publishing politics.

The majority of Lapland writers came from the South, being mainly public servants and officials by profession (Lehtola 1997: 31). In terms of the generic theme of their novels', Lappish nature, the perspective remained that of an outsider; the North was approached as an imaginative colony, a categorial opposite to the (imagined) self-portrait of southern culture (Tuohimaa 1997: 48; Lehtola 1997: 24-25). Some authors attained a certain northern authenticity through spending several years, even decades, as insiders in northern communities, but in many cases the main function of subjective experiences was to confirm one's own romantic and stereotypic presuppositions (see Jama 1995: 121), to entwine a feel of realism into the myths and romanticism. Although these stereotypes did not often come face to face with the so-called 'reality', this did not prevent Lapland from turning into a romantic wilderness of exotic exaggerations. In the same way as literature as an institution and

literary stereotypes have maintained the social process of orientalism over centuries, Lapland literature has made use of the northern myths by confusing the old mythology with the later body of collected information.

Re-Imagining the North

“Truth to tell, the best weapon against myth is perhaps to mystify it in its turn, and to produce an *artificial myth*: and this reconstituted myth will in fact be a mythology. Since myth robs language of something, why not rob myth?” (Barthes 1973: 135)

Alongside its capabilities for working as a colonising practice, literature also has an important role in the processes of cultural and social decolonisation. Literature represents a tool through which prevailing norms, hegemonic myths and codes of behaviour can be breached, either unconsciously or in a goal-oriented manner (cf. Kadanoga 1998). The reformations in children’s literature that have taken place in Britain, for example, represent a successful campaign of decolonization concerning children’s ideological attitudes towards social stereotypes (Phillips 2001). In the same way, literature has been used in South Africa as a tool for attempting to struggle against apartheid politics, in order to realize some conformity in national identity (Crampton 2003). The author does not have to represent and write a certain ideology actively, but rather the message of his/her ‘ideology’ transfers itself into text automatically. To be precise, perhaps even more important ‘gatekeepers’ than the authors themselves are often the publishers, libraries, bookshops, literary critics, reviewers and customers (Phillips 2001: 132). The intriguing question is therefore whether northern literature could actually be capable of writing itself out of some stereotypes which stand for its own symbolic substance. Is it possible that northern literature could challenge its own conventionality without losing the essence of northernness? Some

of the most important and interesting attempts to do this will be introduced here.

In the case of northern literature the gatekeeping processes have taken place in various ways and at various institutional levels, finally becoming evident in the constrained thematic subject matters of the works. In order to maintain its northern status, a work was supposed to fulfil all the expectations familiar from the stereotypic myths, while literary works somehow conflicting with northern romanticism encountered insurmountable publication difficulties. One of the key issues was the overflowing admiration of the romance of dangerous defiance of northern nature, and at the same time northernness as a mental space became strongly charged with gender overtones (cf. Rose 1993). A boom in northern literature took place in the 1920s and 1930s, but the first northern novel written by a woman, *Poro-Kristiina* by Annikki Kariniemi (1913-1984), was not published until 1952. In conventional Lapland literature the man was active, geared to encountering the fear of the wilderness, while the woman's part was more passive, remaining in the background and staying at home (Lehtola 1997: 120). As a northern author, Kariniemi was on the periphery as far as Finnish publishers were concerned, and as a woman, she also represented a gendered minority in a context which conventionally had been intensively masculine. Sinikka Tuohimaa (1997: 47) has asserted that Kariniemi's marginality was actually two-fold. As a female author she represented a critical attitude towards conventional northern romanticism, which also meant that her own northern romanticism, often based on popularization of the old myths and stereotypes, evoked some polemic (Kontio 1998: 81), although she has often been interpreted as a bridge-builder between the southern culture and the northern margins (Tuohimaa 1997: 50).

Kariniemi's semi-Sami origins automatically placed her in the context of a certain romanticism, which she has self-consciously maintained in her literary production. On the other

hand, the values she had internalized in the course of her childhood upbringing were distinctively anti-traditional and strongly influenced by southern culturalism (Kontio 1998: 78-79), so that a certain in-betweenness has actually always been accented in her production. Actually, to become a nationally famous but still somehow progressive northern author, you have to be more or less in between, partly shattering the old stereotypes while partly grasping on to them to remind yourself of what stereotypes are in question. The effort to remain in between is the life-blood of culturally and socially emancipatory activity, which in case of postcolonial research has become apparent in the works of Gayatri Spivak, one of the leading personalities in the research field. Born in Calcutta, West Bengal, this Third World woman represents automatically a (two-fold) marginality, but her educational position as a university professor makes her a part of the world of power, hegemony and elitism. And what is most interesting here is that Spivak is especially conscious of this (Selden & Widdowson 1993: 193) and makes her contradictory position a thematic topic in her own studies (cf. Bonnett 2000). In the same manner Kariniemi has turned her northern in-betweenness into a thematic subject for literature, illustrating at the same time that the regional categories of Nature-Finland and Culture-Finland should not be taken as a matter of course.

Kariniemi's effort was to remove some of the institutional conventions of northern literature and even though she approached such taboos as sexuality more courageously (Lehtola 1999: 19), it was Timo K. Mukka (1944-1973) who consciously proclaimed new reformations in northern literary themes for the first time. Instead of frighteningly cold winter nights, beautiful fjelds and northern lights, Mukka assembled his first novel, *Maa on syntinen laulu* (1964), around the themes of religion and wretched sexuality. The novel was nationally well-recognized and in the footsteps of Henry Miller and his Finnish 'colleagues' it aroused a fierce polemic over whether it was respectable to

connect the theme of lecherous sexuality with that of religion. Although Mukka abandoned the conventional thematics of northern literature almost totally, the stigma of northernness and all the romanticism attached to it were firmly retained by the literary gatekeepers (Jama 1995). Reviewers and critics did not abandon northern romanticism, but attached some other stereotypic flavours to it, and suddenly a partly humorous concept 'The sexus of the wild North', invented by a literary critic Pentti Saaritsa, turned into a symbolic road sign for all literary critics and an advertising slogan for Mukka's publisher (Paasilinna 1988: 91-92). The descriptions used in the novel's sales drive, such as "the work depicts a northern community dependent on instincts" (ibid.: 65), illustrate what kind of literary image Mukka was given to bear. Mukka's publisher was his gatekeeper, making the abandonment of exotic myths extremely difficult.

If Mukka launched the process of literary decolonisation in the North, Rosa Liksom, the pseudonym of Anni Ylävaara (1958-), has been regarded as a female sustainer of that emancipatory project. Liksom is a postmodern novelist/visual artist who has semi-consciously turned her artistic expression into a strategic tool against northern colonialism. Finnish cultural life in the late 1980s was not really yet integrated into the world of Western/European culture, and thus ever since her first collection of short stories, *Yhden yön pysäkki* (1985) Liksom has been on the cutting edge of Finnish cultural modernization. Her postmodern flirting with the mixed themes of urban angst, sex, violence and northern tradition became nationally and to some extent internationally recognised, but the fact that all this was happening in the context of northernness put her works, and northern art as a whole, on a new level of cultural appreciation. Intriguingly, though, Liksom's own literary identity has been structured on the base of exoticism, myths and otherness, hiding behind her pseudonym, her comically stupid sunglasses and her systematic refusals to give any interviews. But her

northern mythicism has become still, more diverse in the course of time: a mishmash of periferality and cosmopolitanism, a jumble of authentic countryside dialects and urban slang, a far-rago of violent literary expression, irony, childish paintings, cartoons, jigsaw-puzzles, t-shirts and wrist watches turned into a project named 'rosa liksom' (cf. Karkama 1994: 317). If the North of the old stereotypes was exaggeratingly romantic, her version of it was ironic, feministically self-assertive and childishly absurd, a contrast to the masculine seriousness that the stereotypes of northern nature were about. In her 'absurd folktales', as they have been called, northern themes were not rejected, but moved into a new level of sarcastic dalliance, by making fun of the public discussion that centred around the social and cultural inequality between the South and the North (Ridanpää 2003a). All this new 'crazy northernness' was very self-consciously established, not necessarily as a political project to fight against social disadvantages, but more as an artistic project with emancipatory consequences, of which Liksiom was definitely somehow conscious (see Ridanpää 2004). Liksiom uses her irony as an emancipatory strategy (cf. Hutcheon 1992b: 13), by taking northern themes, myths and stereotypes into the contexts in which they simply do not fit, creating a new version of northernness.

If all discussion related to the categories of 'marginal' and 'hegemonic' is perceived as an evocation of otherness, then establishing emancipatory ambitions via its own arguments and rhetoric may not prove to be the best strategic option. A subjugated voice is often a voice of bitterness, which in itself does not deconstruct cultural and regional inequality, but rather maintains the discourses behind it. Any reference to a struggle between 'us' and the 'other' naturally represents a speech against subordinating practises, but in many cases this form of rhetoric does not advance the actual purposes. Even though the status and position of northern literature can be perceived as a subjugated outcome of southern hegemony, it has also in itself been

an active part of the social processes by which northern marginality has been strengthened and legitimized. Northern authors have been willingly and actively anxious to assume control over 'their' own subject matter (Lähtenmäki 2001: 240), which inevitably underlines the categorial distinction between North and South. On the other hand, it is natural for the marginalised party, shut off from the national discourse, to continue adhering to its privileges and the few rights that it has as a cultural minority. What makes Rosa Liksom an especially important figure in the process of northern emancipation is that she has actually (probably by accident) turned the postcolonial critique, an attempt to replace 'distorted truth' with 'true truth' into an object of laughter. It is obviously not the question of social injustice between 'us' and 'them' that Liksom is trying to criticize, but rather the whole arrangement of strict oppositional categories through which all social criticism is represented (see Ridanpää 2003b).

Northern influences have become ever more present on the national (popular) culture scene in recent years, and at the same the themes of northernness have been transferred into relatively new contexts. The most prominent northern author recently has been *Mikael Niemi* (1959-), whose breakthrough came with the novel *Populaarimusiikkia Vittulanjänkältä* (orig. *Populärmusik från Vittula*) (2000), a mix of different manifestations of current popular culture and northern tradition. This was a success story which soon found its way onto the stage, was made into a movie and translated into several languages. Although a Swede rather than a Finn, Niemi has still gained publicity in the Finnish media. Besides literary projects one of the most fascinating postcolonial evocations of contrast and emancipatory activity has been the informal collective of Inari rap musicians, *Guarra Norte*, predominantly represented by its Sami singing *Amoc*. Rap music has its cultural roots in the social problems of American urban ghettos and therefore the act of combining it with the pictorial images of northern myths - flam-

ing northern lights, reindeer and the cold winds – makes it an interesting mix of stiffened tradition and the latest pop trends. The mixed themes of Amoc's music and his personal interest in keep alive a minority language spoken by only 300-400 people have aroused not only local, but also national and international responses. Music, literature and science are all forums/tools through which the romanticism and mythology of the North can be established, but on the other hand, they all work as routes for deconstructing spatial otherness as possibilities for conceptualizing the North by other means than just making a binary division between nature and culture.

Finally: The Updated Version of Exoticism

The starting point here was to illustrate how the concept of 'north' has gathered its meaning through the social and cultural process of regional stereotyping, exoticism and mythology. The North was perceived here in a Finnish context, as an imaginative land, imagined by the southern civilization in order to justify its own existence by excluding its opposite and transferring it to a romantic dream of exoticism. The northern culture has been marginalized by the South for centuries via normative institutional practices such as science and the arts, but on the other hand it has been interesting to see how attempts have occurred within same institutions, as in the case of northern literature, to construct counter-discourses against cultural subordination. Still, it is important to remember that perceiving the romanticism of northern nature as a crossroads of subordinate stereotypes is an oversimplification in itself. So it can be fairly asked whether northern marginality is an imagined social discourse in the same way as the emancipatory criticism of it is? To be precise, hardly any artistic works exist that fulfil all the expectations of northern stereotypes, and one can find among the many classics of Lapland literature not only rhetoric constructing northern stereotypes but also deconstructive shades as

well. In modern northern literature, for instance, emancipation is not actually about the author's manner of writing but rather about the reader's emancipatory manner of reading, while the stereotypic nature of reading means that the reader wants to be blind to the multidimensionality of northern romanticism and to sudden flaws and distortions in it. Otherwise the lifeline of the northern romantics, the regional categorization between the North and the South, could collapse. But it must also be remembered that the purpose of authors in re-imagining the North has probably not been to bring about a total collapse of northern romanticism and exoticism but to offer a new, updated version of it.

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Colours, Lights, Emptiness and other Discursive Elements

The Colour White, a Sign of the North¹

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Abstract

Considering the “idea of North” as a discursive system, applied by convention to a given territory, we can identify some of the forms, figures and narratives that constitute the “grammar” of its cultural representations. This article focuses on the colours of the “North”, and on the simplification that underlies them. In literary and artistic works, we notice the strong symbolism of white, which obliterates points of reference. The notion of “whiteness” refers to a screen for an imaginary world and mask that covers the ugliness, which also has an ethical and aesthetic value that simplifies the world while accentuating anguish and extremeness. Thus, the colour “white” can be seen a one of the most powerful sign of the discursive system of the North, and as a tool to simplify the complexity of the northern territories.

Keywords: cultural representations, North, imaginary, colours, literature, arts, white.

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*He'll tell us what he sees and we'll want to
hear about the whiteness and silence.
(Gobeil, 1993, p. 25)*

A “grammar of the North”

In cultural studies, the “imagined North” is defined as a series of figures, colours, elements and characteristics conveyed by narratives, novels, poems, films, paintings and promotional material, which—from the myth of Thule to contemporary popular representations—have produced a rich and complex web of symbolic meanings. Through geographic convention, which locates the North and its point of convergence, the North pole, in the inaccessible, ice-covered and partially unexplored territory at the top of the globe, the North is universal; for the study of the imaginary, it provides a unique terrain made up of different historical and discursive layers, depictions, portrayals by different aesthetic movements, environmental and scientific concerns and post-colonial questioning—a terrain nurtured by powerful and popular representations by explorers, missionaries and scientists. This territory, more often imagined than visited, has given rise to the crystallization of a “grammar of the North,” which governs the modes of semiotic representation and is never devoid of all reference to the real (the cold, the remoteness, the people who live there). Representatives of the “North” are found in layers of discourse, produced by different cultures, sometimes simultaneously—Greek and Latin, Viking and Scandinavian, European, American and Aboriginal—and picked up on and shaped by different movements and trends, such as Romanticism, popular and media discourse, Symbolism and post-colonialism.

On the basis of contemporary analyses produced in Europe, Scandinavia, English Canada and more recently, Québec, the “North” is first and foremost a discursive system whose components, preferred forms, figures, characters, narra-

tive schemata, colours and sounds can be traced historically. It varies depending on the position of the speaker (as observed by Jean-Marc Moura and Monique Dubar, 2000) and has common “circumpolar” characteristics, as methodologically shown by geographer and linguist Louis-Edmond Hamelin through his productive concepts of “nordicity” and “wintricity.” Ultimately, the “North” can be referred to as the “idea of North,” to borrow the title of an essay by Sherrill E. Grace, *Canada and the Idea of North* (2002), itself based on the title of a 1967 radio essay by Canadian musician Glenn Gould, *The Idea of North*.

The North as a discursive system

Thus posited, the North is a discursive system, applied by convention to a given territory, whose forms, figures and history can be defined—a system shared by a number of cultures as well as literary and artistic traditions, all of which can claim it as their own (see the definitions proposed by Chartier, 2004). In literature, a number of figures, components, comparisons and narrative schemata that recur in fiction on the “North” and that define it have been identified through the reading and analysis of hundreds of works as part of a collective project conducted in Montréal on the imagined North.² Figures such as the Inuit, settler, Scandinavian, Viking, Amerindian, gold digger, merchant, missionary and explorer have been found in these works and are used to “nordify” the narrative. Authors like Gabrielle Roy and Maurice Constantin-Weyer, for example, include a Scandinavian character in their novels to emphasize the nordic character of their work. Elements—such as icebergs, polar bears, the cold, the Northern lights, the absence of land-

² A project carried out by the International Laboratory for the Comparative Multidisciplinary Study of Representations of the North at the Université du Québec à Montréal. For more information, visit: www.imaginairedunord.uqam.ca

marks, desolation, solitude remote places, nomadism, refuge, the insistence on the colours blue and white, snow and the absence of trees—are used in these works to create a Nordic setting. These elements are often accompanied by comparisons with the desert, the sea or the Biblical world. Narrative schemata—such as the inevitability of taking action, the journey that changes as a result of climatic phenomena, and physical exploration that becomes a spiritual quest—come up again and again.

The “idea” or rather “ideas of North” portrayed in literature become increasingly numerous with the period and perspective. If we take all the works of fiction, analyzed in the project, that coincide with the concepts of “nordicity” or “wintricity” put forward by Hamelin, we are able to build a historical framework that picks up on literary aesthetics and genres, but distinguishes each corpus in its intensive use of the imagined North. These works include narratives by explorers and missionaries, the aesthetic and symbolic use of the North in poetry, the psychological use of the North in fiction, narratives about colonization that express the magnetism of the North, novels by migrant and immigrant writers, as well as representations by Natives peoples.

The concept of “nordicity”

The pivotal works of Louis-Edmond Hamelin, published in the late 1960s and early 1970s, provide a theoretical basis for thinking about the geographic and cultural implications of the “idea of North.” In his early essays, *Le Québec nordique* (1968), *Le Nord canadien comme espace* (1971), and especially *Nordicité canadienne* (1975), Hamelin developed the concept of “nordicity,” which he had introduced in 1965 and defined in a pluridisciplinary manner in reference to the entire circumpolar region. According to Hamelin, the different “Norths” are not defined exclusively within national borders but, at the same time, main-

tain a certain specificity. In Hamelin's thinking, the "polar value" of a place refers not only to temperature-related phenomena, but encompasses mentalities as well as cultural and identity-based works: "nordicity" (which includes "wintricity", i.e., seasonal nordicity) therefore refers to the state or degree of "North," real or perceived, that applies to the Nordic world in general, to each of its parts, as well as to people and things (Hamelin, 1988). The work of Hamelin, which culminated in an essay titled *Écho des pays froids* (1996), has given rise to a many studies that have furthered the theory and used the practical applications.

By developing the concepts of "nordicity" and "wintricity," we can consider the "North" and its components as a semiotic code, or a discursive system; this has the advantage of relieving the "idea of North" of geographical constraints so that it can be studied in terms of representation as well as cultural, literary and symbolic discourse. "Nordicity" and "wintricity" define the boundaries of the corpus, which includes various works—ranging from accounts of expeditions, narratives by missionaries, adventure novels, stories for young people, films, advertising, company names, poetry, visual arts and photography—yet finds its coherence in the set of figures, comparative elements, narrative schemata, sounds, colours and lights that transcend the different literary and cultural forms. When we isolate the literary works in this corpus and examine the light-related phenomena—the northern lights, the lack or overabundance of sunlight, snow blindness, eternal night, the midnight sun, the North Star—and the colours they include, we quickly see that the "idea of North" is shaped by a simplification of colour, setting and landscape, a focus on a few colours—pastels, blue and orange, which signifies the presence of man—but, most importantly, on the strong symbolism of white, which obliterates points of reference and threatens to absorb everything around it into the nothingness it represents.

The colours of "North"

In his novel *Je m'en vais*, Jean Echenoz ironically summarizes the simplification, or lack of differentiation, of Arctic landscapes in three words when his Parisian character returns from nature and says, in a nonchalant and disinterested way, "to give you an idea of the place, it's very far, very white and very cold" (Echenoz, 1999, p. 68). A number of the animals and figures that define the North also reflect this simplifying fascination with white, such as the snowy owl, polar bear, whitecoat, white belugas, Hans Christian Andersen's white "snow queen," (Andersen, 1977, pp. 20-21) who all live in what narratives and novels describe as the white "vastness," "hell" or "desert." Explorers, writers and the heroes in novels show a fascination for the purity, emptiness and dizziness caused by this space, which is free of elements and has the effect of a drug. The following passage from the popular novel, *Drame dans la toundra*, is indicative of what is portrayed in many works:

De Long was fascinated by the Arctic. Like many before him, he fell victim to a powerful fascination—beyond reason—due to the freezing brilliance of blue icebergs protruding above the sea, the silent whiteness of endless snowfields and the cold light of the northern seas. It had entered his blood like an intoxicating drug and had forever filled his heart with an insatiable desire. (Lütgen, 1972, pp. 12-13)

Other colours—browns, blues, blacks and pastels—are used in these works to paint the Nordic literary setting (as opposed to orange, which indicates the presence of man), but all the symbolism is concentrated in white, which often tends to be "bluish white." (Désy, 1993, p. 81) In *Rêves arctiques*, Barry Lopez writes, "at first sight, it would seem that there are no colours in the Arctic apart from a few weeks in the fall" (Lopez, 1987, pp. 208-209) or that "bright colours are often only dots in a given season, not strokes, and that the paler overall environment absorbs them (Lopez, 1987, pp. 208-209). White's absorption of not

only colours, but also points of reference, cities and characters, constitutes one of the original features of the discursive and representational system of "North"; there is, however, one exception, and that is the sky "where the most surprising colours are found." (Lopez, 1987, pp. 208-209)

This symbolism can also be seen in the discursive use of Arctic and winter white. In works set in urban centres in winter, for example, the cities are covered in white, creating the impression of lost purity. The narrator in Francis Bossus' novel *La forteresse* describes the effect of a storm, saying: "Everything was blurred: the buildings, steeples, trees and the horizon. The city was wrapped in an opaque mist, sounds muted, colours faded, streets and boulevards covered" in white. The earth and the sky were one and the same." (Bossus, 1971, pp. 21-22) Is this symbolic system, such a state of grace cannot last, because the presence of man threatens the purity of spaces at all times: "It won't stay white for long," says one of Jasmine Dubé's characters. "People dirty everything. They don't know how to live." (Dubé, 2002, p. 65) Although white—covering the city and Arctic ice plains—can depict lostness, emptiness and dizziness, it initially gives the characters in these novels a feeling of peace and calm. "In winter," writes Jean Désy in *Le coureur de froid*, "my mind is calm. White gives me strength." (Désy, 2001, p. 21)

White can also represent enlightenment, prompting characters to realize the truth by curiously mirroring their conscience. "Whiteness corrodes appearances, exposes thoughts, reveals the soul. Men are laid bare. [...] No one lies in these immaculate expanses." (Mélançon, 1974, p. 54) The absence of colour, or the alternate use of black and white, also simplifies the landscape and reduces it to a few elements, reflecting how the characters see themselves: the heroine in *Voyageurs malgré eux* observes that the "black and white winter landscape, simplified to the basics [...] reduced her, as well, to her essence." (Vonarburg, 1994, p. 34)

Reduction and simplification

This reduction of colour obliterates the usual signs that enable man to find his way: he feels lost, his points of reference disappear, and he has the impression that he is being swallowed by nothingness. The vastness of the landscape, “white and flat: a league of chalk, a desert of snow” (Hamsun, 1979, p. 197) is like a geographic void³ that cannot be deciphered by the uninitiated – those incapable of distinguishing between different shades of white, textures of snow, thicknesses of ice. The storm in *Un dieu chasseur* conceals all points of reference: “Nothing but white, ahead, behind, to the left, to the right, on the ground and in the air. [...] [This gives] the impression of moving in nothingness, with nothing to focus the eye on.” (Soucy, 1997, p. 112) This inability to decipher the landscape affects the sense of sight first, then threatens all the other senses. The brilliant white virtually blinds man: “All objects merge together; the different planes fade, and outlines disappear.” (Lesbazeilles, 1881, pp. 284-285) The initial peace gives way to a feeling of obliteration and fear of being “swallowed” by the whiteness of the landscape. In *Dessins et cartes du territoire*, Pierre Gobeil writes: “The whiteness had swallowed everything. There was no more sky, no more road, no more relief. There were no more forests, animals or rivers.” (Gobeil, 1993, 114)

The pervasiveness of the colour white thus creates the anxiety-producing impression that the world is dissolving and disappearing. First material things are obliterated, then cries, voices, and finally “the wind is as if frozen” (Primeau, 1960, p. 113) as is time itself, in a transcendent movement that merges the subject with his surroundings in a glowing light that absorbs everything. Things “could dissolve,” writes André Major,

³ In *L'Impératrice de l'Ungava*, Alexandre Huot writes: “the unexplored and mysterious Ungava shown on the map as a white expanse cut only by latitude and longitude.” (Huot, 1927, p. 47)

“in the inordinate whiteness.” (Major, 1981, p. 99) “All this white covered in white to an even whiter infinity. Blinding white on white, sunny, crystallized burning whiteness,” (Morisset, 2000, p. 67) writes Jean Morisset. The Arctic explorers aptly capture this excessive brightness and dissipation of elements into the whiteness of the ice and snow which – by dissolving all recognizable signs of the world – gradually cause man to lose his points of reference, his senses and finally himself. As Lesbazeilles writes:

All you can see is a single form, or rather the absence of any form, a single colour, which is a perpetual glare; you are faced with a single, solitary element, which has defeated and wiped out all others and which, if we stay in its realm and let the tête-à-tête continue, will absorb us and destroy us as well. (Lesbazeilles, 1881, pp. 7-8)

The uniform world of the Arctic, like that of the winter storm, described as a desert and hell, a “landscape of horrific beauty, a hell of whiteness and silence,” (Aquin, 1997, p. 189) is as disturbing as blackness and as frightening as emptiness. The comparison with night – in this case, white – is dizzying for the hero of Maurice Constantin-Weyer’s novel *Un homme se penche sur son passé*: “Darkness was whirling around my eyes, but it was *white darkness*. Yes, points of light danced until they made it dark. It was very dizzying.” (Constantin-Weyer, 1928, p. 91)

The cold and snow, which numb the senses⁴ and slow down time,⁵ form a white hallucinatory screen in the mind, a place of anguish and death, on which elements are personified, such as the blowing snow in Pierre Chatillon’s work, which becomes a white snake that “gets in under your clothes, sticks to your skin, slashes, tries to make your veins burst in its cold

⁴ “Winter is death, a white shroud that covers everything and the cold that numbs.” (Le Beau, 2002, p. 73)

⁵ “The whiteness condenses space and the cold slows down time.” (Echenoz, 1999, p. 36)

clutch." (Chatillon, 1985, p. 164) In Knut Hamsun's work, as in science fiction and narratives by explorers and for young audiences, the extreme whiteness of landscapes hypnotizes and distresses the characters to the point where they hallucinate, perceive forms on the snow that are "translucent, too quick to be seen." (Vonarburg, 1994, p. 333) White, which has absorbed all colour, elements and points of reference, thus becomes a stage on which an imaged world emerges and ultimately the desire to see colour. "The brilliant, uniform whiteness," is such, according to Lesbazeilles, that "the eyes, weakened by continual tension, can no longer distinguish anything" and want to see the colours that have disappeared: "Sometimes, you imagine painting different colours on [...] what the men are wearing [...], so that they can rest their eyes on the multi-coloured backs of their friends." (Lesbazeilles, 1881, pp. 284-285)

The ethical and aesthetic value of "Whiteness"

From hallucinations of changing forms on the overly uniform landscape, the agonizing whiteness of the land, sky and elements, and characters who are "blinded by the whiteness" (Assiniwi, 1976, p. 78) to missionaries whose "eyes burn from the glare of the snow," (Thérol, 1945, p. 127) children fascinated by the city appeased by a white shroud concealing the ugliness, in narratives and fiction on nordicity and wintricity, the very notion of "whiteness" refers to an entire symbolic system based on observation of the real, but determined by many discursive layers comprising a coherent whole, which transcends forms and constitutes the "idea of North" through its many elements, colours and figures. Here, "white," the screen for that imaginary world and mask that covers the ugliness, has an ethical and aesthetic value that simplifies the world while accentuating anguish and extremeness. White condenses the complexity and discursive depth of the imagined North into a sign of emptiness that dissolves any element corrupting its uniformity. Thus, it

can be seen a one of the most powerful sign of the discursive system of the North, and as a way to simplify the complexity of the northern territories.

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Reshaping the North of Russia: Towards a conception of Space

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Abstract

This article analyses the understanding of the North in Russia as a spatial category, drawing on circumpolar characteristics and arguments. Basing on theories of space by Lefebvre and Foucault, space is treated as a geographic, mental and social category. I identify the main tendencies in the construction of northern space as reflected in recent academic and political debates in Russia, and analyse their relation to categories of spatial identity in the reality of Russia. This analysis enables us to evaluate the potential of a promoted Russian northern commonality in comparison to other alternatives for a uniting national idea. In conclusion, space acquires traits of elasticity and thus is broadly applicable as an idea at different levels of political and social identity construction.

Keywords: northernness, Russia, theories of space, spatial identity, northern civilisation, Russian regionalism.

Introduction

The understanding of “North” is used in both singular and plural in Russian language – and this not by random, because there are so many different “Norths”. It is not easy to find

an answer to the question “where is the North” in Russia: there is the “Russian North” (*russkii sever*) in the sense of the region inhabited mostly by ethnic Russians north of St Petersburg, and the “European North” (*evropeiskii*), the “Polar North” (*zaployn’e*), the “Far North” (*krainyi Sever*), the “endless North” (*beskrainyi*), there are so called “territories equivalent to the Far North”, there is a category “other regions of the North” (i.e. not belonging to the “Far North”). Searching for an answer to this question is further complicated by the dynamics of recent integrative processes, enlarging the plurality of “Norths” by “global North”, “geostrategic North”, “circumpolar North”, “Arctosphere”, “Hyperborea”.

The establishment of the EU “northern dimension” in 1997 strengthened considerably the international cooperation in the Baltic States and the northwestern regions of Russia. Russia’s chairmanship of the Arctic council (2004-2006) further increased the attention to the North. “Northern” as a term nowadays functions as an important factor uniting all northern regions, which in the framework of the EU mostly means the European North. This international dynamic tends to shift political ideas about the Russian North as a geostrategic region more towards the West, where the Barents region and West Siberia become possible key regions for future resource development. On the other hand, with the Fall of the Soviet Union and the “loss” of the Baltics in the west and the Central Asian parts in the south, Russia’s borders really moved north- and eastwards. As a result, the geographic centre of the country, which had been in the Khanty-Mansiisk Okrug of West Siberia during the Soviet Union, moved north-eastwards to Evenkia in the Krasnoyarsk region. In terms of political zoning of the Russian North, its borders shifted southwards during the last decade. In spite of all these complications, the common perception of the North is still one of a cold, remote, sparsely populated and marginal space off the track of any mainstream development in the country.

Russia is increasingly presenting itself as a northern country, for the first time ever in the country's history. In political and academic debates expression like 'Russia as a northern country', or '60% of Russia's territory lies in the north' have become more frequently used as arguments. "Northernness" in Russia even gets considered as an alternative in the search for a new unifying national identity, which was formerly occupied by the "single united Soviet people" (*edinyi sovetskii narod*), which had become obsolete after perestroika. The definition of the North and its borders is not only a question of perspective today in Russia (there is a 'North' even in Africa), but also one of pragmatic approaches and theoretical conceptions. The increased importance of the North as an active geopolitical space has resulted in a wide political and public enthusiasm for the northern topic, which is now thoroughly turning upside down the previous perception of the North of a hostile cold space.

In this article I analyse the understanding of the North in Russia as a spatial category, as a geographic, mental and social space. I identify the main tendencies in the construction of a northern space as reflected in recent theoretical academic and political debates in Russia, and analyse their relation to categories of spatial identity the reality of Russia as a country as well as in particular regions. The analysis of the North as a spatial category enables us to evaluate the potential of a promoted commonality along northern lines in Russia in comparison to other alternatives for a uniting national idea. This study bases on an analysis of political and academic conceptions of the North by Russian intellectuals as well as on empirical material from several northern Russian regions (Murmansk, Yamal, Sakha Republic and Kamtchatka).

Theoretical considerations

In his landmark theoretical work on the “production of space” Henri Lefebvre (1991) conceptualises space in a triade to start with: natural, mental and social space. These three are analysed in their ontological transformations, for example the inhabited space or the perceived and imagined (representative) space. Without going too deep into theoretical debates about these categories, for our purpose they are a useful starting point, which is why I continue by identifying their major characteristics:

Natural space is imagined mainly through physical, physiological and biological characteristics and includes location, climate and other features. Nature creates, but does not produce space. Nature only delivers and maintains the values that are already in circulation. Mental space exists in discourses, language, in logical and formal abstractions, image and signs, and also as a set of practices (Lefebvre 1991). It is the space of philosophers, their reflections, feelings, expressions of their self, open for experiments and relations (Young 1994). The North can be seen as a cultural construction and as a space that is created by people and their practices (Ingold 2000, ch. 9, 11). Lefebvre underlines the unlimited diversity and polyvalence of social space. Social space is a production, a process and simultaneously a product, the result of a process and also a reproduction, i.e. the materialisation of a social reality.

The diversity of belonging to different spaces in one region can be well illustrated on the example of the Sakha Republic in East Siberia, one of the most ‘authentic’ Northern regions of Russia. Geographically Sakha belongs to Siberia, economical and administratively, it is a part of the Russian Far East, and in terms of Russian political zoning, it is considered to be in the Far North. Outside of Sakha, this region is usually associated with permafrost and remote periphery. From within we the perception of course is more differentiated, and categories of

orientation and direction, of closeness and distance, centre and periphery acquire a different meaning (see e.g. Vitebsky 2000). Driving from Yakutsk airport into town, the incomer is greeted by a poster saying “welcome to the capital”. In Sakha colloquial language the word *sohuruu* (south) is often used referring to a centre. The expression ‘he left to the centre’ or ‘he left for studying in the centre’ can mean in fact either Moscow, Novosibirsk, Khabarovsk or even Vladivostok, all of which are located south of Yakutsk, but in completely different directions.

Space as a whole and in particular as a social reality embraces a huge diversity of characteristics, which cannot be ignored when we attempt to give a general picture of the North in Russia. Every society produces its own space (Lefebvre 1991), and according to Michel Foucault space can adapt to social changes depending on its assigned role and function for society (Foucault 1986).

Borrowing these ideas I conceptualise the understanding of the North as a space which has a specific role and function for Russian society, for which spatial characteristics are central components. Both perspectives are important for my analysis and represent the North as a space that is formed by society and as a society that is formed by space. In this article I focus on the North as a social construction, which is produced and reproduced by discourses and practices in its institutionalised form.

Looking at the creation of a new spatial conception in Russia under this theoretical framework, my starting point is that this process happens as a response to a different global spatial infrastructure, conditioned by changes in geographical, political-economic and mental scales. The following aspects are important to underline in this context:

Determining a clear position in relation to space becomes ever more important for the participants of a new global spatial integration, which also leads to clarifying the relation between space and identity within this integrative process.

Conceptual differences with practical consequences for the understanding of the North among different partners are already identified, for example, in the framework of the EU northern dimension (2004). The question of spatial identity is also one of the most discussed among other 'geographic' entities, for example the Nordic (Scandinavian, Sørensen and Stråth 1997, Goetz 2003), or Euro-Mediterranean (Pace 2006).

Speaking of integrative processes in the global North does not mean to create differences between a progressive centre and an undeveloped periphery, but rather creating a space uniting equal partners (Heininen 2005). Therefore there is not much to gain for our starting point from an understanding of the North that bases on popular perceptions of a region where people have to exist by 'coping', 'surviving', 'overcoming' 'dealing with the situation' - an image often created by western specialists in relation to the Russian North. I rather prefer the idea of agency (Giddens 1979) to analyse the contemporary conceptualisation of the North as connected to global political and economic relations. I suggest to see agency here as individual or collective 'adaptive agency' under conditions of existing impact or pressure from outside. It is a sort of adaptation as a response to outside impacts, but in a more proactive form.

Currently spatial northern identity can offer a considerable creative capital for political, economical and social paradigms in the development of Russia, where Russians can determine their own honourable and respected positions. Drawing on Elwert's idea on "switching identity", identity is a rather pragmatic concept. Specific groups can change their identity from political to ethnic, from religious to cultural depending on the specifics of the place, the situations and the time. In cases where we speak about survival, identity is about getting more privileges, or for joining more powerful group (Elwert 1997). The analysis of the different conceptions that promote the "Northernness" of Russia helps to understand the process of

establishing a spatial identity with their tasks, functions and perspectives.

Where is the North?

We start with the first basic category of the North, understanding it as crucial part of Russian society as well as a product of society. The question of defining the North is one of the most fundamental in northern academia (Armstrong et al 1978, Nicol 2005). Russia as the world's largest country has its unique relations to space in general and the North in particular. These relations go beyond the usual lack of scientific clarity of the definition even in the attempt to draw lines round the North, such as latitude, 10 degree isotherme, the treeline, the permafrost border, and others. The north as an idea or myth for Russia can be compared with the image of northern Fennoscandia for Europeans, of Alaska for Americans, and the northern territories for Canadians. All are united by the idea of a cold periphery and a place for hopes and dreamers (Sörilin 1989, Slezkine and Diment 1993).

The definition of the North is complicated in Russia by numerous types and levels of internal administrative, economic, political and other subdivisions: Russia has 7 federal districts, 12 economic districts, more than 80 administrative sub-entities (called 'subjects' of the Russian Federation), and even more complicated divisions if we analyse deeper within this basic framework. As shown above for the Sakha Republic, geographical borders not necessarily overlap with economical or administrative divisions. As a result, one region can have multiple belongings, e.g. to different economic districts. This complicated internal structure is inherited from the Soviet Union, where there was even a division of the country in different price-levels. This is why formally today the North in Russia is divided among 5 federal districts and many more geographic, administrative and economic zones.

The dominant understanding of the North itself is in Russia, however, its official classification based on a geographic-economical index which is part of the Russian legislation. This classificatory principle is called zoning into different regions (*raionirovanie*). Zoning divides the North in Russia into

- the Far North;
- regions and territories equivalent to the Far North;
- in 1993 the category “other regions of the North” was added to the Russian legal classification of the North (resolution of the supreme council of the Russian Federation, 1993), but this category did not survive for long (Tarakanov 2007).

This contribution does not aim for an analysis of the complicated and constantly changing system of zoning in legal categories, but zoning practices are interesting here in so far as they affect spatial perspectives of understanding the North.

The idea of “Far North” was introduced in 1932 by a resolution of the Union-wide central executive commission and the council of people’s commissioners⁶. It was further extended in 1945 by the understanding of “territories equivalent to regions of the Far North”. These categories were created mainly for economic reasons, and considered in particular how effective the transfer of production could be and connected to that the necessity of attracting labour force to the North. The categorisation became part of Soviet law in the “list of regions of the Far North and territories equivalent to the regions of the Far North”⁷. Nowadays there are approximately 20 different editions of that document. The main goal of this kind of zoning was the attraction of labour forces to the North and its retention there.

⁶ “...on privileges for persons working in the Far North of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic”, postanovlenie VCIK I SNK RSFSR.

⁷ Perechen raionov krainego severa i mestnostei, priravnennykh k raionam krainego severa, 1967.

The basic principle for this zoning was a conception for developing the productive capacities of the North by the famous soviet scholar S.V. Slavin. His main interest was in technique, technology and materials for the North with their special adaptation to northern extreme conditions, in terms of construction details, characteristics of long term use, economy. Slavin participated in the organisation of a scientific council dealing with the "problems of machines working under conditions of low temperatures". Slavin determined the borders of the economical and geographic understanding of the North, considering the specifics of industrial development in the region, and the need for increasing the economical efficiency of technical processes. According to Slavin, regions count as northern in case of :

- location north of the economically and more densely populated areas of the country, and also the remoteness to the main industrial centres of the country;
- low population density and a low level of mass production for the economy of the country;
- high cost of construction and production in comparison to the more tempered regions of the country;
- harsh climatic conditions that make economic development more difficult (Slavin 1972, Graham 1990).

Such a categorisation basing on remoteness and harshness of the climate fits less to the European northern regions of Russia. Those have a highly developed infrastructure in transport and industry, are comparably close to the economical, political and cultural centres of Russia and therefore look less like 'authentic' northern region in people's perception. Therefore the urbanised Murmansk region, which has the highest population density worldwide in the North, is more easily associated with the "*zapolyarnoe*" than with the Far North. From a geographic point of view (in terms of northern latitude), regions such as Kamtchatka, the Republic of Tyva or Mongolia as members of

Russia's 'northern club' cause slight confusion: Kamtchatka has the same latitude as Kiev, Tyva Republic has a common border with Mongolia.

On the other hand, an index basing on coldness and remoteness fits perfectly well for regions such as the Sakha Republic. Its capital Yakutsk is 5680 km from Moscow by airplane, the coldest inhabited place on Earth is there, and the Republic's territory of 3.2 million km² is approximately the same size as India, with the difference that in Yakutia only 1 million people live there, relying on an infrastructure consisting of just 115 km railroad and 7000km paved roads (Nikolaev 2002). The Lena River has therefore to serve as the main traffic artery of the region, but it is only navigable on water for 3 months of the year, the rest of the time being covered by ice. Along similar lines, the Yamal-Nenets district in West Siberia fits well to this category of the Far North. Its infrastructure is only developed in the southern bits, where oil and gas is extracted, and one city on the foothills of the Polar Ural Mountains, with railroad access. Both parts of the region are not connected by ground transport with each other, but separately by railroad to Moscow, which is typical for the central Soviet spatial planning.

The category of "Far Northernness" therefore mis-fits the European North of Russia and Murmansk, even though the region is almost entirely located north of the Arctic Circle, whereas only 40% of Sakha and 50% of the Yamal-Nenets district is north of the Arctic Circle.

The indexation of the North and determining which territories belong to it in Russia was introduced to the legislation first and foremost for regulating state guarantees and compensations for the hardships that workers have to endure in a cold harsh climate. Financial assistance is given to northern regions for attracting labour force (salary top-ups called regional coefficients) and stimulating qualified workers to stay in the North (salary top-ups called northern benefits) for developing industry in remote regions. After the Fall of the Soviet Union the

borders of this legal northern category 'North' moved considerably to the south. According to the ministry for economic development, northern benefits are even paid in 14 other places not officially on the list of northern regions (Zhukov 2006). Examples include Vologda, Bashkiria, Udmurtia, Khakassia, and the Jewish Autonomous region in the Russian East. The existing benefit system for northern regions also changed. Whereas in the Soviet Union benefits were for the sake of 'building communism' by attracting labour force during industrialisation nowadays benefits are more conceptualised as compensations for the harsh climatic conditions and high costs of live in the North.

The basic list of northern regions from 1967 is in spite of numerous changes still the basic document for a number of other lists that were established subsequently, for example a climatic zone for construction in the North, or several documents of the ministry for labour for determining the northern payment top-ups, or even a list of northern regions in Russia with special regulations for the production, delivery and sale of alcohol (resolution of Russian government No 400, 2007). The "legal North" with all its cold and remote characteristics is densely tied to numerous realities in everyday life and therefore always played an important role for the perception of the Russian North in general.

It would be wrong to see the North in its legal categories as a stable space. Its consistence was and is constantly changing, sometimes expanding and sometimes contracting through including or excluding particular regions. Therefore it is not surprising that today the questions of who belongs to the North and who does not in Russia is one of the mostly debated topics not only in terms of legal zoning, but also in terms of defining the Russian North in general. For example the town of Kandalaksha in Murmansk region is regularly changing its status of 'northernness'. Kandalaksha is north of the Arctic Circle, and legally belonged to the 'territories equivalent to the Far North'

until 1990, when the 'equivalent' was dropped and the town became a part of the Far North (resolution of Russian government No 594, 1990). Two years later Kandalaksha got the 'equivalent' back (resolution No 776, 1992). There are many other examples for these changes. Depending on time and different particular legal documents, the North currently counts for 60-80% of Russia's territory. Depending on this, the population of the North is also changing.

From these examples we see that the North is not a state but a process running along the line of "inclusion and exclusion". This theoretical concept developed by Schlee and others (Schlee & Werner 1996, Woodward and Kohli 2001, Kirsch 2006) accompanies contradictory processes of conceptualising the North and is suited to analyse the ambivalence and the multiplicity of spatial practices.

The contemporary northern spatiality in Russia is without doubt moving towards integration on the global level, which is also having its effect within the country. This, however, does not mean the full expansion of integration of the whole country as 'northern'. Both inclusion and exclusion can occur simultaneously and are not necessarily opposed to each other. Only with their multiple and constantly interacting characteristics can we understand local, regional and national forms of geographically diverse practices and identities.

The question of where the north is today in Russia is difficult to answer both from outside and from within the country. One of the most important characteristics of the North is the legal one. It bases on the natural-geographic and economic variables and is currently in an acute crisis. The question of enlarging the 'northern club'⁸ towards the west and the south entailed questioning the definition on the base of geographical and economic factors. One of the new northern axes in Russia is

⁸ i.e. regions belonging to the North legally and thus entitled to more budget transfers.

running along the line of Yaroslavl-Vologda-Arkhangelsk and does not fit well to the categories formulated by Slavin. Along this axis, the North is represented vividly for example in titles of regional newspapers such as "*severnyi krai*" (northern end, Yaroslavl), "*Russkii Sever*," "*Krasnyi Sever*" ("Russian North", "Red North", Vologda), "*Pravda Severa*," "*Severnyi Komsomolets*" ("Truth of the North" "Northern Komsomolets", Arkhangelsk). The region increasingly figures as a European region between the Volga and the White Sea (Turovskii 2003).

Currently there is a whole flurry of diverse conceptions of northern benefits and understandings of the North, leading to disparities and confusions. The need for changing to a more rational and transparent system of northern benefit distribution leads again back to the final question where the southern border of the North is in Russia. In 2004 president Putin asked for a clear definition of regions belonging to the North⁹. Three years later he suggested establishing a special institute of the Russian national arctic council for coordinating the North, and establishing a clear legal basis for the Russian state policy in the North (session of the presidium, 2007). The need for rethinking the southern borders of the Russian North is also emphasized in academia (Ten 2004). Another suggestions for coordinating the activities of all northern territories in Russia is the creation of an special 8th federal northern district, to be 'carved out' of the existing 7 districts (Gromyko 2004). In 2007, there are still many 'Norths' left in Russia. A member of the Khanty-Mansiisk regional government, born in Vologda, answered to my question if she was born in the North with a smile, saying "maybe, but this is another North" (interview 2007).

⁹ Opening speech at the meeting of the Presidiuma Gossoveta v Salekharde, April 28, 2004, accessed at www.president.kremlin.ru

The uncomfortable but beneficial North

As we have mentioned before, the question about the borders of the North are for the inhabitants of Russia not only theoretical constructions of space, but have very practical implications. This question is connected straight to the everyday life within these borders, because the government pays considerable compensations and subsidies for those inhabiting the North. For example, the 'regional coefficients' (*raionnye koeffitsienty*) on top of the usual salary are between 50-80%. This is used to attract people to come to work in the North. Another type of payments is used to keep people in the North, by increasing salary top-ups depending on the number of years a person has worked in the North. Northerners also have the right to retire earlier, they get 14 days more holiday per year, they get once in two years a free return trip to any place in Russia from their northern place of residence, and they are entitled to support in case of resettlement from the North to more temperate regions in Russia after having worked for 15 years or more in the North.

All these financial privileges apply for more than 40 of Russia's administrative entities (subjects of the Russian Federation see above). Strange enough, 14 of these regions are not in the official list of northern regions in Russia from 1967. For these regions the new plans for zoning in the Russian North have the most practical implications.

The current situation in Russia concerning the definition of the North and corresponding financial support for northern regions reminds on the discussions of northern indices in Canada in the 1960s and 1980s (Hamelin 1979,1988, Brunelle et al 1989, Graham 1990). In Canada the zoning of the North was done to support and motivate the working population in remote northern regions. This idea was borrowed by Canadian geographers from the Russian professor Burkhanov, who de-

veloped in 1968 indices for the North using combined climate data. This system had been mainly developed for engineering, namely determining conditions for the use of technology in northern mineral resource extraction. Burkhanov identified four different stages of climatological "harshness" and according to those divided the North into four different zones: the "Arctic extreme zone", the "subarctic zone of high extremeness", the "northern extreme zone" and the "eastern zone of relative extremeness" (Burkhanov 1970).

From 1958 on, the Canadian government worked with a system of payments to motivate workers in remote northern regions. These payments corresponded to the climatic harshness and extremeness of natural conditions (Graham 1990). However, Canadian as well as Soviet scholars were aware from the beginning that climatic harshness cannot be the only criterion to classify northern regions. A new model for classifying the borders of the North in Russia combines Burkhanov's system with socio-economical and medical-biological data. There are different variations of this new model, each advocated by a particular group of scholars from different scientific institutions (Zhukov 2006). (Shmeleva 2004, Moiseev n.d., Selin and Vasiliev n.d.). One of the most discussed classificatory systems for the North connected to financial transfers of the Russian state is the principle of 'uncomfortability' (*discomfortnost'*), which revisits the borders of the north and determines a new "northernness".

In April 2007 this new model of regional division within the North was discussed in a session of the Russian Parliament on the initiative of the Duma committee for northern affairs and the committee for natural resources. Basing on the 'uncomfortability' principle, the model envisions a threefold division of the North: the absolutely uncomfortable zone, the extremely

uncomfortable zone, and an uncomfortable zone.¹⁰ The first two zones should cover what is currently called the 'Far North' (*krainyi sever*), whereas the third zone should consist of the 'territories equivalent to the Far North' (*territorii priravnennye k krainemu severy*). Using this model, members of the 'northern club' such as Novosibirsk or Kemerovo might lose their northern status and therefore have already expressed their discontent with the new system (Tuleev 2007; Kuznetsov 2007). According to other classificatory versions, parts of Murmansk, Arkhangelsk and Karelia regions could lose their northern status (Shmeleva 2004).

The 'uncomfortability' principle does not satisfy all stakeholders interested in northern zoning. Therefore the Russian ministry for economic development went beyond the understanding of 'uncomfortability' and came up with a scale of 'comfortability'. That model classifies all regions of Russia, not only the North (Selin and Vasiliev n.d.). Russia is divided into six major zones, three of them being 'uncomfortable' and three of them 'comfortable'. The last zone is called 'favourable' (*blagopriatnaia*), covering the area around the Azov and Black Seas and the western parts of the Northern Caucasus.

Today the inhabitants of all 'Norths' wait for a decision about the new official borders of their region, because for them and Russia as a country this will have immense consequences. The current system of financial privileges was inherited from the Soviet planned economy and does not work properly under the conditions the new Russian economy. In many regions the general system of salary-coefficients is not tied to a particular branch of the economy. Nonetheless, there are significant differences in the scales of payments between the extractive industry, where payments are much higher, and for example agriculture. Employees of the state administration are also treated dif-

¹⁰ In this classification "absolutely uncomfortable" is one step more than "extremely uncomfortable".

ferently from those employed in the private sector, where many northern benefits are not guaranteed.

The new models of northern zoning have been criticised along several lines. Firstly, classifying the North along lines of “uncomfortability” is an unnecessarily negative starting point for a definition. Secondly, a new zoning and rethinking of northern benefits may generate significant out-migration from the North, as many might suffer losses in income when staying there. Thirdly, practical questions of payments and structures have been criticised and cause many additional questions:

- What are the financial and economical consequences of new zoning in the North and for Russia as a whole?
- How will the transfer of money among different budgets happen if one administrative entity ends up lying in three different zones?
- What happens in the Yamal-Nenets district, one of the richest northern regions, if the planned border of one of the zones will run through the regional capital of Salekhard?
- Will this lead to further social and financial stratification of the population?
- How will the new zoning influence the development of infrastructure and construction in the North?
- Will a new system be capable of solving the problem of high production costs in the North?

So far my northern friends and informants still prefer to go to China or other places in order to buy the popular mink fur coats, not only because the design is more modern, but also because they are cheaper than in the North. As long as the system does not change and the situation stays unclear, many pensioners who chose to leave the North after retirement to spend their old days in the south will continue to be northern residents and keep their flats in the North on paper, in order to preserve their higher northern pensions, which they might lose if they de-register.

A new system of determining northern finances will also lead to a reconfiguration of relations between the centre (Moscow) and the northern peripheries in Russia. This transformation is accelerated by tendencies of centralisation in Russia in the last 5 years, which had already significant financial consequences in the regions. The crisis of definition in the North is tied to global dynamics too and therefore definitely is not likely to be solved in a year. It will continue to attract attention and thoughts of all stakeholder groups, including politicians, scholars and inhabitants of all 'Norths'.

The mental map of the North

Mental maps are images of the environment in our minds and store our knowledge about spatial organisation of our surroundings, alongside information about characteristics which we associate with different places or regions. Mental maps do not necessarily comply with geographical scales.

The more detailed the scale of a map, the easier it is to determine the understanding of the North. Outsiders do not have to be very exact in their definitions, whereas the perception of insiders is more detailed. That perception can, however, fade out, the further away the mind goes from the centre-location of the subject. Inhabitants of Rovaniemi in Finland, one of the most famous towns on the Arctic Circle and home town of Santa Claus, for example imagine the Arctic starting some 300 km north of their home, in the vicinity of the town of Ivalo. For Ivalo people, however, the border of the Arctic moves even further north, to the towns of Inari or Utsjoki. For my informants in Murmansk their town is not in the Arctic, although it is far more beyond the Arctic Circle than any other big town in Russia. However, several of them associated the Arctic with a railway station called 'Arctic Circle' (*stantsia polyarnyi krug*), which is in fact located hundreds of km south of Murmansk at the border to Karelia in the Loukh area. However, these two

respondents were not aware of the 'southernness' of that Arctic railway station. For Nenets reindeer nomads the borders of Yamal, which translates as "end of the land" from Nenets language (Stammler 2005), are equally elastic, moving northwards depending on the location of the respondent.

For a general Russian perception, the North is easiest to be understood through a dichotomy between centre and periphery. This determines in many ways the mental dimensions of the North and the specifics of spatial relations in Russia as a whole. Any place outside of the 'centre' bears the mark of periphery in people's minds. The popular 'anatomic' expression of Moscow being the head and St Petersburg the heart of Russia divides the whole country into centre (the two mentioned megapolis) and the rest of the country, at best distinguishing some little islands within the huge peripheries, 'mini Moscows', for example Novosibirsk, Ekaterinburg or Vladivostok. Peripherality here is understood not in terms of geographic distance to the centre, but also in political, ideological and cultural dimensions.

This is inherited from tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union and continues to be the basic element of spatial identity in contemporary Russia, in spite of considerable recent developments of horizontal links within the country. A fellow passenger on a non-stop flight to Moscow from Yakutsk had to go through Moscow, just to fly back again several thousand kilometres northeast, because there was no direct connection between two northern Siberian cities. Russia continues to be a highly centralised country with a huge difference between a rich, dynamic and glossy centre and the rest of the country. This situation is cemented by central superiority in almost all aspects of life, starting from the main flows of capital, political decisions, the supreme commission to evaluate scientific dissertations and ending with the possibilities for shopping, the level of health care and the standard of life as a whole.

The North, however, in scientific discussions as well as in common understandings is not only associated with the periphery, but also first and foremost with the word 'Far' (*krainyi*, meaning located at the end). This reproduces another spatial dichotomy in Russia, the one between *krai* and *materik*, the 'Far end' and the 'mainland'. The Russian policy from the 18th to the beginning of the 20th century focused mainly on economic factors and conceptualised the northern periphery mainly in terms of benefits to the south and 19th century. This included fur-trade, minerals and other resources. During the Soviet Union this policy turned into a giant industrialisation of northern territories, including a whole complex of social infrastructure. This industrialisation was tailored for both economical and ideological needs. The idea was that people should not only extract resources, but also live, have families, grow up children and get education in a single location.

This idea fitted well with the collective ideology of Soviet people, emphasizing the 'human factor' in the country. The argument was that such an endeavour is only possible in the context of a centrally planned economy. Moreover, such a policy was thought to be the asset of 'human' socialism, as opposed to capitalism, where the main criterion was the rate of profit. The economic logic of socialism was "improvement of socialist production (...) for the purpose of satisfying to the fullest the constantly growing material and cultural needs of the whole society" (Slavin 1972: 60). That was different from a logic of capital accumulation only, and therefore, nowhere else in the circumpolar North we find such big and developed industrial cities than in northern Russia. The majority of Russia's northern population consists nowadays of Russian-speaking immigrants and their descendants (rather than indigenous peoples). The first waves of incomers in the 1920s and 1930s are considered to be locals in the North for several generations already. Nonetheless, the idea of staying in the North for a lim-

ited period in one's life, usually until retirement, before moving back to the 'mainland' (*materik*) is still quite popular.

The incomer-population is usually viewed as being connected to the 'mainland' and the south by the indigenous and native population of the Russian North. In the Sakha Republic and Yamal there is a rather clear classification of different Russian-speaking groups of people in the North, e.g. old settlers (*starozhily*), transient workers (*vremenshiki*), incomers (*priehnye*). This differentiation is less expressed in the Murmansk region, where infrastructural links are more developed and the geographic distance to the central Russian regions is smaller. For all these categories of people, however, connections to the 'mainland' continue to be an important factor, be it through parents, relatives, children studying, having a house or flat, for other reasons. Such connections continue to present a potential for out-migration to the 'mainland'.

The idea of a 'frontier-mentality' or the dichotomy *krai-materik* continues to be important for both inhabitants in the North and perception by outsiders. Among all my fieldwork experiences, the word *materik* was used most frequently in Kamtchatka. When I asked colleagues in Petropavlovsk if it is safe to go out in town at night, they smilingly answered that criminality is much lower than on the *materik*, because anyway there is nowhere to escape (*vse ravno bezhat' nekuda*). One criminal who tried to escape was caught immediately, when he tried to find the closest railway station on Kamtchatka, which in fact can be reached only by air or water (interview, July 2007).

The idea of *krai*, 'Far end', "which you reach and there is nowhere else to go" (Razumova 2006: 179), and the idea of *materik* in relation to the North are first and foremost Russian conceptions that arose as a result of migration experiences, be it through relocation, exile, labour migration, or industrialisation of the North. Connected to these experiences there is another contradictory pair of perceptions of the North, as house of the dead and as a realm of utter freedom, as a frightening head of

darkness and a fabulous land of plenty, as frozen wasteland and as colourful frontier, as a silent cold space and as *alter ego* of Russia, as place of Russia's 'backward' northern indigenous peoples and as wealth of Russia (Slezkine & Diment 1993, Lamin&Malov 2005, Blakkisrud & Hønneland 2006).

It is not possible to understand the general idea of the North without considering these numerous dichotomies in their context. They do not have to be mutually exclusive. Nonetheless the physical-geographic classification was and still dominates over other temporary categories basing on historical memory or experience. Not long ago many inhabitants of central Russia did not have any idea where the 'authentic North', e.g. Yamal or Sakha (Yakutia) were. These places were mainly known as some frosty and remote marginal space, which somewhere behind the Ural mountains merged with categories of Siberia and the Far East, finally all being some kind of periphery. This construction of marginality is supported by two more aspects:

Firstly, the whole North, beginning in Europe west of the Urals and reaching to the Bering Strait, is a set of territories of many indigenous ethnic groups, which in Soviet times consolidated into different levels of regional autonomy¹¹. Secondly, the lack of clarity of the most important question in Russia about the North, namely whether the North for Russia is a burden or an asset, also contributes to preserving this previous image of the North as a cold remote periphery. In practical terms this is a question of preserving the old Soviet approach to the North as a place for permanent settlement of large populations, or rather rethink it as a place for transient settlements of fly-in – fly-out shift workers in mineral resource extraction. This hotly debated question remains still unanswered by now. There are programmes supporting both approaches to the North, on

¹¹ e.g. the Yamal-Nenets autonomous district, or the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), or the Chukotka autonomous district

the one hand supporting out-migration of permanent population from the North (Heleniak 2001; World Bank 2001; Federal Law 2002, №02079, Thomson 2004; Round 2005), on the other hand projects of building up cities as permanent centres of future northern resource development (Zuev 2005: 237, Stoliarov 2007).

Therefore, a contemporary mental map of the North bases on a combination of these natural and cultural, political and economic factors discussed above. However, global and inner Russian processes ask for thorough adjustments in this mental map, for example the changing centre-periphery relations after the 1990s (Gossmann 1997, Honneland 2006). There was a time when some regions had acquired considerable autonomy from Moscow in administering their vast mineral resources. Establishing straight international contacts and inner-Russian horizontal relations among regions led not only to an improved political reputation of the northern periphery, but also made yesterday's "unknown cinderellas" better known to a broader public. "When you fly in to Moscow, you better don't say that you come from the North, otherwise the taxi drivers will increase the price. From the North means with lots of money, that's what they think" (interview, Yakutsk summer 2003), was the instruction of an informant for me before leaving Yakutsk. The previous stereotypes have weakened because of a new image of the North as economically strong resource rich region. Yamal is now more associated with gas and Sakha (Yakutia) with diamonds, and not only with permafrost and reindeer anymore. Within these regions, a dominant perception is that the centre extracts most of the resource revenues and flourishes at the costs of the northern periphery.

All in all the image of the North as 'backward and uncivilised' has changed positively as a region with growing economic potential for Russia as well as for the whole globe. This new image of the North draws more on positive sides of Russia's history, such as the heroic expeditions of Potanin on drift

ice, Chkalov's non-stop flight over the North Pole in 1937 or the exploration of the Northern Sea route (Gromyko: *moda na sever*). Other components of this new image are postsocialist ideas such as the mythical, transcendent North (Shiropaev 2005), the passionate North, and the North as a vector for Russian ethnogenesis (Gromyko 2001, Krupnov 2003), the positive postmodern North (Neklessa 2005, 2007) and the fresh wind from the northeast (Shtepa 2000) or from the northwest (Shtepa 2004).

Reshaping the North or a new philosophy of space

The question about the ideological and intellectual basis of understanding northern spatiality in Russia is becoming more acute, as a result of the numerous discussions by politicians and scholars about the northern borders, the geopolitical importance of the North, the potential of Russian hydrocarbons in the Arctic, about northern benefits, the 'cost of the North', and the search for new governmental approaches.

The manifestation of 'Northernness' cannot be limited to political or economical interests only. It also has to be supported by ideas that connect straightforwardly to a new spatial identification of the whole country. Among the most complicated tasks in this respect is the compatibility of the new 'northern dimensions' of Russia with the marginal status of the North in Russia's society as a whole. Such a new spatial idea has to emphasize the integrative potential of the North for the whole country, and also has to be a thoroughly Russian conception that cannot look like being borrowed or adapted from the west. This is not an easy task, considering the vastness of Russia as a country and the 'traditional' image of the north as a cold hostile region. In addition to that, Russia is also a multiethnic, multinational country. According to the Russian census in 2002, more than 150 ethnic groups were registered in the country, with ethnic Russians counting for 79,82% of the population. In the

Soviet Union the unifying ideological construction was the 'soviet people', which formed a mega-umbrella over all diverse ethnic and regional identities. The 'soviet people' served for many decades as the single national identity for all of Russia's inhabitants.

The search for a new national idea as a replacement for the lost Soviet identity was not successful so far, in spite of many debates and ideas. One of these ideas for example draws on the Slavic or 'ethnic Russian' idea (Verkhovskii 2003). Another one emphasized conciliarism (*sobornost'*) (Borodai and Nikiforov 1995). Both of these concepts base on a Russian orthodox spirit, which does not quite include Russia's non-Russian inhabitants, among which are, for example, large muslim groups, among other religious congregations. Another idea for Russian national consolidation was "Eurasianism", where Russia would be the central bridge between Europe and Asia both geographically and culturally (Humphrey 2002). However, Eurasianism offers to this day less political weight and capital for Russia in comparison to northern spatiality. The concept of a Russian national idea basing on northern spatiality is now intensively being discussed by theorists as a more neutral and less conflictuous way for consolidating Russia as a multiethnic and polyconfessional country.

Finding a balance between national non-western models for development and the need for cooperation with the global community is another important aspect of incorporating "Northernness" into geopolitical and national interests in Russia. Russia today is demonstrating an increasing self-confidence, not at least underlining its namely "Russian" roots and its own way of global integration, which has to be different from western models. Emphasizing the "Russianness" of development happens in spite of the fact that many of the suggested development scenarios in fact were borrowed by popular western theorists such as Toynbee, Huntington, Giddens, Appadurai, Wallerstein, Robertson and others, which were

translated to Russian. However, all of these models are creatively reinterpreted and transformed into what is thought to be an original Russian model. The main currents of contemporary intellectual thought in Russia definitely have now gone beyond the period of enthusiastic adaptation of western ideas, such as 'catch-up development' or 'sustainable development'. The new 'northern dimensions' of Russia are a chance to meet this challenge. The 'northern way' sounds less provocative than adapting a 'western way', which is still more ideologically loaded with ideas of the west as contemporary competitor or past enemy. The 'northern way' suits better to Russia's increased self-confidence in an international position.

One of the most discussed and developed recently ideas is the concept of northern civilisation. In academic debates it is often introduced as a philosophical reflexion of a new understanding of the North, and as suitable for building a 'northern model' of an all Russian culture (Golovnev 2004, Popkov and Tyugashev 2004, 2004a, Neklessa 2002a, 2007). Northern civilisation is thought to be a spatial model which is opposed to the Eurasian model, and which is a new geopolitical factor (Gromyko 2001, Shiropayev 2005). Northern civilisation also functions as a new approach to administering the North in public and political movements and unions, such as the "party of Russia - Northern Civilisation", the "Parliament of peoples of the World" or the cooperation of northern cities "60 parallel (60 degrees latitude)" (Krupnov 2003, Popkov and Tyugashev 2004a). In numerous political and academic discussions northern civilisation is present as a strategy for strengthening social relations and institutions in spatial categories, and even as a structural basis for a national statehood (Neklessa 2007). In 2004 the first congress "Northern civilisation: formation, problems and perspectives" in Surgut (Khanty-Mansiisk region, West Siberia), where many well-known Russian and international northern scholars participated, was a stimulating kick-off event for a broad discussion of this new concept.

The manifestation of northern spatiality as a political and cultural construction is not an entirely new event. When the question of a new uniting national idea for Russia to replace the lost Soviet idea was especially pressing in the beginning of the 1990s, many regional leaders suggested their own ideas for regional identities, partially drawing on international relations in their regions. Those became an important support for the regions in the search for a new identity and policy towards the federal Russian centre. International relations were developed mainly along ethnic or confessional lines, for example Finno-Ugric cooperation (Saarinen 2001), or the “Euro-Islam” movement (Khakimov 1998). In the remote northern peripheries of Russia without any Diaspora abroad, the idea of space became the central concept on the regional political agenda.

The first president of the Sakha Republic Mikhail Nikolaev introduced a new understanding of ‘circumpolar civilisation’ in numerous publications, declaration and activities (Stammler-Gossmann 2006). Promoting this concept drew on the support by local scholars, who developed ‘circumpolar civilisation’ on the basis of Arnold Toynbee’s ‘frozen types of civilisation’ (1976). The term ‘circumpolar civilisation’ was understood as a community of people living in similar climatic natural conditions of the circumpolar North and being united by a close spiritual and material culture and worldviews (Vinokurova 1995). The conception developed at a time of very specific relations between the regional Sakha political elite and the federal centre in Moscow (Gossmann 1997). The declaration of a regional “Northernness” (‘we are northerners’) was used in support of the considerable regional sovereignty that Sakha had acquired from Moscow, and to preserve the volatile unity of different ethnic groups within the region, as well as to overcome the complex of inferiority of the ‘little brother’ of different ethnicity in comparison to the strong ethnically Russian centre.

The circumpolar civilisation was a good opportunity to underline the uniqueness and the advantages of the northern

community. The prestigious international activities of the region in the 1990s helped to enter the global community and strengthen the reputation of the Sakha Republic as a whole, and also the situation of its indigenous minorities. However, within Russia the Sakha Republic was too far away from the centre and hardly known there. The circumpolar concept was too much connected to indigenous minorities of the North and to the unique relations between man and the environment and with these particularities did not have much chance to go beyond any regional frameworks.

Within 15 years after the Soviet Union, the Sakha Republic has experimented with numerous spatial reference frameworks for finding a regional identity. All of them have their plusses and minuses. For example in the meantime the office of the 'northern Forum' was closed and its former chairman, Mikhail Nikolaev, is now the chairman of the new 'Eastern Dimension' programme in Russia, aiming mainly at intensifying relations between Russia and the countries of the Asian Pacific (Presidential decree no.559, 07.04.2006). Therefore the 'northernness' of Sakha has gone to a more hibernating state, whereas the 'easterness' has become more active. This shows how spatial references in local identity can change and become activated on different occasions when needed.

The northern civilisation as a post -and proto- space

The two categories of a) space (northern) and b) civilisation, entered today the all-Russian arena. In their connection to global processes they have become central in discussions about development models for the country. Although a full theoretical treatment of the concept of northern civilisation goes beyond the framework of this article, it is worth looking at the main traits and approaches.

Northern civilisation is seen as a prototype for a future unity that goes beyond national frameworks, but at the same

time functions as a strong factor of Russian reality. As a unique country of northern civilisation Russia is thought as an equal participant in the general civilisatory process of the planet and at the same time preserving itself as an independent subject. In a way this includes both a 'new north' and an 'old north'. The aspect of civilisation dominates here about the aspect of northernness in both the new and the old interpretation. Russia as a northern country is introduced as a new type of world civilisation with a 'soft statehood', with multicultural and multi-confessional transnational borders and with a horizontally structured network of regions (Krupnov 2003). According to the congress resolution of "Northern Civilisation" (Surgut 2004), the North as a particular type of civilisation has to become a space of cooperation and partnership among regions, states and nations that all belong to different types of civilisations (resolution 2004). In the numerous publications on the website sever.inache.net, dedicated to questions of northern civilisation, it is more than the mechanical sum of Europe, Russia and America basing on cultural unification. Northern civilisation also draws on common economic values (Shtepa 2004).

Samuel Huntington's theory about the clash of more or less homogenous civilisations (1996) has gained much attention of Russian intellectuals (Popkov & Tyugashev 2004). Assuming these different civilisations in Huntington's model as equal partners in global processes, they argue, fits better to their idea of an original Russian model of development than certain civilisations that aim for catching up to the level of others. From this point of view we can also understand why Russian intellectuals are sympathetic to the Japanese term of 'glocalisation' that has been popularised by R. Robertson (1995). Glocalisation is interpreted as a synthesis of global interests and localised uniqueness, a regional scenario of globalisation (Bauman 2002, Kotomina 2003, Shtepa 2004).

The innovative North

The main characteristic of this 'new' North is its innovative and corporative face. Geographical borders fade out in such an understanding, whereas their symbolic importance becomes the principle criterion of belonging. In this more symbolised quality that is oriented towards the future, the North has the best integrative potential and represents the most attractive and pragmatic theoretical idea which is possible to use politically. The basis is the idea that the inner generative energy of northern space has to be realised with the production of high technologies. The sociologist Ivanov (2002) introduced the understanding of "virtual economy" in the end of the 1990s to Russian debates, which was taken as a starting point for different visions in Russia, such as 'silicon valley' (Nikolaev 2005, 2005a), 'intellectual economy', 'digital world' (Neklessa 2002, 2002a), 'hard and soft technology', 'haute couture resources' (Shtepa 2005). These variations figure prominently in numerous projects and suggestions about northern development and transform into more or less concrete practices.

The innovative direction has gained attention by president Putin, who emphasized it as a strategic task for Russia at a state council meeting entitled 'on information and communication technologies'.¹² According to the politician Sergei Mironov the leaders of the 21 century will be those countries that succeed best in controlling high technologies, rather than those with huge natural resources (Nikolaev 2005a).

Applying this direction of thought to the circumpolar civilisation, these high technologies for the North include digital network villages, cluster-factories, new high tech transport on strings as invented by A. Unitskii, new types of energy resources such as mini nuclear power stations or bioenergy, and

¹² In February 2006 in Nizhnyi Novgorod, see: <http://www.nr2.ru/nn/56508.html> (accessed 06/10/2007)

latest telecommunication technologies. Moreover, innovations for the circumpolar civilisation should also include the social sphere, in the form of life-insurance, social forms of citizenship, and personal patronage (Gromyko 2001, Krupnov 2003).

It is in this innovative sphere where the northern dimensions acquire the lines of a future Russian statehood. The way to become successful here is seen in the corporative approach. It is understood as a kind of agreement between the federal centre of Russia and the main industrial companies in the North, which should combine mineral resource extraction with a high-tech economy (Chernyshev 2004, Neklessa 2005, Andreev 2006). One possible model of development on this basis can become the 'northern contract', according to the political anthropologist Sergei Zuev (2005). This contract should be built on the basis of mutual business commitments between the state, industrial companies and the regional institutions of self-governments. Neklessa (2005) suggests a "glocal" model of Russian statehood in the form of a transnational corporation "Russia", which should be fed by a regional corporation "North-West" and "points of alternative scenario for the country's future (Neklessa).

Proto North

Creating a 'Post-North' with new original qualities is among the more important components when conceptualising the 'northern' status of Russia in the global context. This paradigm offers the possibility of overcoming the current national stress when attempting to realise an Euro-Atlantic cooperation, where Russia's participation still somehow has the reputation of a passive developing country. This is why the uniqueness and originality of the Russian way is another important 'civilisatory' component of the conception. The current situation with the North is interpreted as repetition of the history of Russian northern development in the energetic phase of Russia from the

discovery and exploration of the northern territories to the reconstruction and consolidation of the country (Programme '60 parallel', 2005). It is also about a revival of the times of big northern infrastructure projects, and the unrealised or uncompleted models of development, such as an international northern transport corridor with a tunnel under the Bering Strait in the early 20th century, or the Northern Sea Route (Zuev 2005, Krupnov 2003).

The Russian roots of the new northern concept are emphasized by drawing on traditions of millennia in building and defending an original civilisation, on the pre-revolutionary experience of saving cultures, and on the organisation of a successful polyethnic life (Krupnov 2003). Moreover, the unique practical experience of Russia in establishing scientific approaches to northern exploration is used to justify the 'Russianness' of the North in the 21 century (Gromyko 2001, Zuev 2005). Examples for achievements of this kind are shipping in the North, agriculture, and health care. Terms like revival, repetition, reconstruction, and neo-tradition related to the northern model of Russian development became essential in almost all interpretations and underline the Russian 'rootedness' of this new north. The uniqueness of Russian natural landscapes is used as another argument for the Russianness of the 'northern civilisation' when the Russian North is seen as 'Noah's Arc of humankind' (Gromyko 2001), with its huge reserves of 'wild' nature, being the "lungs of the planet", as the Americans already for a long time breathe Russian oxygene" (Nikolaev 2002).

Nonetheless, the possibilities of the 'civilisation' component in the conception of northern civilisation become more critical when adding the spatial component ('northern'). How can these aspects of civilisation from the theoretical literature introduced above be successfully linked to the communities of indigenous northern peoples and the common social position of the North as periphery, resource colony, and frontier? How can

this old status of the North be combined with the proclaimed northern mission that should unite whole country? The historian Victor Ten (2005) sees the solution of this problem in representing the North “referring to the past time of rule of the appropriate and natural economy. Yuri Gromyko (2001) refers to the ways of surviving in harsh conditions that were developed by the peoples of the North.

The Novosibirsk scholars Popkov and Tyugashev (2004, 2006) underline the existence of the northern (Arctic) civilisation as a philosophical reflection of the superiority of mind in the “frozen civilisations” (Toynbee 1976), rather than using traits of ‘civilisation’ such as the presence of cities, division of labour, classes, statehood and written law. Different from Toynbee’s pessimistic predictions about the scope for evolution of these communities, the Russian scholars underline the potential of the northern civilisation to continue or revive development. They prove the role of indigenous northern communities and their importance for the evolution of humankind using classical Russian and world philosophy from Voltaire and Nietzsche to Chaadaev and Gumilev (Popkov and Tyugashev 2006).

Relations with Fennoscandia are also used to support cultural categories in the North of Russia for example the Finno-Ugric roots of many northern peoples, the role of the Vikings for the development of early Russian statehood, the Scandinavian relations of the Novgorod Republic, and the historical contacts of the Pomor population living on the shores of the Barents Sea. Many authors see these relations as historical continuity or the revival of historical tradition (Shiropaev 2001, Shtepa 2004; Golovnev 2004). Nonetheless neither philosophical nor historical Fennoscandian references are enough powerful as a resource to overcome an inherent contradiction between the ‘northern’ and the ‘civilisation’ aspect when conceptualising the North as an integrative national category for the whole of Russia.

There is, however, one deficit in the attempt to link the European (western) high-tech society to the 'traditional' northern society through the northern type of a Russian civilisation. It is the lack of symbolical and empirical proofs. Categories of inclusion and exclusion enforce that conflict. The northern status of Russia, as it is argued in a geostrategic and innovative context, is mainly oriented towards the dynamic regions in the European North of Russia and West Siberia with their hydrocarbon resources. The rest of the Russian Arctic cannot compete with those regions, neither in terms of resource abundance, nor with infrastructure. Weaker integrative symbols such as the 'Scandinavian myth' exclude 'other Norths' such as Sakha (Yakutia) or Kamtchatka altogether. We may observe in these remaining regions a rise of the marginal indigenous communities which looks like a late revenge of their cultures. However, for the Russian-speaking majority of the Russian northeast this movement to compensate earlier humiliation does not meet any of their interests.

The search for a balanced conception of northern spatiality including political and cultural aspects is most active in the geographic and geostrategic 'centre' of the Russian North – in the Yamal-Nenets and Khanty-Mansiisk districts of western Siberia, where most of the Russian oil and gas reserves are located. The Nentsy are a Finno-Ugric speaking indigenous group of the North and herd successfully the world's largest herd of domestic reindeer, in the world's biggest gas production area (Stammler 2005). For the paradigm of a dynamic North this region has an important role for building up a northern civilisation (Popkov and Tyufashev 2004, 2006). This process is still at its early stages, but from the very beginning it is happening in tight connection to global processes and mobile resources, e.g. people, goods and services. The activities of the Arctic Council, intergovernmental and non-governmental programmes and projects, international economic relations, and the increasing mobility of regional elites enables the development

of trans-territorial dimensions in these regions. In addition to that, new symbols in the regions (e.g. the new flag of Yamal), more attention to image-making policy (e.g. the first international forum of image-making in Khanty-Mansiisk 2006), are used to build bridges between the political and academic rhetoric and regional values.

Conclusion

The debates discussed above and the existing conceptualisations around the Russian North show an active process of determining spatial frameworks and a growing awareness of the unique possibilities as well as problems of the North. Northernness in a global context reflects a generally increased actuality of space as a relevant category. Space becomes a crucial trait of 'centeredness' on the global agenda. Having analysed the diverse interpretations of space, we can say that the North can help Russia to create new forms of competitive power in the global arena. In this respect it is important for Russia that playing the northern card enables to emphasize a unique specific Russian way, rather than buying into western models of development. The non-western potential helped the North to gain popularity. It is hard to imagine that without this the North would have become important in this quality and as an integrative model for the whole country.

The category of space figures here as a product which is created by social actors (Appadurai 1996). In our case these are politicians and theoreticians, and space has become an instrument (Lefebvre 1991) for their activities.

At the same time, we see that the understanding of the North has its place in society. Considerable activity of the 'global North' in transnational projects has far reaching effects for the North within Russia. Therefore Russia's ambitions to become a major player in this 'northern club' are more than

theoretical abstractions on a global scale; they are integrated in specific existing regional contexts.

Our analysis confirms Lefebvre's argument about the constitutive dualism of the category 'space'. Space has therefore simultaneously global, homogenous, unifying as well as fragmenting and dividing qualities. In this dualism space can develop in all possible options and variations and can facilitate negotiations in a non-aggressive context. These characteristics of space offer new political, economic and social paradigms for postsocialist Russia.

Our analysis revealed several different spaces functioning in the name of the North, but not any general understanding of what the North really is. We have seen that the North functions on several levels in Russia, e.g. the global, the national and the regional levels. The narrower the spatial frames, the stricter are their criteria inclusion and exclusion, for example in the region. At the same time, they also become easier exchangeable. The different spatial reference frames for an identity of the Sakha Republic after the Soviet Union are a good example for this. Basing on our empirical material from different Russian northern regions, we see that space as a social construction is used as an instrument and concept for solving actual challenges of very diverse nature, be it the quest for regional identity, political weight, economic capital, or international cooperation. In this sense space is constructed by society and also reproduced through discourses and social practices.

From the regional perspective we observe how space can manifest its versatility: space as concept can satisfy local needs and 'work' properly to the extent to which it corresponds to local perceptions. My informants from different social and age groups prefer to express their approach to space as a more 'readable' or 'visual' form of social practice. Space is pragmatically approached in terms of possibility to work, division of labour, hierarchy or power. For example, if believing in Sakha

as a northern region gives jobs in northern international cooperation, why not believe in Sakha's northern spatial identity?

It is important to understand that the question is not whether or not spatial identity exists. Spatial identity can be an essential part of a constantly changing and shifting diversity of identities. A newly articulated spatial identity does not necessarily mean that it becomes the main frame of reference on all social levels. At the same time this does not mean that spatial identity is immediately refused. Pragmatic approaches to spatial identity in society include careful evaluation of the opportunities and problems connected to one or the other suggested concept. Even switching between different spatial frameworks, such as 'northern' or 'eastern' dimension, means activating one framework and letting the other 'hibernate', rather than mutually exclusive practices. The circumpolar civilisation in the remote Sakha Republic, for example, changed to another 'southern' reference space, emphasizing historical connections of Sakha with the Asian world of Chingis Khan. Ever since, the northern spatial reference is hibernating.

Therefore, as long as the spatial identity is institutionalised and directed from the top, it becomes meaningful when it finds a rational pragmatic basis in the regional society, not necessarily an emotional basis.

The north is today not only an ideological construction, but also a huge energy of imagination. Therefore the North is often associated with the birth of new life, with the conquest of the cosmos, or with the frozen rich history of Russia that will thaw and revive as a result of a new spiritual 'warming' period (Gromyko 2001).

The analysis of ideas about the North in this article leads us to conclude that space can change its location and its borders, as well as its contents. It can also change from, say, a geographical frame of reference to a more imaginary frame. This 'elasticity' and versatility of space as a category is one possible source of its legitimisation.

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Metropolis, the Southern Cone of Latin America and the Antarctica

Representations of the environmental problems among young inhabitants of Buenos Aires

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Abstract

On the basis of a theoretical socio-ecological and socio-existential discussion, together with a rootedness approach, the results obtained from an empiric research on young Buenos Aires City inhabitants, 15 to 25 year-old, are analyzed in order to check what are the representations about urban dwelling and the environmental problems not only in the city but also in the South Cone of Latin America and in the Antarctica.

This population has been analyzed on the basis of the following variables: representations, perceptions, attitudes, and behavior with respect to their environmental problems thereof: in the city, the region and the Antarctica.

Rootedness is considered as a "total" phenomenon: multidimensional and interdependent among its three dimensions (the spatial, the social, and the cultural dimensions), and also as an

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explanatory variable, together with anomie, participation, and consumerism.

Keywords: city, environmental problems, rootedness, Antarctica, Latin America, anomie, participation, consumerism, youth.

Introduction: on the importance of the environment as a total phenomenon

Social sciences and Anthropology have stressed the socio-cultural components inextricably united as well as integrated to any concept dealing with the environment. In fact, the environment is a total phenomenon: it is both a natural realm as well as a built up realm, hence both interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary approaches are required.

In that sense, it is E. Rothacker's contention that the human habitat is constituted by a selection of objects endowed with an existential importance for humans: such objects are significant, they make sense. As an object for an analysis rooted in social sciences, the environment/habitat means an intra- and trans-disciplinary approach (human sciences, and sciences of nature), a holistic mode to grasp the complex inter-connections of the different components thereof. So, the habitat gets constituted as a system including interdependent subsystems (Cf. del Acebo Ibáñez, 1998).

It is in this connection that Hawley (1991, 1950) considers that the "community" is a collective response to the habitat involved, an adaptation, so to speak, of the human organism to the milieu it lives in: while *culture* is an "eco-system considered from an analytic outlook", an eco-system is "culture considered from a synthetic outlook". A self-criticism of the ecological-human thinking (cf. D. Erpicun's, 1976) is very valuable when they introduce the *self consciousness*, and consequently the environment can be seen as an *interiorized milieu*.

This self-criticism allows links to be established with an existential Sociology as a fresh sociological reading of the existentialist thinking (M. Heidegger, J-P Sartre, K. Jaspers, etc.). Because the human being, not only develops strategies aimed at the biological survival during his/her stay on board the planet Earth but also the human being *founds* space or territories that could be called "realms for meaning". So, the human being inhabits in the existentialist meaning Heidegger gives to this concept. The fact of inhabiting is a *proprium*, i.e. a characteristic which defines the human being as such -as Heidegger put it most aptly in his famous essay *Bauen, Whonen, Denken* (...).

In fact, the human being is a creature who dwells, such dwelling overcomes the mere action of "occupying some space" or "possessing a dwelling place": we do not dwell because we build, but as Heidegger (1954) points out, we build and construct because we have previously dwelt.

To dwell, to live-in-a-house, to inhabit some certain space, implies an action that is both foundational and founding. Precisely, inhabitants -more than architects or urban planning experts- are the real house and city builders, because they found them as of their being-themselves-in-a-society. As a continuous re-appearing of the *Homo conditor*, in the action of living the contents that give the ultimate sense to architectural forms are created.

Consequently, every ecological crisis is not free from strong ethic and existential connotations with reference to either its causes or its consequences and the possible ways for the solution and prevention thereof. This is precisely what Ph. Lersch (1973) was referring to when he presented the *De-poetization* (*dis?*) of the world, or K. Mannheim (1943) when he mentioned the crisis of the judgement and of the representations of reality. Perhaps the extreme environments, such as the Antarctica and the Arctic, can help us to re-take (*recuperar*) this poetic approach to the environment and to convince us that the Earth (and every place in it) where we inhabit is our home.

Rootedness approach

The attachment of man to the territory tends to emerge as rootedness, understood as a complete spatial-socio-cultural phenomenon. Since individual, society and culture –together with the space and time coordinates- constitute factors that are inextricably joined and inter-dependent, rootedness offers a pluri-dimensionality that emerges from such components. The sense of belonging represents the intercrossing of the said dimensions, so that rootedness is the attachment of an individual or group of individuals to a certain space-time, society and culture (del Acebo Ibáñez 1996, 1993).

The first and prevailing spatial rootedness –understood as the identification of man with a place, that “territorial imperative” that exists already in animals and of which modern ethology has spoken (Ardrey, Lorenz 1965)-, as civilization progresses, increasingly becomes a consequence of the social and cultural rootedness. We consider social rootedness the extent to which the individual attaches or feels that sense of belonging to different groups and organizations, specially to those in which he feels extremely and intimately involved; this social dimension of rootedness also depends on the existence of participating structures, both in the local community and in the global society. Cultural rootedness is the being in force and personal experience of the inhabitant, of the normative-axiological background that specifies such historical society in which he lives; in the antipodes of anomie, man –a free, responsible and symbolic creature- critically identifies himself with such background that conforms him and which he helps to conform, thus nurturing a sort of *Weltanschauung* that shelters and strengthens him, a realm that is full of shared senses, the background and ways of human living that tend to -and facilitate- a nourishing rootedness (del Acebo Ibáñez 1996, 1993).

Rootedness appears, then, as vocation and fulfillment: the human being lives (must live) in the planet by means of forms

of rootedness: otherwise, he excludes himself, leaves solidarity aside, and becomes depredatory.

Methodological aspects

On the basis of such considerations and theoretical discussions we carried on an empirical study to check what are the representations about *urban dwelling*, *the environmental urban problems* and about *the South Cone of Latin America* and *the Antarctica* for young people –age group 15-to-25-year-olds, inhabitants of the City of Buenos Aires.

To design the sample (N=300) some sample points have been randomly selected in the city. At each point analysis units have been selected in a “coincidental” way on the basis of age, gender, and socioeconomic level (SEL) quotas. A questionnaire with both open and closed questions have been administered.

As a general objective, we have set out to find out how strong is the rootedness of young, 15- to 25-year-old people dwelling in the city of Buenos Aires, as well as their subsequent representations, perceptions, attitudes, and different types of behavior with respect to their urban habitat, and the environmental problems thereof. At the same time, through the construction of the respective indexes, the following variables have been measured within the said population sample, namely: *spatial rootedness* (territorial bonding); *social rootedness* (sense of pertaining to groups, primary and secondary groups, as well as real and potential grade of participation in community affairs; and *cultural rootedness* (grade of anomie). We acknowledge the fact that there exist restrictions –a fact likely to be observed in any index construction, especially in cases such as our case example built up, so to speak, on other indexes. Anyhow, it is our contention that this is a valuable, valid resource provided, however, it is considered as an approach to a phenomenon highly difficult to be measured on the ground of the complexity of its components.

The grades of *consumerism life* and *inner life* have also been measured to look for explanatory variables. Besides, we have crossed all the responded categories with gender, age, and SEL.

The empirical study has been carried along pursuant to the following hypotheses:

- a) rootedness is a “total phenomenon” the characteristic of which lies in its three dimensions, namely the spatial, social, and cultural dimensions;
- b) in any dweller with rootedness in a given city or local community, there exists a “representation of the fact of dwelling” that implies a greater commitment, and a greater participation with regard to both urban/local and environmental problems, with a lesser level of anomie; and
- c) the anomic dweller tends to evidence a higher degree of individualism and predatory behavior; at the same time this dweller tends to withdrawing from the more primary, or affective links.

Domestic dwelling: the sense of “house” in everyday life

What does “home” mean?

If we take into account the fact that human beings dwell, and taking into account that the meaning of things change pursuant to the “*meaning of the word ‘home’*” we were interested in finding out the “*signifié*”, the “*meaning*” young people endow the concept of home with –and we have also discovered some differences according to different socio-demographic variables.

A greater ratio of young people (36.7%) consider their houses as “*a place for intimacy and privacy*”, a reply the higher percentage of which is found among male subjects –it is our contention that male subjects contrast the family world to the street world wherein they are much more committed than women). Now, the percentage decreases among young people

with a much lesser SEL: and this is most probably due to the crowding conditions which are common place a fact when you get down to the fringe-of-society milieu.

For almost 30% of young people (28.7%) their houses mean "*a safe place to be*". Considering the house as a shelter wherein you feel protected from the street world is mostly to be found among: a) female subjects (35% vs. 23.1% among male subjects); b) the youngest youth (36% of 15- to 19-age group subjects vs. 22.4% among 20- to 25-age group subjects); and: c) subjects from the lesser SEL (especially, subjects pertaining to the E level who, in a great majority, live in shantytowns).

In a quite lesser ratio (17%, and 15%, respectively) young people consider their homes as "*a place where I can do whatever pleases me*" –particularly among higher age-range subjects, and as "*a nice place to meet friends and relatives*" –a reply mostly to be found among youth pertaining to the E level.

If we sum up people considering their houses as a "place for intimacy and privacy" and people considering their houses as "*a nice place to meet friends and relatives*", you find out that more than half the surveyed population (51.4%) perceive their houses in terms of *primary and/or intimacy relationships*.

The main characteristics any person is supposed to be endowed with: "to be" and "to have"

According to the contraposition of these terms and attitudes well analyzed by Erich Fromm (.....), for almost 70% of the interviewed subjects, the main characteristic any person must be endowed with is *genuineness* (especially as far as female subjects are concerned: 78% vs. 64.4% for male subjects). Percentages, however, decrease as subjects' SEL decreases, which is in keeping with the Maslow's Theory of the Needs: the need for an existential genuineness, placed at the top of the needs, is felt as such once the most primary needs have been satisfied –

namely: food, means of existence, safety; thereafter the need for belonging, and the need for prestige follow on.

To have friends is a characteristic which is highlighted as a priority for 21.7% of subjects, a percentage that increases as the subjects' SEL decreases: having friends rates 50% for young people of the lesser strata –i.e. people living in shantytowns. Now, *to have much money* or *to be quite famous* are mentioned as priority characteristics by 6% of subjects only. In other words, subjects prioritize the fact of “being” instead of the fact of “having”¹³ at least when subjects must define the main characteristics any person is supposed to be endowed with.

Be it as it may, and in spite of this nice declaration of principles, when it comes to measuring the level of “*consumerism life*” of our interviewed subjects in terms of actual everyday life, we have been in a position to observe that a third of the sample (32.7%) evidence an *intense consumerism life* (except, of course, with regard to people with lesser SELs) while 60% of subjects (58.3%) evidence a *moderate consumerism life*, and only 9% could be placed at a *lesser consumerism life* level.

Interviewed subjects have been requested to prioritize the four above mentioned characteristics. Thus, it could be noted that *to have friends* is the characteristic chosen as a second priority by 63% of subjects, while *to be genuine* is a second priority for 19% of subjects. *To be famous* is classified as the last priority by 52.7% of subjects, and *to have money* is the last priority for 47% of subjects.

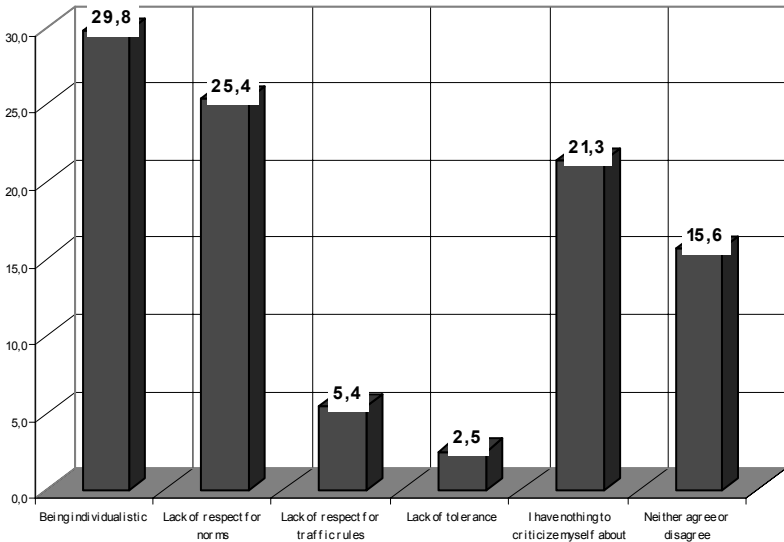
Self-perception as a resident of the city of Buenos Aires

Taking into account the self-perception any young person has of himself/herself, subjects have been asked about which attitudes or behaviors of theirs they would criticize themselves as being residents of the city of Buenos Aires:

- *Being individualistic* (“my individualism”, “I’m not committed”, “I don’t participate”, “lack of solidarity”, “lack of love for my city”, “I only do what I please”): **29.8%**. When introducing the gender variable, it can be seen that percentages increase as far as female subjects are involved (37.7% vs. 23.1% among male subjects), as well as among young people within the 20- to 25-age group (38.6% vs. 20.1% among young people within the 15- to 19-age group). At the same time, the percentage is significantly reduced when dealing with lesser SELs, especially with the E SEL (10.0% vs. 39.8 at the highest SEL). Regarding young people pertaining to the lowest social stratum, this lesser ratio of individualism could be explained by their strong need for solidarity networks they have a tendency to set up insofar as those networks operate as adaptative and survival strategies when facing situations very close to marginalization and abject poverty.
- *Lack of respect for norms* (“Generally speaking, I don’t respect rules”, “I’m not considerate”, “I don’t respect order”, “soiling the city”, “throwing garbage on the street”): **25.4%**. Even though -when dealing with the lack of respect for norms in general, we could not find out significant percentage differences when introducing gender, age, and SEL variables, we have indeed to point out to the differences appearing when it comes to the lack of respect for traffic rules: difference is higher among male subjects (7.7% vs. 2.7% among female subjects), among young people within the 15- to 19-age group (8.7% vs. 2.4% among the 20- to 25-age group), and within the high and medium SELs -in which case this could be due to the fact that a greater ratio of subjects with either high or medium SEL have a car, if compared to the poorest social sectors).
- *Lack of respect for traffic rules* (“I don’t take road safety into account”, “I just cross the street as it pleases me most”): **5.4%**.

- *Lack of tolerance* (“overreacting badly”, “being violent”, “being in a bad mood”): 2.5%. Percentages duplicate and even triplicate when dealing with subjects with the lesser/lower SELs, and young people within the 20- to 25-age group.
- I have nothing to criticize myself about: 21.0%.
- DK/DA: 15.6%.

**Graph 1. Self-criticism as a resident of Buenos Aires
(Young inhabitants of Buenos Aires) (%)**



The fact that almost a third part of our interviewees acknowledge attitudes rooted in *individualism* in their daily behavior is in keeping with their answers when replying to the question: “Up to which grade do you think that Buenos Aires residents are individualistic?”. Indeed more than a half sample

(57%) acknowledged this to be a characteristic feature of the “porteños” (=the people who live in the port of Buenos Aires):

- Most individualistic: 23.7%
- *Individualistic*: 33.3%
- Somewhat individualistic: 35.7%
- No individualistic: 7.0%

The city and the environmental problems

Urban problems proper

We found that knowing the perceptions youth had with regard to issues related to the city of Buenos Aires was interesting. So, sample subjects have been handed over a list of potential issues for them to check which issues they deem to be most important:

At a *descriptive level*, it has been observed that young people insist on the following aspects:

- Hold ups and burglaries kept being at the same level for the last two years (91.6%).
- Traffic is more and more hectic every day (88.7%).
- Public health situation is not guaranteed at State-run hospitals (83.3%).
- The city lacks green areas (79.0%).
- With so many potholes, streets are simply impassable (78.4%).
- When disasters occur, Civil Defense performance is poor (78.3%).
- Pedlars spoil the urban landscape (57.0%).

While, at a *prescriptive level*, it is our sample subjects’ contention that:

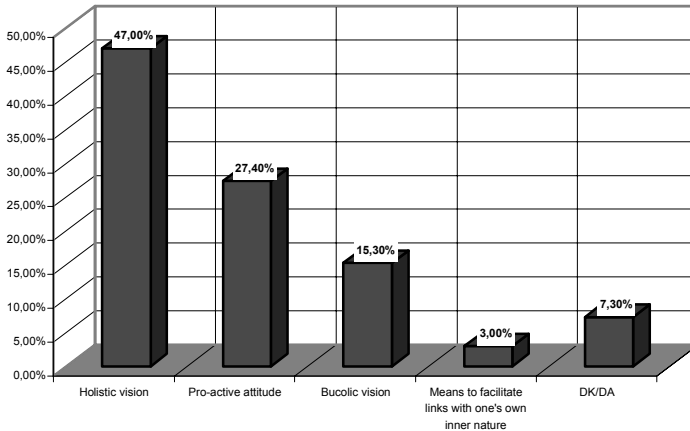
- Residents should be able to participate in a direct control of civil servants (81.3%).

- Residents should be endowed with the possibility to either approve or reject projects that are of utmost importance for the city (76.3).
- Immigration of Bolivian and Paraguayan citizens should be restrained (73.3%).
- Immigrants with no ID papers should be expelled from our country (66.0%).
- People fail to participate because there are no available places for them to express their opinions and complaints (58.3%).

Individual representations on the “Environment”

Before we consider urban environmental problems proper, it seemed to us that it would be appropriate to find out –in terms of a “proof of concept”, what did young people understand by “habitat”. Answers, as it was to be expected, displayed a wide range of approximations that can be resumed as follows:

Graph 2. What does the term "enviroment" mean to young people? (Inhabitants of Buenos Aires City aged 15-25)



- *A holistic vision, conceiving habitat as a spatial-sociocultural phenomenon* (“that’s the space where we live in”, “anything surrounding us”, “physical space and architectural space”, “a relationship among the environment, people, and living creatures inhabiting it”, “society, rootedness, interaction”, “our habitat”): **47.0%**.
- *A proactive, belligerent attitude with regard to the environmental* (“that’s the place we have to take care of so that we can live”, “all that is disappearing”, “all that is neglected”, “contamination, pollution”, “a thing most valuable”): **27.4%**.
- *A bucolic vision of the environment* (“it’s the plants”, “it’s Nature”, “beaches, the sea”, “air, oxygen”, “green areas”, “animals”): **15.3%**.
- *Habitat as a facilitator for innerness* (“it’s your possibility to contemplation”, “it’s feeling well with everything”, “peace”, “purity”, “something which gives you joy”, “something which allows me to live fully”): **3.0%**.
- DK/DA: **7.3%**

The *holistic* vision of habitat, as a spatial-sociocultural phenomenon, is more present among male subjects (51.2% vs. 41.5% among female subjects), young people within the 20- to 25-age group (52.4% vs. 40.1% among young people within the 15- to 19-age group). Percentages drop dramatically when it comes to individuals with a lesser SEL: among D level people, 39.3% answers were registered, while at the E level people, percentage dropped even more –down to 15.0%: this can be due to the fact that this question requires a certain level of abstraction and “intellectualizing”, so to speak.

The *belligerent* vision increases percentage wise among sample subjects with a low SEL level up to 35.7%, and diminishes among subjects with the lowest SEL level to 15%: maybe, these people are much more concerned with their day-in day-out survival, and the related satisfaction of their primary needs.

The percentage is somewhat higher among male subjects accepting the belligerent vision (30.0%) if compared to female subjects (23.3%).

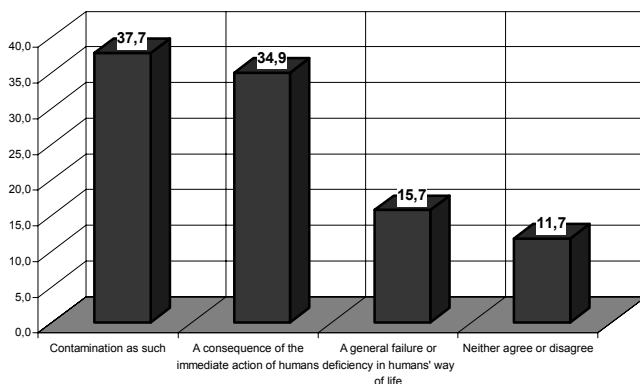
The *bucolic* vision appears to a greater percentage among female subjects (19.7% vs. 11.6% among male subjects), and young people within the 15- to 19-age group (19.7% vs. 11.6% among the young people within the 20- to 25-age group). The bucolic vision is also on the increase among individuals pertaining to the both extremes of the socioeconomic scale: 20.7% of higher class subjects, and 20.0% of the lower SEL subjects -E level, the lower of all.

Ignorance (DK/DA) is markedly on the increase among young people with the lesser SEL: either 45% do not answer, or they acknowledge that do not know how to answer the question.

Environmental pollution: definition and policies

At first we have also resorted to the “proof of concept” as regards what is known as “environmental pollution”. Thereafter, answers have been classified as follows:

Graph 3. Environmental pollution: definition and grades (Young inhabitants of Buenos Aires) (%)



- *Contamination as such* (“something which is not natural”, “something which is not pure”, “something altered, de-based”, “something deteriorated”, “a lack of environmental-ecological equilibrium”, “air pollution”): **37.7%**. There is a somewhat higher rate of answers among young people within the 15- to 19-age group (40.4% vs. 32.9% among young people within the 20- to 25-age group). Among subjects with the lesser SEL (E level), percentage drops to 27.3%.
- *A consequence of the immediate action of humans* (“refuse”, “filth”, “maltreating, destroying or marring the environment”, “people just don’t care”): **34.9%**.
- *A general failure or deficiency in humans’ way of life* (“a wrong doing”, “unhealthiness”, “lack of green areas”, “excessive advertising”, “an existing evil”, “a problem requiring urgent solutions”): **15.7%**. This answer is mostly found out among male subjects (20.4% vs. 14.3% among female subjects), young people within the 20- to 25-age group (22% vs. 12.1% among young people within the 15- to 19-age group). Percentage, however, diminishes markedly among subjects with the lesser SEL (9.1% vs. 21.6% among subjects with the higher SEL).
- *DK/DA*: **11.7%**. This lack of information is on the increase among subjects within the 15- to 19-age group (16.3% vs. 6.9% among subjects within the 20- to 25-age group). It also increases gradually as the SEL decreases -down to 22.7% among the subjects with the lesser SEL (E grade).

When subjects have been asked about *the grade of environmental pollution in the city of Buenos Aires* a great majority have evidenced a high degree of environmental consciousness: indeed, 50% of young people state that contamination is “very high”, another 40.3% considers it to be “high”, which sums up a significant 90.3%.

With regard to the *different actions that could be applied to reduce the pollution problems in the city of Buenos Aires*, sample subjects were faced with several alternatives the grade of effectiveness of which they were requested to point out.

Table 1: *Measures against contamination: effectiveness thereof (%)*

Agree or disagree	Higher effectiveness	Medium effectiveness	Lower effectiveness	Neither
Are there penalties for whoever pollute?	72.7	12.0	14.7	0.6
More information & environmental campaigns are needed?	70.6	16.0	13.4	0.0
Do B.A. residents participate?	67.0	19.7	12.4	1.0
What about any other measures to be taken?	8.0	0.7	4.4	7.0

An increase in information and/or environmental campaigns are measures the effectiveness of which is considered to be at the higher level. Percentage increases markedly for subjects with the lesser SEL: as far as 60.5% of subjects with the higher SEL are concerned this measure would be endowed with the higher effectiveness while, among subjects with the lesser SEL, ratio increases up to 80%.

In that sense too, the participation of B.A. residents is deemed to be an alternative of maximum effectiveness the percentage of which increases as the SEL of our interviewees decreases, namely: 62.3%, 67.6%, 74.1%, and 80.0% (from the highest SEL to the lowest, respectively).

With respect to *the need for penalties to polluters*, it has been observed that the percentage of subjects that are agreeable are somewhat higher among male subjects, and subjects within the 20- to-25 age group.

Socialization agents with regard to environmental problems

Our sample subjects were asked what had been the medium they had resorted to for information about environmental problems he or she is aware of. Their answers evidence the importance of the following socialization agents:

- a) Mass media: 79%.
- b) Subject himself/herself (subject had collected information on the street; reading books or brochures): 9.9%.
- c) At junior/senior high school; at university college: 5.5%.
- d) Through ecologist organizations: 2.3%.
- e) Talking to his/her family: 1.2%.

The importance of the mass media increases as sample subjects' SEL decreases: while 71.2% of young people with a higher SEL mention the mass media as a source for information, the ratio of young people with the lowest SEL resorting to the mass media climbs up to 90%.

Self-obtained information occurs mainly among sample subjects within the 20- to 25-age group (12.7% vs. 6.8% of subjects within the 15- to 19-age group).

Either high school or university college is especially mentioned among subjects within the 15- to 19-age group. (9.9% vs. 1.7% of subjects within the 20- to 25-age group). Neither high

school or college are mentioned among sample subjects with the lowest SELs (D and E).

Ecologist organizations are only mentioned by sample subjects pertaining to the high strata of society (no subject with the lesser SEL mentions ecologists organizations ever).

Main social actors supposed to deal with environmental problem solving activities. Performance thereof, and disappointment level in view of their performance.

With regard to the problem solving process involved in environmental problems, our sample subjects have been asked their opinion about the socialization agents in terms of “high importance level assigned” and “high degree of dissatisfaction level with their real performance”.

A majority of sample subjects acknowledge the very important role played by the following institutions/groups:

- a) environmental/ecologist associations: 61.7%
- b) mass media (TV, radio): 54%
- c) the Government of the City of Buenos Aires: 52.3%

At the same time, our sample subjects express a *high degree of dissatisfaction* when checking up the potential performance of practically all the above mentioned institutions or groups (“they have to improve a lot”), with special reference to

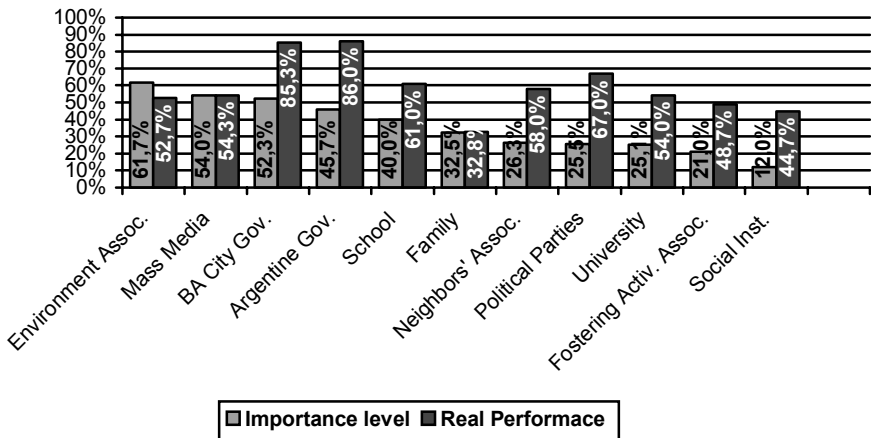
- a) the Federal Administration: it is the contention of 86% of our interviewees that the Administration has to improve “a lot” their performance when dealing with environmental problems
- b) the Government of the City of Buenos Aires: 85.3%
- c) political parties: 67%
- d) schools: 61%
- e) district protective associations: 58%

The *worst institutional qualification* –in terms of “what they really do” and “what they would have to do”, are awarded, so to speak to

- a) political parties,
- b) the Federal Administration,
- c) the Government of the City of Buenos Aires.

All these data confirm the really poor image the population at large sustains about the Argentine political class –as it has been evidenced through a number of research works that have been carried out lately.

Graph 4. Socialization agents regarding environmental problems: High importance level assigned and High degree of dissatisfaction with their performance (Inhabitants of Buenos Aires City, aged 15-25) (%)



Living in a city as a rootedness process

Spatial rootedness. Degrees thereof

As it has been explained before, three degrees have been set up as far as Spatial Rootedness is concerned: “high”, “medium” and “low”, in function of which our sample population was classified as follows:

- a) Youth with *high spatial rootedness*: 71.3%
- b) Youth with *medium spatial rootedness*: 25.0%
- c) Youth with *low spatial rootedness*: 3.7%

When we crossed “spatial rootedness” with gender, age, and SEL, some significant percentage differences appeared in function of the age group as the following table illustrates, in that sense that we have found out a higher percentage of subjects with a high spatial rootedness among young people within the 20- to 25-age group.

Table 2: *Degrees of spatial rootedness according to age (%)*

Degrees of spatial rootedness	15-19 years	20-25 years
High spatial rootedness	62.6	78.9
Medium spatial rootedness	30.9	19.9
Low spatial rootedness	6.5	1.2

There is a higher ratio of *spatial rootedness* among young people within the 20- to 25-age group: 78.9% vs. 62.6% of young people within the 15- to 19-age group.

A *lower spatial rootedness* can be observed among the subjects whose SEL is at the lowest (E): 10%. This could be ex-

plained because this population segment change residence many a time due to money problems or, at least, their houses are precarious.

When crossing the indexes for “spatial rootedness”, and “inner life” it can be observed that among young people with a high spatial rootedness, the percentage for an intense inner life is greater.

Table 3: Degree of Inner life according to Spatial Rootedness (%)

SPATIAL ROOTEDNESS	INNER LIFE		
	Intense	Moderate	Low
High	73.9	70.0	66.7
Medium	23.5	25.0	33.3
Low	2.5	5.0	0.0
Total figures	100.0	100.0	100.0

Social rootedness

Taking into account that we consider that *social rootedness* occurs whenever: a) a subject leads an active life in the primary groups where they belong (either their families, their peers, or their friends), and: b) a subject pertains to any organization endowed with a clear participative attitude and/or evidence a service attitude towards the community involved, we have asked the following questions:

Social rootedness at the level of public life

Another way to measuring social rootedness was done by asking sample subjects *how important (or not) was “meeting people in public places”*. Answers have been classified as follows:

- It is utmost important: 43.3%
- It is rather important: 45.0%
- It is slightly important: 11.0% (among subjects with the lowest SEL: 30%)
- DK/DA: 0.7%

We tried to find out *“how important it was for young people to participate in organizations”*. The high percentage (42%) of sample subjects who answered that participating in organization was only *“slightly important”* was quite surprising. This answer was mainly found out among male subjects (48.1% vs. 35% among female subjects), and subjects from the 15- to 19-age group (51% vs. 34.2% of subjects from the 20- to 25-age group).

When it comes to our *sample subjects’ own participation*, only 17.7% say that, indeed, they attend rather frequently meetings organized by some district, environmental, political or student’s organization. A significant 70.3% state plainly that they *“never attend”* meetings organized by this type of institutions mainly due to motives linked to *“lack of interest”* and *“no time to go there”*. In that sense, we can classify the reasons for no-participation as follows:

- a) *motives linked to the Subsystem of Personality* (*“lack of interest”*, *“participating just didn’t occur to me”*, *“unawareness”*, besides especially negative attitudes such as: *“just no good”*, *“it isn’t worth my time”*): 47.8%.
- b) *motives linked to the Social and Cultural Subsystem* (*“no time to go there”*, *“personal problems”*, *“lack of opportunities”*, *“I’ll go when I’m a grown-up”*): 36.6%.

This no-participation, or no-interest for participation among young people, not only takes place notwithstanding gender, age, or socioeconomic level, but also has been taking place for some time now, as it had already been observed in previous research work... and the trend is increasing. In those research works (for example: Schufer, Mendes Diz et al., 1988; Hentschel et al, 1993), the level of participation reached a fourth part of the juvenile population while, in this study, the level of participation hardly reaches 18%. Nevertheless, it has been observed that participation at the level of district organizations increases as subjects’ SEL decreases. This may be due to a greater *“district-consciousness”*, so to speak and a better sense

of “local community” being present among those strata on account of being a population sector on the fringe of marginalization (0.7% in the highest SEL vs. 19.2% in the lowest SEL).

We could suggest that young people are not given (and they themselves do not find) genuine participation possibilities, so they kept being “pushed on the backburner”, that is to a massive participation implying the consumption of objects – besides they are presented as “models” for the consumption market. When our interviewees were asked “*what is the organization you would like participating to*” again it could be observed that sample subjects with the lowest SEL evidenced the higher percentages for a *potential participation*. So, it could be considered that if they do not participate this is due to the time they input in achieving adaptation strategies aimed at overcoming marginalization situations.

As regards the *actual participation* of young people our index shows that a third part participate actually while an important percentage (66.6%) does not. A higher percentage of male subjects do participate: 37.5% vs. 28.6% of female subjects. The percentage of young people within the 15- to 19-age group: 38.1% vs. 29.2% among young people within the 20- to 25-age group.

The lesser consumerism life, the greater the actual participation, as can be seen in the following table:

Table 4: *Actual participation of young people as per the degree of consumerism life (%)*

ACTUAL PARTICIPATION	CONSUMERISM LIFE		
	Intense	Moderate	Low
YES	30.6	33.7	40.7
NO	69.4	66.3	59.3
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

This should quite demonstrate the tendency –we have already set up in the Theory of Rootedness as a “total” phenome-

non, to compensate a lesser “active” participation with a greater “passive” participation; that is, a participation limited to the consumption of goods and services the sociocultural world offers.

Degrees of Social Rootedness

Starting from the construction of the index of “social rootedness”, our sample population could be classified as follows:

- a) Youth with a high social rootedness: 88.0%
- b) Youth with a medium social rootedness: 10.7%
- c) Youth with a low social rootedness : 1.3%

When crossing the different levels of rootedness with gender, age and SEL variables, we have been in a position to check up some percentage differences with respect to the high social rootedness as per subjects’ SEL: indeed, while at the high, medium, and medium-low social levels approximately 89% of individuals with the said degree of social rootedness are registered, the lowest SEL registers 75% of youth with a high social rootedness.

Cultural rootedness, anomie and *urban everyday life*

Degrees of cultural rootedness and anomie

In function of the Index of: High Cultural Rootedness (low Anomie); Medium Cultural Rootedness (medium Anomie), and Low Cultural Rootedness (high Anomie, as it has been discussed in Methodology) we have been in a position to classify our sample population as follows:

a) Young people with high cultural rootedness (low level of Anomie)	35.3%
b) Young people with medium cultural rootedness (mid-level of Anomie)	62.0%
c) Young people with low cultural rootedness (high level of Anomie)	2.7%

When crossing *cultural rootedness* with gender, age, and SEL variables, we could observe the following percentage differences:

- a) As the SEL drops down, the percentage of individuals with *high Anomie* (low cultural rootedness) increases (0.9%, 2.9%, 3.7%, and 10.0% from the higher SEL to the lowest SEL, respectively).
- b) Medium levels of Anomie can also be found in a higher ratio among subjects with the lowest SEL: “D” SEL: 81.5%; “E” SEL: 70%, while at the BC1 level is 56.1%, and at the C2/C3: level is 61.9%.
- c) Female subjects evidence a higher cultural rootedness ration if compared with male subjects (38.6% vs. 32.5%, respectively), as it can be observed in the table below:

Table 5: *Degrees of cultural rootedness per gender (%)*

Cultural rootedness	Men	Women
Low CR	3.1	2.1
Medium CR	64.4	59.3
High CR	32.5	38.6

Subjects within the 20- to 25-age group evidence a high cultural rootedness (low anomie) in a greater ratio that the other age group does:

Table 6: *Degree of cultural rootedness per age (%)*

Cultural rootedness	15-19 years	20-25 years
Low cultural rootedness (high anomie)	3.6	1.9
Medium cultural rootedness (med. anomie)	67.6	57.1
High cultural rootedness (low anomie)	28.8	41.0

Anomie and Consumerism Life.

We tried to relate the *degree of anomie* with the *degree of consumerism life*: in this connection we could observe that, among subjects with a low level of anomie we have found out higher percentages among subjects with a low consumerism level, as the following table illustrates:

Table 7: *Consumerism life per degree of anomie (%)*

ANOMIE	CONSUMERISM LIFE		
	Intense	Moderate	Low
High	2.0	3.4	0.0
Medium	65.3	62.3	48.1
Low	32.7	34.3	51.9
Total figures	100.0	100.0	100.0

It could also be observed that those sample subjects who “feel happy with that they do for the most part of their time” are people with a low index of anomia (i.e. enjoying high, and medium cultural rootedness levels) as it can be seen in the following table:

Table 20: “Degree of cultural rootedness and satisfaction with one’s leisure time” (%)

Table 8: Degree of Cultural Rootedness and Satisfaction with one's Leisure Time (%)

Satisfaction with one's Leisure Time	Low CR (Anomie)	Medium CR	High CR
Satisfied	62.5	71.0	72.6
Unsatisfied	37.5	18.8	15.1

Rootedness as a total phenomenon

An index of **Total Rootedness (TR)** has been constructed starting from the fact that we are dealing with a 3D phenomenon: namely spatial, social, and cultural rootedness, taking into account values assumed for these dimensions (See 4, Methodology), with the following results:

- Youth with high TR: 21.3%
- Youth with medium TR: 76.3%
- Youth with low TR: 2.3%

When crossing Total Rootedness with gender, age and SEL variables, we could observe the following percentage differences:

- a) "High" TR increases in the lesser/lower SELs: 24.6%; 15.8%; 25.9%; and 35.0% from the highest SEL to the lowest SEL, respectively.
- b) A higher percentage of young people within the 20- to 25-age group with a "high" TR is observed, as can be seen in the following table:

Table 9: *Degrees of Total Rootedness according to age group (%)*

Total Rootedness	15-19 years	20-25 years
High TR	17.3	24.8
Medium TR	79.9	73.3
Low TR	2.9	1.9

At the same time, high TR is predominantly found among subjects who not only know their own district but also other city districts as well.

Now, if we introduce the “Consumerism life” index, we discover that the total rootedness drops as the “consumerism life” is on the increase, as it can be seen in the following table:

Table 10: *Degree of Total Rootedness and intensity of Consumerism Life (%)*

TOTAL ROOT-EDNESS	CONSUMERISM LIFE		
	Intense	Medium	Low
High	18.4	21.1	33.3
Medium	80.6	76.0	63.0
Low	1.0	2.9	3.7

At the same time, we must point out that there exists a relationship between the “Mixing up with neighbors” variable, and Total Rootedness: actually, as the high TR degree drops down, higher percentages of “I don’t mix with my neighbors” variable are found, while the greater percentage of whoever “mix with the majority of my neighbors” variable is found among subjects with a high TR, as the following table illustrates:

Representations about the South Cone of Latin America and the Antarctica

The South Cone of Latin America

Common environmental problems: an identification process

Once the sample population had been consulted with regard to the common environmental problems in the South Cone, it could be assessed that more than a third (37%) “is unaware of” or “does not know” the topic. This percentage is in the increase whenever a given subject’s *individual anomia level* is greater and his/her *rootedness grade* is reduced. The answers from the remaining 67% population have been grouped as follows:

- a) *Problems caused by immediate, obviously predatory human actions* (deforestation, tree cutting, indiscriminated animal hunting, lack of cleanliness, filth, toxic waste, contamination, “couldn’t-care-less” attitude of industrialists, drainage system to rivers directly): **53.8%**.
- b) *Environmental problems proper caused by mediate human actions* (reduction of the ozone layer, greenhouse effect, El Niño current, climate changes): **25%**.
- c) *Problems derived from life in the great cities* (noisy cities, overcrowding, air pollution, smog): **16.8%**.
- d) *Problems caused by either disasters and/or accidents* (floods, fires, oil spillage, nuclear power plants): **2.9%**.
- e) *Lack of environmental consciousness* (lack of awareness, insufficient environmental education, unawareness that recycling is a need and a must): **1.4%**.

The awareness of human beings’ immediate responsibility as far as environmental problems are concerned increase a)

as subject's individual anomie grade decreases on the one hand, and b) as subject's rootedness grade / inner life grade increase on the other hand. Precisely, interviewees evidencing a "lesser" inner life tend, in a greater ratio, to place the cause of problems "out of the subject".

As can be seen, a great majority (78.8%) acknowledges the human being's "capacity for neglect" as the very first cause for the South Cone environmental problems –that is, problems caused by either the immediate, or mediate human action even though such percentages decrease as interviewees' *SEL level* are also on the decrease. We have detected an interesting fact: subjects with the lesser *SEL level* mention problems caused by catastrophes and/or accidents in a greater percentage: this may be so because their marginality conditions cause them to be more vulnerable or exposed to such situations.

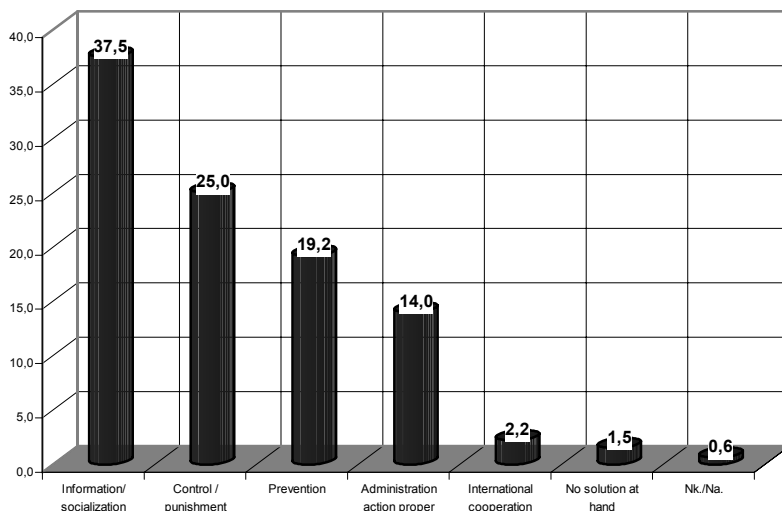
Possible solutions to such environmental problems

As regards the possible solutions to the above mentioned environmental problems, more than a half of interviewees (57.4%) "is unaware of" or "does not know" –this is most especially noted among subjects evidencing a *lesser participation level*. From the subpopulation who did answer to this question we have been in a position to assess the following categories:

- a) *Information/ socialization* (People should be made aware of these problems, more information, there is a need for a worldwide campaign aimed at taking care of the environment, educating people): 37.5%.
- b) *Control / punishment* (Stronger controls, regulations, there is a need for punishment, fines, disciplinary measures, creation of an international police corps): 25.0%.
- c) *Prevention* (Refraining from using aerosols, refraining from using leaded gas, recycling waste and refuse, creating more green areas, creating more national parks): 19.2%.

- d) *Administration action proper* (Government must act, there must be a political will for action, a greater economic development must be generated): 14.0%.
- e) *International cooperation* (Interdisciplinary tasks performed among countries, cooperation among nations): 2.2%.
- f) *No solution at hand* (There exist no solutions at all, any solution is Utopian): 1.5%.

Graph 5. Possible solutions for the South Cone environmental problems (Young inhabitants of Buenos Aires) (%)



As can be seen, actions arising from the education subsystem (information, socialization) and the political subsystem as well (prevention, administration action proper) are privileged. A fourth of the interviewees, however, say that any solution for environmental problems should arise from the normative subsystem (control, punishment).

After we have crossed these results with potential explanatory variables, we have been in a position to observe the following facts:

1. The importance of *Information / Socialization* (education subsystem) is especially privileged by either women (51.0% vs. 92.8% males), subjects with a *lesser anomie grade* and an *intense inner life*, or subjects with a *greater relationship intensity among their primary groups*. At the same time, this percentage is reduced as interviewees' SEL decreases.
2. The importance of *Control / Punishment* (normative subsystem) increases substantially as an interviewee's SEL is in the increase. It is also observed in a greater proportion among subjects with *lesser individual anomie levels, higher rootedness level*, and, also, among subjects with a *greater relationship intensity in their primary groups*.
3. The importance of the political subsystem (*Prevention / Administrative action proper*) is evidenced in a greater percentage among *males* in lieu of females (39.3% vs. 23.5%).

Looking for a possible link between the environmental problems of the Southern Hemisphere and the Northern Hemisphere

When subjects have been asked whether they considered that there existed any link between the environmental problems the countries of the Southern Hemisphere, and the Northern Hemisphere were facing, 40.0% replied that there was *no link whatsoever* (this was particularly true among *females*: 45.7% vs. 35.0% males). At the same time, the percentage is markedly on the increase as an interviewee's SEL decreases. Now, 36.3% said that there was *some link*, and only 17.7% said that there was a *high link* whose percentage (this percentage increases as subjects' SEL increases, a fact easily understood when taking into account a probable higher education level and a greater access to information).

The subject population who observed that "there exists a link among the environmental problems both Hemispheres are facing" was asked for their opinion about such a link (e.g. what was exactly the matter).

Among subjects answering that “*there was some type of link*”, 81.4% said that there were *either common or similar problems* (in many a case, reference was made to the globalization process, namely: these are global phenomena, the world is an only world, this is a worldwide phenomenon. The percentage decreases significantly when dealing with subjects whose SEL is at the *lesser level*. The remaining 18.6% resorted to the *power the North exerts on the South* (Southern countries depend on the North, both prevention and the economic resources are greater in the North, the problems the North is facing have an impact on the South, the North throws more waste on us) and, most especially, that was the case for subjects with the *lesser SEL level* the number of which is two-fold or even three-fold the percentage of subjects pertaining to the other socioeconomic levels.

Representations about the future in the Southern Cone countries...

a) ...in connection with the environment:

Young people from the city of Buenos Aires have been asked about the future of the SC countries as far as the environment is concerned, 10 years from now. More than two thirds (68.3%) was *evidently pessimistic* (it will be much worse: 22.3%; it will be worse: 46.0%) a percentage which increases significantly in the case of subjects with a *low anomia level*, and decreases in the case of subjects with a *lesser SEL level*.

As far as 19.2% of subjects are concerned, the situation of these countries will be *the same in the future* (a percentage that increases significantly to 33% within subjects with the *lesser SEL level*).

Only 12.4% of subjects evidences *optimism* (it will be better: 9.7%; it will be much better: 2.7%). However, the optimistic subjects at a higher percentage are those young people with a higher grade of *individual anomie*, and within a 20-25 age range (17.4% vs.6.5% of subjects within a 15-19 age range).

b) ... in connection with the socioeconomic conditions:

As regards the socioeconomic future of the Southern Cone countries 10 years from now, subjects evidence a *marked pessimism* the percentage of which, however is lower than the percentage referred to the environment: 48.3% (much worse: 24.6%; worse"23.7%). It should be noted that the percentage of subjects answering "much worse" increases significantly among young people with a *higher grade of individual anomia*, and a *lesser grade of rootedness*.

As far as 24.3% of subjects are concerned, the socioeconomic situation of those countries will keep being the same.

Optimism with regard to the socioeconomic situation increases if compared to the environmental situation: 24.6% of subjects say that the socioeconomic future of the region will be better, and 2.7% of subjects say that it will be "much better". Within the 20-25 age range subjects, optimism earns a higher optimistic percentage: 32.3% vs. 20.9% of subjects within the 15-19 age range.

Antarctica

Antarctica as a metaphor and a reality

The Antarctic space is, to a major extent, a void or uninhabited (or almost void or uninhabited) space. Nevertheless, it must be observed that this uninhabited space may achieve to perform some positive functions, precisely because of its characteristic of "neutrality", because it is a kind of "neutral space". Such restriction may then become a resource. This is the reason why Simmel supports the idea that such space may act as a "nexus". And, as we have mentioned in another work (R. Roura & E. del Acebo Ibáñez: 2000: 559) to Simmel the space is – among all life powers- the most suitable to intuitively represent impartiality: "[...] Only space – says Simmel (1977: 739)- offers

itself to everyone without any prejudices. And this neutrality of space –he adds– is more than anywhere else in an uninhabited territory, that belongs to nobody and that is, so to speak, nothing but space”, that belongs to nobody but that, precisely for this reason potentially belongs to everybody. Because the space is, as Kant used to say, “*the possibility of co-existence*”.

The Antarctic Space as remoteness and proximity

Antarctica insomuch as an almost void and uninhabited space, pristinely represents the convergence (that is many times diverging, of course) among the National declarations of sovereignty, the latent integration (or conflict) due to the overlapping of claimed territories and the globalization processes.

The “White Continent” appears as a paradigm of natural realm to be preserved and protected by men, of an environment as Mankind’s heritage, of the convergence of aesthetics and ethics, of reality and poetry, of “immaculate virginity” in opposition to a multiplicity of potential exploiters. And, by the way, of “extreme environment” . In other of our researches we aimed at the different perceptions towards Antarctica in view of its emotional connection with the environment -R. Roura and E. del Acebo Ibáñez (2000)-, namely: Antarctica as an *experience* (live, experience its virginity and purity), Antarctica as a *sense of belonging* (we are both part and a product of the environment, and in the White Continent the relationship between natural environment and the individuals is mediated to the minimum extent by man-built environment), and Antarctica as *symbolism* (due to its being an unexplored or wild territory, as a symbol of peace and co-operation, as an expression of Creation itself).

Individual representations about Antarctica

Subjects have been asked what does Antarctica represents for them. Answers have been distributed among the following categories:

- a) *"Leaving aside" attitude, indifference and skepticism* with respect to the Antarctic territory ("that does not mean anything", "I don't feel it is near me, it's only a piece of ice", "that's where penguins live", "it's something far away and forgotten", "that's the world's icebox", "that's a no man's land", "it's the other point of the world", "it's a place nobody can live in", "this is a desolate place"): **33 %**. The percentage rises significantly as the SEL of interviewees decreases, reaching 50% among subjects with a lesser SEL level.
- b) *A part of the Argentine territory* ("a part of Argentina that a great deal of people have forgotten", "it lies to the south of Argentina", "it is a part which belongs to Argentina", "it is a part of the national patrimony"): **almost 30%**. These opinions are to be found among subjects with a high, or medium rootedness.
- c) Twenty per cent of the young interviewees evidence a *esthetical-poetic vision*, or *Utopian vision* of Antarctica ("beautiful landscapes", "beauty", "a dream", "something unknown which should be explored", "the infinite beauty only the Lord is able to create", "mystery", "the last shelter", "humankind's patrimony", "a virgin place", "a pure place", "an oasis"). Subjects evidencing this vision tend to be people with a *higher grade of individual anomie*, and a *higher grade of potential for participation*. They also tend to be individuals that are *not so much affected by consumerism*.
- d) Almost 10% of interviewees evidence an *economic-wise, conflict-aimed vision of Antarctica*. (this is a land many people dispute over on account of its resources, a many-resourced place, an immense water reservoir, a strategic

- place, international conflicts) a percentage increasing significantly when it comes to individuals with the highest SEL levels (13.8% for individuals with the highest SEL level vs. 0% of individuals with the lowest SEL level).
- e) It should be noted that only 7% did not answer to this question. There are significant percentage differences as far as young people within the 15-19 age range are concerned (11.3% vs. 4.9% among the 20-25 age range), and also among subjects with the lesser SEL level (20%).

Antarctic environmental problems as subjects perceive them

Almost 60% of interviewees either did not know anything with regard to the environmental problems likely to be caused to Antarctica or they did not know what to say. This percentage increased significantly as the SEL level of subjects was decreasing: percentage reached 100% among individuals with the lowest SEL level.

From the group of subjects that answered these questions, their answers can be grouped as follows:

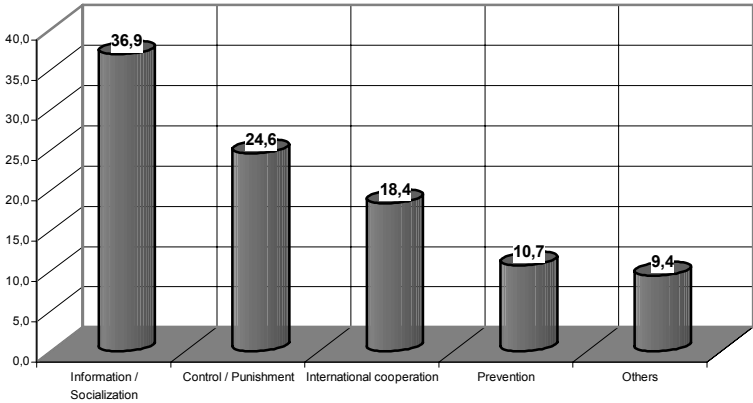
- a) Twenty per cent of subjects perceive that there exist *environmental problems proper* (ozone layer, defrosting, overheating). In a great majority subjects are males, within the 15-19 age range.
- b) The remaining 29.8% perceives that the extant environmental problems are a *consequence of the immediate, and directly predatory human action* (refuse and waste from the boats causing water pollution, oil spillages, contamination caused by the military bases, trash, slaughter of the marine fauna, non discriminating fishing). There is a greater percentage with this kind of answer whenever their SEL in creases. This is also a percentage to be found out among subjects within the 20-25 age range. They also tend to be subjects with a *higher rootedness level*, and a *lower individual anomia level*.

Possible solutions perceived to solve those environmental problems

It should be noted that when they were asked about the possible solutions they could suggest as regards Antarctica environmental problems, and how could it be possible to face them, more than the three quarter part of subjects (78.6%) a) admit they have no idea about, or b) skip the answer directly. All subjects that did not answer were suffering from *individual anomia*. The replies gathered among the remaining subjects can be grouped as follows:

- a) *Information / Socialization* (make people aware, educate tourists): **36.9%**, especially males (93.5% vs. 28% females), and subjects within the 15-19 age range (50% vs. 27.5% of subjects within the 20-25 age range). These are subjects with either a *high or medium rootedness level, low levels of individual anomia, whose inner life is not low*.
- b) *Control / Punishment* (navigation must be forbidden, norms and regulations must be set up, control is a must): **24.6%**, especially subjects within the 20-25 age range (33% vs. 7% within the 15-19 age range), and females (36% vs. 14% males). These are predominantly subjects with *no actual social participation, and low potential participation*. However these subjects evidence *low levels of individual anomia*.
- c) *International cooperation* (the world powers should reach an agreement): **18.4%**, mainly subjects with a high or medium rootedness, and a low level of individual anomia.
- d) *Prevention* (protect fauna, protect Nature, take away people that are there so that they do not go on polluting the environment): **10.7%**.
- e) *Others*: **9.5%**.

Graph 7. Possible solutions to solve Antarctica environmental problems (Young inhabitants of Buenos Aires) (%)



Some conclusions

In this study, we have tried to find out how the different ways of being-in-the-world-of-the-city, and the different ways to “live in it” find an echo, so to speak, in the different ways, and degrees of intensity in the representation of the urban everyday life, the present and future environmental problems and its possible solutions as well as the different degrees of individual involvement. By linking these results with some of hypothetically explanatory variables, we could observe:

a) Our sample population privilege above all aspects from the *Education Subsystem* (Information / Socialization) and from the *Political Subsystem* (Prevention / Government Action proper). A fourth part of our interviewees, however, find some solutions to the urban environmental problems within the *Normative Subsystem* (Control / Penalties).

The importance of *Information / Socialization* (Education Subsystem) is especially privileged by female subjects (51.0%

vs. 29.8% among male subjects), and also by whoever evidence a *low grade of anomie* coupled to an *intense inner life*, and subjects with a *major intensity in their relationships with their primary groups*. It is to be noted that this percentage drops down as the SEL of our sample subjects is reduced.

The importance of *Control / Penalty* (Normative Subsystem) increases markedly as, also, the subject's SEL increases. This aspect is also present in a greater ratio among people evidencing *low levels of individual anomie, high rootedness level*, and people enjoying a *major intensity in their relationships with their primary groups*.

The importance of *Prevention / Government Action* (Political Subsystem) is found in a greater percentage among male subjects than female subjects (39.3% vs., 23.5%).

b) A **rooted** resident in the city is a person who has been living there for more that 8 years' time -this resident feels even better with respect to the city as he or she felt two years ago. The rooted resident tends to identify the city from the *spatial* point of view (*physical place, district*): he or she would like that their children could grow nicely in Buenos Aires. In this sense, the city is a *value*.

A rooted resident values his/her home even though he/she tends to spend less time there than an unrooted resident does. House is, fundamentally, a dwelling place more than a shelter. In other words: recovering intimacy within the domestic realm does not mean necessarily that the otherness is rejected.

Anonymity that urban life is likely to "offer" is not appreciated. Consequently they give the "highest value" to social urban relationships at both the private and the public level.

They privilege -in the *other* as well as in themselves, "genuineness" and "having friends". So they feel more "themselves" within their urban everyday life when they are among their primary groups: family and friends.

They know their district, and other districts too. Actually, they tend to identify themselves with one of the Buenos Aires district.

They are less individualistic than the rootless residents. Actually they do not use their car a lot as well as their walkman while they walk in the city –both elements of use could be considered, in a way, to be a symbol of “individualism”.

They mix with a majority of their neighbors whose “respect” –the opposite of anomie, is their most valued quality.

They are happy with what they do, most of their time, so they do not tend to suffer from tedium or boredom –because they feel involved with the realm they live in, into a kind of *affective adaptation* with it.

“Loving the city” is something they give the highest value, as well as urban participation and all aspects dealing with supporting the normative structure of the urban community.

They evidence more *inner life*. So, as far as they are concerned, “living in the city” must be linked to “personal achievement”. This is why, for a rooted resident, “living in the city” is of “utmost importance” inasmuch as it makes their personal achievement easier.

They have a clear participation attitude, and vocation: with regard to environment they can be classified as “active” or “belligerent” individuals in connection with both the natural environment, and the socio-cultural aspect. Precisely, they consider that the maximum responsibility for environmental problems not only fall on the authorities of the Self-Governed city of Buenos Aires but also on its residents. At the same time, they deem “contamination/pollution” as a problem that also fall on the responsibilities of citizens –this is why they trust the effectiveness of environment-related information and campaigns.

c) The **rootless** person gives “slight importance” to aspects linked to participation (be it actual or potential), spatial rooted-

ness (i.e. affective adaptation to the realm), cultural rootedness, and existential achievement. They value anonymity the city is able to offer, as well as their individualism even though other people criticize them.

As far as responsibility for urban and environmental problems are concerned, the rootless is likely to favor a not-thinking attitude in terms of “near” social actors. Instead the idea is locating responsibilities further, or the furthest: that is, make the federal administration responsible. Regarding contamination/pollution, their criticism is much more aimed at causes predominantly structural.

d) The **anomic** person is, in a way, a subtype of rootless person. They have been living for not so much time in the city (less than 5 years’ time). They give value to their *home* as “a place where they can do what pleases them most”. This is why, maybe, they spend more time at home (more than 13 hours a day), and tend to get up later. In a related way, they have a scarce “cultural life”.

They value “to have friends” but not so much “genuineness”. What do they prefer in their district? Friends and family. That has been precisely the place where they have met their best friends. What anomie generates -i.e. confusion and mistrust in terms of “the others”, finds a palliative among one’s closest people.

They like the city, they think they will still live there 10 years from now -maybe a realm wherein they envision the possibility to find alternative means, and adaptative strategies so that they can face survival in a social world they perceive as a blurred, changing normative structure. They identify the city as physical place or district, or as a place to meet friends and relatives. Again, it seems that what they feel the cultural-normative structure fails to give them, they look for it within the social structure at an interaction level with a basically affective orientation, that is: face to face, one on one.

They do not have a tendency to envision the street as “a danger”, they preferably see the street as a place to be with friends and, perhaps, a place to find some means apt at favoring their own urban, existence survival strategies. However, they are afraid of the police, a fact likely to be explained like this: they tend to feel (not necessarily at a conscious level) that they are out of the legally set norms... since they do not feel norms are “theirs”. At the same time, they consider that “night life” means “freedom”.

They do not feel happy with what they do most of their time. Anyhow, they do not feel either tedium or boredom.

They evidence a level or tolerance and acceptance greater than other people with respect to “the distinct” that can be represented by certain urban subcultures (skaters, punks, skin heads).

They acknowledge that nobody cares for the environment., but their actual participation is scarce (that is, they only participate at a level of “fans’ group”), and they refrain from committing themselves with the problems the city endures. The higher the degree of anomie, the lesser active and potential participation. They seldom indulge in self-criticism with regard to their behavior in society, a fact that would be linked to the “drowsiness” of their urban consciousness.

“Loving the city” and serving the community is losing importance for the anomic, a fact that is intensified when they face the question on “not soiling the city”: they just couldn’t care less. Neither they value the historical knowledge nor the urban heritage, and they simply give no value to the fact that the city is likely to make their personal achievement easier.

e) It could be noted that there exist a great deal of young subjects from the city of Buenos Aires that lack any knowledge about the environmental problems the South Cone (Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay) is facing. And the lack of knowledge is also important when it comes to ask them about the Antarctica.

Percentages climbed to higher figures when subjects were asked about the possible problem solving process. This is likely to mean that the environmental problems are a topic reference is made to in general instead of being a problem the magnitude and consequences of which people should be keenly aware of.

We have observed that individuals with a high rootedness level, and a low anomie level tend to identify environmental problems –of either the South Cone or Antarctica-, with problems dealing with the *immediate human action* in terms of *depredation and/or direct pollution*. This can be envisioned as an explicit acknowledgment of the individual responsibility as far as the etiology of the contemporary environmental problems is concerned. At the same time, this type of social actor (rooted and not anomic) tends to give priority as a solution to the *socialization and information processes*. In this case, too, subjects are resorting to the capacity and responsibility of individuals –in that sense that individuals are likely to modify their behaviors through an adequate information and formation process. This also implies a certain hope with respect to the possibility of modifying the human behavior –hence, solving environmental problems.

Perhaps a clear visualization, coupled to a clear experience, of the normative-axiological web of a given society could anchor individuals from which they could be in a better position to identify the environmental problems, their possible causes and solutions. In that case, we have been dealing also with *young people with a higher grade of inner life* a fact leading the great majority of them to privileging an *esthetic, poetic, and Utopian vision of Antarctica*. Besides, their high rootedness causes them to consider that, basically, Antarctica is a part of the Argentine territory.

Conversely, a low grade of inner life causes subjects to put environmental problems “away from one’s responsibility” (this is a characteristic of life in the great cities, this has been due to natural disasters, to floods).

A high grade of anomie causes subjects to evidence subjects to envision the future in a most pessimistic way. Representation is both immediate and mediate with respect to the environmental problems affecting both the South Cone as well as Antarctica.

It has also been observed that, as subjects' SEL decreases, their pessimism increases with regard to the environmental problems the South Cone is suffering from. They also tend to identify the main environmental problem in the South Cone to "the immediate, predatory human action" while looking for a solution in the socialization and information processes. As regards Antarctica, subjects with a low SEL level tend to perceive it with a "couldn't-care-less" attitude, indifference and/or skepticism: maybe because their own daily life -on the very verge of the system, forces them to develop survival strategies that do not allow them the necessary time to consider problems affecting so far away places.

Conversely, as the subjects' SEL increases, a solution to the environmental problems of the South Cone tends to be found in the control / punishment procedure. With regard to Antarctica, individuals enjoying higher socioeconomic levels tend to perceive Antarctica from an economic-wise, conflict-aimed approach.

Control and punishment as a way to put a remedy to the environmental problems tend to be emphasized predominantly for subjects within the 20-25 age range with a higher percentage of female subjects. The same solution is also suggested by subjects suffering from a low actual as well as potential participation level.

Young people within the 20-25 age range tend to be more optimistic than subjects within the 15-19 age range as regards the future of the South Cone, both from an environmental and a socioeconomic approach.

Generally speaking, Antarctica tends to be seen as the *Terra Incognita* we mentioned above due to the high percentage of "subject does not know/does not answer" which can be

summed up to the predominant “couldn’t-care-less”, indifference and skepticism attitude many a young people evidence with respect to the White Continent.

The imaginary Antarctica –as a fruit of an esthetic, poetic, and Utopian vision is predominantly present among young people with a lesser grade of *consumerism-aimed life*, a *low anomie level* and a *high grade of potential participation* –that is, individuals endowed with the sufficient energy to experience and go ahead in “areas” where Antarctica rises as a metaphor of beauty, mystery, purity, virginity, and the last shelter. Conversely, a more pragmatic and conflict-aimed vision of Antarctica is to be found in a higher ratio among young people with the highest SEL level.

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Social Changes and culture in Icelandic Coastal villages

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Abstract

Coastal villages in Iceland which have always been characterized by transformation have in the last two decades been shaped by restructuring of the fisheries, new economic activities such as in tourism, and growing number of foreign laborers. The article examines social and economic transformations in coastal areas based on different research projects that were all based on field research in fishery based villages the northwest part of Iceland. My discussion brings forward some issues regarding the inhabitants' changing perceptions of local culture during this time. In the last two decades the concept of culture has become an instrument of both local populations in marginal areas and ethnic groups all over the world with more knowledge of other people and other ways of living. Unlike before, culture is increasingly used in the villages in North West of Iceland to describe commonalities and diversities found within them. I illustrate how inhabitants of small villages talk about culture and how they show local culture to tourists. Furthermore with a growing population of foreign origin a conception of multiculturalism has appeared in the region which again makes the inhabitants more reflective of local culture of the region. These changes can only be understood if put into a global context. However it is important to combine a spatial perspective that

sheds light on transnational connections with a historical one to understand the cultural transformations in the villages.

Keywords :Coastal villages, locality, culture, labour migrants, multiculturalure

Coastal villages in Iceland have always been characterized by economic and societal changes and by mobility of people and products. In the last two decades societal changes have been shaped by restructuring of the fisheries, new economic activities such as in tourism, and growing number of foreign laborers. This article examines social and economic transformations in coastal areas based on different research projects that were all based on field research in the northwest part of Iceland. This is an area where fishery has always played a central role for people's existence. The various research projects that I have worked on in this area since 1989 have given me a chance to observe societal changes over almost two decades. My discussion brings forward some issues regarding the inhabitants' changing perceptions of local culture during this time. I will depict how inhabitants of small villages talk about culture and how they show local culture to tourists. Furthermore with a growing population of foreign origin a conception of multiculturalism has appeared in the region which again makes the inhabitants more reflective of local culture. These changes can only be understood if put into a global context. However it is important to combine a spatial perspective that sheds light on transnational connections with a historical one to understand the cultural transformations in the villages. Unlike before, culture is increasingly used to describe commonalities and diversities found within such villages.

In the past anthropologists studied locally based cultures of different people in demarcate communities. Today they as well as other social scientists are concerned with the complex relationship between culture and place (Appadurai 1996;

Bauman 2000; Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Urry 2001). They no longer see culture as tied to territories in the same way they used to while most still continue to examine people's daily lives in particular localities. Anthropologists have instead of describing cultures been concerned with processes that bring about ongoing recreation of cultural identities and cultural representations. They have for some time examined how production, consumption, politics, and identities become detached from and re-attached to local places (Kearny 1995). A critical examination, and even rejection, of the culture concept has been going on in anthropology while local populations and ethnic groups have been taking on the culture concept for their own use often in a reflexive way in defining their realities (Eriksen 2002). Culture has in a sense become an instrument of both local populations in marginal areas and ethnic groups with more knowledge of other people and other ways of living. Culture is moreover constructed in a more reflexive way than ever before as people consciously define their culture for tourism or to sell a product and is often connected with power and material resources (Hannertz, 1996).

Global perspectives in social sciences have been concerned with spatial relations, with cultural construction of places, and with conceptions of culture as flexible and hybrid. Localities places are important for people's sense of identity but as will be shown in this paper local meanings and collective identities are socially constructed and ever changing and "hybrid" (Urry 2001). However, cultural production is grounded in various substrates of shared social experience, experience that has existential meaning for those who partake in it. This experience is formed within hierarchy of constraints and dynamic processes that link global process with the local structuring of social lives (Friedman, 2000). In the following discussion of cultural change in fishery based localities in Iceland I will examine social and economic changes and how culture and perception of its linkage with place changes. As the main goal of this article is

to examine cultural change I will begin with a short historical overview of the developments fishery villages in Iceland with a special focus on the West Fjords region. I will then give examples from my different research project to depict how these cultural changes took shape.

Historical background of fishery villages

Coastal villages in Iceland, such as those in the West Fjords, are usually geographically isolated and with houses build close to each other. They have from 200 to 1000 inhabitants, with one larger town of 2.700 inhabitants. These villages are commonly located in fjords with little lowland, and came into being when boats were small and proximity to good fishing grounds was more important than nowadays. Most of them developed as single enterprise villages where one company (with a local owner) possessed the main processing plant as well as some fishing vessels that provided fish for the plant.

In the nineteenth century there was a large exodus from farming regions into coastal areas all around Iceland. At this time there was great increase in the processing of salted fish for foreign markets and many landless people saw an opportunity for a better life in the growing fisheries. The 20th century was characterized by growing prosperity in these villages especially after the Second World War. In the development of a modern welfare state of the decades following the Second World War, integrating the widely dispersed fishing communities into the national economy was an important goal. The fishery villages were seen as part of the national economy and official regional politics were concerned with maintaining employment in villages and towns. Important part of this goal was to modernize the fish industry. Loans were provided by the state to buy trawlers, and numerous measures were taken to improve life in the villages along the coast, such as providing local services,

especially in health care and education. Road construction, bridge building and assistance with building new harbors were also important in this development (Bærenholdt, 1994; Skaptadóttir 1995).

Gradually more new trawlers and new and larger freezing plants were bought to most fishery villages with the aid of the government and the municipalities. The prosperity of coastal villages in the sixties and seventies can clearly be observed from the many large houses build in the villages all around Iceland at this time. Although most villages were more or less one-company villages, in most the municipality was to varying degree involved in the fishery firms. The municipality was for example involved in providing loans, investing in vessels and in the processing factories. Thus fish processing plans were in some cases in the ownership of private individuals as well as the municipality (Guðmundsson 1993; Skaptadóttir 2004).

In the 1990s there was a diminishing governmental and general support for regional development. Earlier regional development efforts were criticized for poor results and for leading to problems such as over-investments in fishing vessels. Great importance was given to increasing productivity of fish processing firms. To ensure more productivity the goal was been set on creating larger production units in the fishery industry. The ITQ system that is now in existence is an example of the application of such market solution. Economizing and efficiency of the fishery have been emphasized as the main goal of this management system. A quota system was first established in 1984 as a temporary solution to problems of diminishing fish stocks and over-investment in vessels. In 1991 the system was extended and quotas became divisible and could be sold and rented between vessels (Individually transferable quotas). One of the effects of the ITQ system already in the 1990s was a concentration of quota shares into the hands of few large companies. The number of small companies holding quotas, on

the other hand, decreased severely already in the first years (Pálsson & Helgason, 1996).

Little attention has been paid to the social effects of the economic transformations on family and work life in small villages, or of locally-based sustainable development. This was a transformation from a regulated, comparatively organized fisheries sector with units of production embedded within local communities, to a globally oriented, free market industry with highly mobile units of production with just as much in investing abroad as locally (Eyþórsson 1996). One of the consequences of the ITQ system for inhabitants of fishery villages is, as Eyþórsson points out, that locally-based control over the access to resources has increasingly been lost. When individuals owning quota sell their quota they benefit greatly but if they sell it to companies in other parts of Iceland as is usually the case other inhabitants are affected as they can no longer bring fish to land. Those who own quota can sell it for much higher price they would get for landing their catch. Many of them have chosen to sell, invest the money elsewhere, or move away. The industry as a whole is showing greater profits and is successful. The privatization of the fish stocks has been the most important goal of the ITQ system and economic efficiency its main measurement of success. However, the localities as many other small peripheral localities of the north have gone through serious crisis as the result of market solutions to the industries economic problems (Skaptadóttir, Mørkøre and Riabova 2001). Many villagers have been left with fewer jobs and with houses that cannot be sold or only for a very low price. In the West Fjords some have left their houses unsold to start a new life elsewhere in Iceland while those who decide to stay there face new challenges.

In spite of this situation new people keep moving into coastal villages from other parts of Iceland and from abroad. For the most part they have come to work in fish processing plants. Despite fewer jobs in the fewer jobs due to restructuring

of the fishing industry, the fish processing firms began to lack workers in the early 1990s. Not being able to find workers in Iceland the employers searched for labourers abroad, primarily from Poland. In 1996, 70% of all new work permits granted in Iceland were issued to firms that hired workers in fish processing jobs (Directorate of Labour 1999). By this time the out-migration of native-born Icelanders from the area of West Fjords had already been an on-going process, and was the highest in the country from the years 1997 to 2002 (Statistics Iceland 2007).

International migration is a quite new phenomenon in Iceland, but it has been rising rapidly. In 1981, foreign citizens were only 1.4 % of the total population whereas in the year 2006 the proportion was 6% (Statistics Iceland 2007). Even though the largest numbers of immigrants reside in the capital area, the percentage of foreign-born residents among the population has generally been much higher in the coastal villages, such as those in the West Fjords. For example, in 1999 foreign citizens represented 7% of the population in the area whereas in other regions this ratio ranged from 2% to 3%. There are some villages within larger municipalities where more than half of the population are foreign-born or of foreign ancestry. Presently the share of foreigners in the population of the West Fjords remains fairly constant at around 7% (Statistics Iceland 2007; Skaptadóttir and Wojtynska 2007). As we see from this brief history of coastal villages in Iceland and in particular of the West Fjords is that they have never been stable units, but always going through changes. These changes and the different movements of people into the villages and out of them are part of their cultural formations.

Moving out from culture, into?

I first came to do field research in a coastal village in the West Fjords in 1989 in relation to my doctoral project. Before going there some of my friends, even those with roots in fishing communities, told me I was leaving culture behind and soon would smell like fish. The village I chose to live in was known at this time in Iceland for its right wing politics and for economic prosperity based on emphasis on private property. It was a village not much unlike others based industrial development and Fordist regimes, where large production facilities, a relatively stable work force and the welfare state were combined in one company town (Gupta and Ferguson 2002: 67). The village went through a history of more or less continued increased prosperity most of the 20th century, especially after the IIWW as many other villages in Iceland. There were very few tourists at this time coming to the village. Out-of-towners living temporarily in the village were primarily seasonal laborers, or music teachers from other parts of Iceland or abroad. During my field work period I worked in the fish plant with women of foreign origin. Already by the 1970s and 1980s temporary workers had been arriving in the West Fjords from countries as diverse as Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden and Denmark. They were few in number and they were predominantly young single women who stayed only for a season. They wanted to travel before going to college or settling down and often they continued to the mainland of Europe after making money in the fish plants. Occasionally they would meet a partner in the villages and settle there.

When doing field research at this time I experienced for the first time in my life living in a territorial bound “community”. In the village which at this time had about 1100 inhabitants everyone knew a great deal about every other inhabitant in the village, this included name, marital status and number of

children, work place and hobbies. There was about a half an hour drive to a larger town of 2700 inhabitants mentioned above on a good day, but in bad weather this can be a dangerous road, with rocks and small avalanches falling on it.

One dominant family owned most of the firms that provided jobs for the inhabitants of the village such as the fishery firm, the mini department store and hardware store. As the main job providers the managers saw it as their duty to give jobs to all members of the community. Class divisions were clearly visible, but usually referred to in indirect way. A particular term was used for this dominant family that consisted of the father, who had started the company and had died by this time, and his children who were running the different businesses in the village. The social and economic ties within the community were generally very much based on kinship and reciprocity. The same few families who owned the companies in the village were also active in politics and were on municipal board and active in local associations and cultural life. Although the one family was the most dominant in economic life, there were also few other visible families in economic and social life. These families were also to some extent linked through marriage. In the late 1980s it was common that people would trace kinship relations within the village for me. No major economic crisis had occurred for some decades and there was hardly any unemployment in the village. Trawlers were bought and the fish plant equipped with the newest technology. The financing of the major fishery firm was secured primarily by governmental loans as other fishery enterprises in Iceland.

This was a community that of course had its internal conflicts, but close knit networks. People who suffered crisis such as caused by bad weather or accidents at sea, or long term illness received help from other villagers. Inhabitants who I talked with compared their own village favorable to the surrounding villages and pointed out the extraordinary beauty of the surrounding mountains. Local identity was important but

somehow taken for granted and not speculated much over. People were mostly busy being modern Icelanders, having modern things. They were aware of a negative view of fishery villages as culture less entities but took pride in being central in the national economy and being part of the fisheries. This was in fact an important aspect of their local identity. They were proud of their fishermen and that of the West Fjords area. Women who were doing the work in the fish plants that most people in the capital area looked down upon expressed repeatedly a pride in providing wealth for the nation. Some people claimed that they were different than other Icelanders as they lived closer to nature and unlike people from the city they had experienced how nature gives and how nature takes both as fishermen and through difficult weather and avalanches.

The inhabitants were at this time active in many different kinds of organizations, some of which have existed for many decades such as the women's association, the local rescue team, the Lions, a church choir and a women's choir. These and other associations organized different cultural activities not only for themselves but also for the other villages in the region. They commonly use the funds raised to finance some communal things, such as for the church or community hall. There is a golf course next to the village, a football field and a swimming hall, which serves as a popular meeting place.

At one point during my field work when talking with a local woman asked me about my project and anthropology. I told her that anthropologists studied diverse cultures and cultural difference. She then explained to me that in this village they did not really have culture except perhaps the choirs, the local theater group and the music school. In fact her conception at this time was the same as my friends who were using this concept to talk about art and higher education. She had never even heard of the meaning used by anthropologists.

Cultural coastal communities

I went back to do field work in the same village and another in the vicinity in the summer of 1996 and again in the summer of 1997 to study women's strategies in a time of diminishing work in the fisheries and returned there for a shorter trip two years later for a related project on coping strategies. Although as already mentioned I had experienced living in a close knit community for the first time in 1989 I had not thought much about the concept of community in a critical way. It was only at this time when coming back that I could not help becoming interested in questions regarding the concept of community and locality. This is primarily because I noticed that important changes had occurred in the way people talked about the locality where they lived. Unlike before people in both villages continually spoke about the village they lived and its possibility for future survival. Having a local culture had also become important among the people living in these two villages.

Both of these villages had been going through serious economic crisis. By this time the main company of the village where I had lived in 1989 had become bankrupt with 70% of the population becoming unemployed, many of them for the first time in their lives. The crisis was felt all through the community as most of the economic activities in the village were related to the fisheries. This was a big shock for the villagers, as they had been very proud of the local economic life. Moreover much of the quota and thereby the right to fish had been sold away and some of the inhabitants were gaining money from renting out their quota. This created tensions between individuals within the villages, and those who were renting out or selling their quota were accused by some of the other villages for selling out and leaving others without jobs. Living in the village was no longer taken for granted at all and people kept explaining to me in a defensive way why they insisted on living in a place they themselves doubted had much of a future. Many people, rela-

tives and friends, had been moving away and since then the population has been less stable. The prices of houses had gone down and people who wanted to leave and search for employment elsewhere had problems selling their houses. In spite of the crisis some people were still moving there from other parts of the country and for temporary work from abroad. The old families who had been dominant before were no longer as visible as they used to be. There was no longer an expectation from the villagers that the company owners automatically provided jobs for them, were involved in local politics, or assisted them in any way as had been the case before. They could be shareholders in larger companies who had opened their processing plants in the village and could move on to other areas any time. A similar story occurred in the other village where I did fieldwork at this time.

Because of the economic changes the inhabitants were increasingly concerned with strategies to create new jobs. The local municipal government was very involved with various attempts. Small boat fishing is an example of one such strategy. Another strategy that built on informal ties and local identity was the establishment of a handicraft center in the village. This and similar handicraft centers in other villages were established in relation to a development project which had the goal help women create new economic opportunities based on knowledge they already held. In many small villages in Iceland, there is a long tradition of women sewing clothes and knitting sweaters and mittens for family members as store bought clothes were not always easily available until two or three decades ago. Women and few men produced handmade crafts, preferring local materials and design, and sold them to other villagers as well as to Icelandic and foreign tourists during the summer months. The women knitted wool sweaters and mittens with a pattern that was not just Icelandic but from the West Fjords. They made dolls (that were named after the area), made handbags and jewelry from fish skin. They used natural materials

and emphasize the closeness of fishing communities to the resources of nature and their woodcarvings and quilts often depict fishery-related themes.

With the economic transformations and consequently a search for new economic options the concept of culture has become a project for local identity and for tourism development. In addition, the handicraft center served as a tourist information center for the village and surrounding area in the villages where I did field research. Thus women were playing a greater role in the presentation of the village to outsiders than men. In this way they played an important part in the making and re-interpretation of local culture. This strategy consisted very much in going back in history of the village, the area or the larger region of the West Fjord peninsula. Other projects such as building an old fishing build on the same idea. This fishing site still attracts many buses of foreign tourists there all summer long.

Even though the growth of tourism had at this time been slower in marginal regions than in Reykjavik the number of tourists had been growing. Moreover the inhabitants increasingly were traveling to other parts of the world as tourists. People were talking about their history in a different way than before but also the surrounding nature, focusing on untouched nature not just the most beautiful mountains. Although the inhabitants commonly had pictures of the village on the wall in their own homes, the fishery villages themselves or the activities going on there, were not objects shown to tourists and there was very little emphasis on recent history, but instead on the distant past.

As many experienced this time period as a time of crisis similar to a natural catastrophe, they emphasized the importance of strengthening links within the community. They expressed an interest in making the village more viable as part of making a better life for themselves. They maintained that it is not enough to build economic opportunities and employment although it is most basic. For example, the municipal authorities

supported cultural activities and emphasized good public services. People in both villages pointed out the importance of keeping up people's spirits. Similarly for most of the women, being a member of the handicraft center was not only a way to be able to sell their products and supplement the household income. When I asked a member of the handicraft center about the role of the center in the community, she said, "For people in such a small village it is important to stick together. Participating in the handicraft center gives you a feeling of belonging and a chance to socialize." They argued that the social activities related to the center are not only important for them as individuals but also plays a vital role in keeping their community viable.

The handicraft center and the seasonal fishing site are good examples of localization as the people involved emphasize the local distinctiveness in both their production and marketing. Local distinctiveness refers to nature and landscape as well as to local history. In their local ways they used similar methods used elsewhere in tourism and through medial and traveling they had become more conscious of what made themselves different than the rest of the world. But they expressed this difference using similar terms as other local populations in peripheral areas.

Multicultural Coastal Communities

While doing research in the fishery villages in the late 1990s I had begun to notice that there were a growing number of foreigners coming to work to these villages. Because I was dealing with other research issues at this time I did not look at this closely. Since 2003, because of this development, I have however, been doing research on foreign labor migration to Iceland, with the West Fjords as one of the areas of study. I have thus returned here repeatedly to for field work in few of villages in this area.

The West Fjords region had until recently the highest percentage of foreign citizens and foreign born in the country. As mentioned above the area has a longer history of migrant labour both from other parts of Iceland and from other countries. The majority of the foreign citizens currently living in the West Fjords came only temporarily on one-year contract to work in the fish processing, often with intention to stay no longer than two or three years. Most of them are from Poland, but also from other countries. The main reason Icelandic women gave for why they no longer wanted this kind of job was the low wages for such a physically hard job. They said that they preferred jobs in the service sectors, such as the health services, caring for young children, old people and the handicapped. Although Polish people are the most numerous in the area there are people from 30 national backgrounds living there.

For these labor migrants moving to Iceland is primarily a strategy in order to make better lives for themselves and their families back home. Most of them send remittances to their relatives and some have been able to invest in an apartment or a house in their country of origin. While many have returned, some of them have settled for a longer time, nevertheless most with the idea of returning in the future. Those currently coming to work there are usually related to someone already working and living in the West Fjords. This has also been encouraged by the employers who claim that bringing family potentially creates more stable work force that will stay for a longer time in the area. Because of much out migration from the villages good and inexpensive housing is easily available and thus some of the migrants have invested in a house or an apartment in the villages. Although the largest numbers of migrants in the villages work in the fish processing plants and other unskilled manual jobs, there are also some skilled people such as music teachers working there. Music teachers from all over Europe and especially Central and East Europe have played an impor-

tant role not merely in the music life of the region but also in the local theatre.

With the growing number of immigrants in the area nationality has become a new marker of difference within the villages. There are limitations to the relations between the majority of the migrants and Icelanders because of language problems and because the foreign workers commonly only work with other foreigners. In breaks at work people sit at separate tables where they speak their own language. Furthermore those born and raised in there and the migrants have different perceptions of the villages. The migrants only infrequently share the Icelander's admirations of the local landscape and they do not share the historical knowledge about the importance of the fisheries as a source of pride (Skaptadóttir and Wojtynska 2007). For those who have only stayed for few years a coastal village is primarily a place of work. Back home whereto they return for at least one month a year is where social life matters. Thus many of them have limited interest in participating in local events arranged by local associations or being active participants in these organizations. There are obviously exceptions to this, for example people who have decided to stay for good or have married an Icelander. Music teachers are also usually very active in cultural life of the villages.

The attitudes of Icelanders to these new inhabitants of their villages are mixed. Some of the Icelanders express distress about the lack of interest in learning Icelandic and disappointment about little participation in social events and they try to figure out ways to involve them. They need members to keep the choirs and the theatre club alive. Even though negative views may be found among some inhabitants the local authorities have chosen to define this as a challenge instead of as a problem. There is a strong emphasis by the municipal authorities in the villages of the West Fjords to make these new inhabitants feel welcome in a time of great out migration to the capital area. They have services that are difficult to maintain with a small population such as the

schools and health services. A multicultural center has been opened in the region serving not only the region but providing information for foreigners all over Iceland. Already in 1996 the first celebration of various nationalities residing in the area was held organized by local associations with support from the local authorities. This has since been held regularly. In these celebrations, people of the different nationalities, celebrate together and show arts, food and various artifacts from their country of origin. In these celebrations Icelandic participants show traditional food or materials from the past, especially from the area. There is a great deal of discussion going on about multiculturalism and people talk about different individual behavior in terms of cultural difference.

Conclusion

The fisheries and fishery based localities as those described in this article have always depended on a world markets. The last two decades the fish industries have been characterized by economic restructuring and new technologies in production. Moreover, the fish industry currently depends for the most part on the work of migrant laborers. When I began my research in coastal communities in 1989 the concept of culture was not used in the way it is used today. It was only used to describe art or what is also called high culture. People took their living in a coastal village as more or less for granted. This does not mean that they existed in a stable society that was suddenly transformed by globalization as they had witnessed great transformations during their lives. Moreover, although people did not themselves reflect as much on their own culture before, former identities and local meanings were also socially, politically ideologically and economically constructed. Since the concept of culture is increasingly used to describe what makes them different from others. Inhabitants for example talk about

local culture in relation to tourism development as we have seen in the discussion above.

With globalization people have gained more knowledge about how other people live through television, the internet and traveling. Thus people are aware of the difference in lifestyles between different countries and use the concept of culture to describe this difference. At the same time localities as those in the West Fjords of Iceland are becoming multicultural as people with different national heritage, speaking diverse languages are sharing their life in a small village. These different movements of people depict different realities and possibilities of the world population but they are both part of cultural formation in various places. When discussing globalization and global processes such as those described in this article it is important not to replicate the older developmental ideas and accept the view of globalization as a force that only provides economic freedom and welfare to people. This gives a simple picture of the world which ignores people's various social and economic positions, experiences, strategies and identities. Instead we should examine the global processes at work locally and not lose sight of the fact that while the global technology and communication systems open up possibilities for many we also witness growing polarizations in the global economy (Bauman, 1998) Moreover we are reminded of the fact that the conceptualization of locality, domestic and transnational life and global processes are difficult to understand without reference to each other.

In the different research projects I found different ways in which culture is represented in the villages. My examples of changing conceptions of culture in small resource based villages in the West Fjords is similar to local global connections in peripheral areas elsewhere, but perhaps they are stronger felt because of the interconnectedness of such small populations and with a narrow economic base. To be able to understand the effects of globalization and the global-local connection and ar-

ticulation we need detailed studies of the nature of these changes for people's lives and how they cope with these changes. In this way we can examine more closely the nature of cultural production.

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Visual construction of the indigenousness

Finnish Lapland travellers' photographs of the Saami people and culture

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Abstract

Visual has always played an important role in representing cultures and ethnicities. "Us", "them" and ethnic relations are constructed through visual representations in great part. This article focuses on active Lapland travellers' photographs of the Saami people and culture. Aim of the study to which this article bases on, is to trace visual orders and gazes that are present in travellers' photographs. The main question is how photographs identify the Saami people and their culture? Photographs and their connotations are analysed against the representations of the Saami in the Finnish Lapland travelling industry and historical travel literature. Active travellers' photos do not simply repeat the gazes, representations and connotations, which are present in tourist industry and old travel tales. They also imply connotations, which break the old stereotypes and transmit "atmosphere of understanding" between the Saami and Finnish travellers.

Keywords: Cultural identity, gaze, Lapland, photograph, representation, stereotype, the Saami, tourism, visual

Introduction

The beautiful and somewhat desolate nature of Lapland and exotic Saami people has played an important part in the tales and narratives of Lapland travellers since the very beginning of their documentation. In *Germania*, Cornelius Tacitus (98) had already described the people who lived according to the rules of nature and had their own exotic religious ways and humble lifestyle. After Tacitus, the next written sources about the Saami can be found in some Viking sagas. For instance, Ottar and Öyvind Skaldesiller have written about the poor and wild people – especially those with a hunter-gatherer lifestyle – living in the merciless wilderness (Lehtola 1999, 17). One thing common to all of these early descriptions, is the way in which the Saami are seen as people without property and lacking civilization. In most of the descriptions, the Saami are those who belong to the underclass of the archaic Nordic societies. A rather similar representation is repeated in Johannes Schefferus' *Lapponia*, dating back to 1673, which can be thought as the founding book of Lappology. *Lapponia* is one of the clearest historical documentations of the Saami life and culture, but it creates a romantic view of the Saami as primitive, harmless, and peaceful in their nature. This description partly justified and made way for the Nordic states to conquer the living environments of the Saami and deepen state control in Lapland.

This picture of the Saami as exotic peripheric people has endured for centuries in the Finnish, Nordic, and European travel literature. Scientific lappology and popular travel books formed their own catalogue and lexis, their own discourse consisting of certain types of words, utterances, and pictures. Subsequently, this created a mythical picture of Lapland and the

Saami, which became an important cultural mirror in the building process of Nordic nations. This mythical picture leaned greatly on the “logic of negativity” (Lehtola 1999, 16). The Saami were those who lacked almost everything: civilization, property (such as cattle), permanent and proper dwelling places. The Saami became cultural “others”, against which the Finnish national character, for instance, was textually and visually build and emphasized. This was especially so after the strengthening of the nationalistic Fennomann movement in the mid-19th century. In Fennomannic discourse, the Finns were seen as hard-working, aiming at civilization and, furthermore, as those whose artistic and cultural (e.g. language) features were more highly developed on the scale of cultural evolution than other Finno-Ugrian people. This “othering” of the Saami started to formulate truth-discourses about them and their culture in the eyes of the Finns and such discourses remained present in the developing Lapland tourism, which became common during the 20th century. Actually, this discourse was at that time one of central launching pads of Lapland tourism in Finland and continues to be so today. Lapland was and is sold through notions about its exoticism, romanticism, wilderness/wildness, primitiveness, and cultural difference; as an “ultima thule”. (Lehtola 1997, 47-60; Lehtola 1999; Länsman 2004, 22, 146-157; Saarinen 1999; see also e.g. Topelius 1876.)

In the last twenty-five years or so, Lapland tourism has increased dramatically; mainly as a result of the work of Finnish businesspersons. At the same time, its significance in relation to the regional economy has become of primary importance: tourism is the main source of economic income and field of employment (see third chapter). Although the historically constructed primitive, exotic, and romantic stereotypes of the Saami and Lapland are still very much alive in tourist marketing, the representations and narratives of Lapland and the Saami have multiplied. First of all, the Saami have ploughed their way through to the tourist industry and many of the

places of accommodation and tourist resorts are provided by the Saami. Secondly, as the tourist mass has increased, it has also become more heterogeneous. There are people who travel to Lapland for spa and hotel holidays, hiking, alpine and cross-country skiing, and to visit the cultural and archaeological sites. Thus, the expectations, demands and preconceptions about Lapland and the Saami have also diversified. The same can also be said about the interpretations and representations that tourists and travellers make of their visits to Lapland.

Although some theorists argue that the visuality and gaze have not always been significant in the travel memoirs and literature, and it has gained its importance along the development of modern tourism (e.g. Adler 1989), I argue that in the Lappish travel literature and “western” descriptions of Lapland visual has played an important role through the printed history. Already Tacitus’ *Germania* swarms stories of visual perceptions of the Saami, their everyday lives and living environment. During Tacitus’ times, the Saami were called as the Finns.

The Finns are earthly wild and despicably poor. They do not have weapons, horses, nor houses. They have plants as nutriment, leather as clothes, and earth ground as bed. Their only property is their arrows, which they made out of bones because of lack of iron. Hunting provides maintenance for both men and women. The latter follow men everywhere and hunt part of the game. Their children’s only shelter from wild animals and storms is some sort of canopy of sticks. (Tacitus 1976, 75-76; translation MP.)

In Schefferus’ *Lapponia* actual pictures are in crucial role: the gaze and the mediation of what was seen in Lapland are as important part of the construction of knowledge in the book as is the text. The great part of the pictures in *Lapponia* present weird and exotic religious patterns of the Saami, which deviate from the ones of Europeans.

The significance of visual in how travelling and travel literature have illustrated and taken over the peripheries has only increased after Lapponia, especially during the era of modern tourism. The catalogue of old travel literature has not, however, disappeared, but its position has strengthened. The old visualisations have transferred to modern travelling and their reproduction has expanded through modern media. This old catalogue is still important part of how Finnish travellers visually perceive Saaminess, both when they have not actually seen the Saami or their patterns and symbols, and when they perceive and interpret what they have actually seen and documented during their travels. Traveller's gaze is constructed through different signs. These signs mirror broadly shared and historically constructed images of some particular area, culture and people (Urry 1990, 3.) In the Lapland tourism, these signs come mainly from the old travel literature.

This article focuses on those people who travel to Lapland for nature and cultural experiences, stay there for longer periods, have done so many times, and most of whom belong to the association of active Lapland and outdoor devotees. This article examines the visual representations of the Saami people and culture made by these travellers. I analyse how their photographic representations engage with classic and romantic stereotypes of the Saami. Do they strengthen them, lean on them, or perhaps challenge them?

This article uses a collection of 182 photographs as its research material. The first photos are from the year 1930 and the last ones from 2003. I have collected them from eight different travellers and one archive of the Tunturilatu (Felltrack) association, which was formed by active travellers living in Central Finland. I have collected photographs from the different and multiple trips that each person has made. My attempt was to collect all of the pictures that in some way related to the Saami and/or their culture from each traveller, or at least one picture from every recorded encounter between the travellers and the

Saami who they had photographed. The purpose of this data collection was to approach the change(s) in the photographic gaze that take(s) place when a person gets to know the Lappish nature/countryside, cultures, and people, as the number of travels increase. All photos are used anonymously by request of the photographers/travellers.

Theory and methodology

It is said that tourism and photography are two of the salient characteristics of (post)modern human experience and essence (e.g. Bauman 1996; Garlick 2002; Kaplan 1998). On the one hand tourism – as a form of travelling – is something that locates, relocates and dislocates cultural features, as well as one significant metaphor of (post)modern identity. On the other hand identities get their form and content in representations and one of the most powerful ways of representation has been photograph through the last century. The theoretical background of the article derives, thus, from present cultural studies, tourist studies and anthropological studies on visuality and photographic representation.

I do approach identity as something pertaining to the essence of a human being or group, but rather to its visual, oral, textual, or other representation (e.g. Dyer 1993; Hall 1997a; Hall 1997b). This approach emphasizes the notion that cultural identity is flexible, hybridized, and changes according to the context in which it is used. The meaning of identity is contextually produced in different representations in a particular way, by a particular person, for a particular person, and with specific means. Much more than ‘essence’, the pressing question regarding identity is the way(s) in which it positions people in representations. This is a political question par excellence: groups and people struggle over and negotiate the positions from which they produce representations about themselves and ‘the others’, as well as the form and content of these representations. Repre-

sentations produce, reproduce, and change power relations between social and cultural groups. Sometimes representations produce and strengthen the conceptualizations of ethnic minorities as others; those, who are culturally inferior to the Western "us". Sometimes, however, representations decline and change these stereotypes. The form of influence that 'the other' has here depends on the context of representation, its subjects and objects, and their relationship. If it is possible for the target of the representation to influence the representation, it is usually less "othering" than if this possible does not exist. Representational approach to identity means that I do not chase for authentic identities or visual representations, but the question of authenticity is also political. What becomes acknowledged as authentic is a matter of power relations and political struggles. Those with the right media and legitimate positions can "authenticate" identities and representations. In the case of Lapland tourism, these are usually big tourist companies and state travel services.

Authentic identities are myth. The researcher can not perceive the world and the reality as pure, but through significations produced from particular perspectives and positions. Along this "guideline", I do not tend to present "authentic", "real" or "pure" research story about the visuality of the Saami. It is also crucial to emphasize that I do not compare the representations of Finnish travellers as secondary to "authentic" representations of the Saami themselves. This article is about Finnish travellers' visual mentalities, which crystallize in their photographic gaze. It is a journey to critical understanding of the cultural framework, which has impacts on our perceptions and comprehensions about the Saami and Lapland in the context of travelling. This approach has of course its potential pitfalls. One might criticize that the voice of the Saami is absent in it. On the one hand, this is of course true, but as I have said, I do not try to chase authentic representations, but to direct the research gaze towards the Finnish representations, which construct both the

Saaminess and Finnishness – the case is about ethnically Finnish researcher studying ethnically Finnish travellers. I am also aware of the danger that someone interprets my writings as an attempt to “speak on behalf of the Saami”. That is by no means my intention, but to open up new perspectives to the Saami – Finnish relations. In the spirit of Foucauldian genealogy, I do not try to tell truths, but try to make way for critical reinterpretations and perspectives to Lapland tourism and ethnic relations it bears. My writing is one representation among others – although academically constructed one. (About these discussions see Hovland 1999, 38-42; Clifford 1986.)

Photographs have been very important in anthropological research through its modern history. On the one hand, photographs have been taken by anthropologists for documentation of situations and people during the ethnographic field work. According to Elizabeth Edwards (1992, 5) anthropological photos have often constructed the exotic “otherness” of foreign cultures as they were used as evidence of western race theories and justifications of colonial power in the turn of 19th and 20th centuries. At that point, and also later on, photos were used as “recorded expressions of truth”. Edwards (emt.) says that this framework of objective and seemingly benevolent anthropological recording is what present anthropology needs to decode and move the perspective of observation from truth to the power relation between anthropologist and research subjects.

While this relationship was in many cases tempered at an individual level with a genuine desire for a sympathetic understanding of people in human terms, such intentions were inevitably confronted by the intellectual difficulties of such an endeavour, and the unequal relationship was sustained through a controlling knowledge which appropriated the ‘reality’ of other cultures into ordered structure. Photography was in many ways symbolic of this relationship. It represented technological superiority harnessed to the delineation and control of the physical world,

whether it be boundary surveys, engineering schemes to exploit natural resources, or the description and classification of the population. [...] Through anthropology the power of knowing was transformed into a rationalized, observed truth. (Edwards 1992, 6.)

On the other hand, photographs taken by the people under study have been used as memoir data and researched as one way of their meaning production. "Photography is a valuable tool for field research in part because it highlights the way in which persons construct their reality through visual documents" (Stark-Arola 2000, 5). Whether a photograph is taken by research subjects for private purposes or an anthropologist for research purposes, it provides a tool for a dialogue (ibid.). In the case of this article, this dialogue is two-fold: on the one hand the photographs I use as data include the dialogue between traveller/photographer and the photographed/the Saami, on the other hand the dialogue between me/researcher and the photographer/traveller is also present in the research process. It is crucial that everyone in the process understand that photographs are "extremely important personal objects which signify above all person's interconnectedness to other persons, and thus their identity at the nexus of a system of interpersonal relations" (ibid., 6). This is present in the ways that the Saami people and culture are represented in the each photo and the situation that it is taken. According to the photographers from whom I collected the pictures, photographed people sometimes wanted to dress in a certain way for photograph situation and sometimes photographers asked them to pose in the certain way. Thus, these cultural, personal and situational elements are something, which influence on the photographic representations, and they have to be kept in mind while reading my interpretations. I have tried to approach these "emic meanings" through discussions with the photographers in data collection situations and through reading of their journals, but also

tried to fulfil them with “etic meanings” through approaching them against visual discourses represented in the tourist industry and travel literature.

Methodologically, I approach the rhetoric of the travellers’ photographs by analyzing their denotative and connotative messages. First, I have done a classification of the photos according to their denotative messages, i.e. what do they portray. Second, taking a lead from Roland Barthes (1977), I try to understand and interpret the myths hidden and “working” in the photographs. Myths can be approached through the symbolic, cultural or, as Barthes rather calls it, connotative message of the photo. There are different kinds of cultural, aesthetical and practical knowledges stored in every photo. Their expressions and classifications form the rhetoric of image. It mediates the myths and ideologies “hidden” in the photos, and that is what I mainly try to analyse here.

One noteworthy dimension of the photographic message here is also the linguistic one. Usually either captions or texts in some objects of the photographs (e.g. product labels) conduct the interpretations which could be made out of it. In my data, two kinds of linguistic forms are present: On the one hand the oral stories, which travellers told me while I visited their homes. Those have influenced on my interpretations of the photos. On the other hand the captions, which travellers have written next to the photos in their albums or which are used in the journal of the travellers association, did guide me to watch the photos in a certain way and let me know, where the photos are taken and which is their “iconic message”.

Analysis of the connotative messages of the photos links to the analysis of “visual orders” encoded in the gazes of the travellers.

Structures and orders are part of the visual. Visual orders exist both in physical environment, world of objects and in forms and contents of illustrated representations. [...] They are part of in-

teraction happening in gaze. To gaze at something is action, which is normative and transmits meanings. [...] Visual orders include established and shared cultural meanings. (Seppänen 2002, 34-36.)

Visual order is thus culturally structured set of regularities, which conduct the ways, how we visually perceive, represent and interpret something. It is the “common” and “normal” way of representing things and horizon of expectation for the interpretations of representations. There is, for instance, a particular visual order in representing the Saaminess in tourist industry – consisting of certain symbols in certain order – and it contains a limited repertoire of possibilities for decoding the messages in representations. When visual orders are analysed, it must be also observed what is not shown in representations. When television commercials on cosmetics represent beauty, they use certain looking young people and elderly, disabled and weighty people are absent, for instance. Visual order and gaze links to construction of facts and truths – their visual dimension. Especially photographs are crucial in this, because they do have a reputation of being authentic representations of reality. However, this does not mean that photos are free from imaginary and subjective features. Photographic gaze mirror images of the photographer and her/his ways of visualising them. Photograph is a mean of social interaction, which functions within the dimension of cultural signification system. As an ideological practice, photograph draws principles from cultural contexts where it works – in this case Lapland tourism and travelling. (Ibid., 13, 34; Edwards 2001a; Edwards 2001b; Barthes 1977.)

Gazes are crucial for visual orders. Through gaze we fit something that can be visually perceived to visual orders. We also fit ourselves into the visual orders through others’ gazes – when we try to satisfy the demands written into them. In other words, eye does not only transmit, but also receive. “The gaze is

continuously reforming process, where earlier images, cultural experiences and situated interaction bind together" (Seppänen 2002, 97). Gaze does always contain power, and between two or more subjects it is a power relation. In gaze one evaluates other and puts her/him into certain place in ones own socialized cultural settings. This other on her/his behalf regulates own actions according to this gaze, whether it is actual or simulated. (Cf. Foucault 1979, 200-201.) Tourist gaze or traveller's gaze is also socially organised and systematised, and impregnated with power. Through gaze travellers organise the reality they perceive and classify people perceived in relation to themselves as members of particular ethnic and social group. (Urry 1990.)

Who are the Saami?

The Saami are the only indigenous people in Europe. Most of them live in the northernmost parts of Norway, Sweden, and Finland, and on the Kola Peninsula in Russia. Altogether, there are approximately 75 000 Saami people and they speak ten different languages. In Finland, there are 8000 Saami people who speak three different languages: Northern Sámi, Inari Sámi, and Skolt Sámi. The traditional living environment of the Saami is a region that consists of three northern municipalities in Finland. However, only 55 % of the Saami currently live there. (Kulonen et al. 2005, 5, 176-177.)

According to the definition made by Saami Thing (representative organization of the Saami in Finland) and the Act of Sami Thing for the Saami person, *Saami means a person who considers her-/himself a Saami, provided: 1) that she/he her-/himself or at least one of her/his parents or grandparents has learnt Sámi as his first language; 2) that she/he is a descendent of a person who has been entered in a land, taxation or population register as a mountain, forest or fishing Lapp; or 3) that at least one of her/his parents has or could have been registered as an elector for an election to the Saami Parliament or the Saami Thing.*

Next I will look through some of the details of historical development of the Saami population and their governance in Finland, because “a deeper, contextual understanding (of photos and gazes) is dependent on a network of encoded structures in representation” (Edwards 1992, 5). My intention is to contextualise the gazes of travelling with the historical development through reading of some recent historical observations, made by researchers with the Saami background and/or critical slant on stereotyping nature of Finnish historical Saami studies. Through clarifying the background of the Saami and power structures between Saami and Finnish state, I try to offer means for reader to critically appraise the exoticizing gaze of the historical travel literature.

The first sources about the Saami traditionally state that the livelihoods of the Saami have been based on hunting, gathering, and fishing. The Saami lived for most of the year as family units in temporary accommodations because they followed the seasonal circulation of game. During the winter times, they gathered in villages based on the kin relationship of the dwellers - so-called *Siidas*. For the Saami, significant means of income and products came from the fur trade, which they practiced with other Fenno-Scandian, Baltic, and Eastern groups. (Tacitus 1976; Schefferus 1979.)

According to some archaeological and anthropological interpretations, the hunter-gatherer Saami already practiced small-scale reindeer herding and owned a few reindeer per family unit as cattle. As such, reindeer herding became a significant source of livelihood for the Saami during the 16th century. The reason expedition of spread of reindeer herding as a common source of livelihood was two-fold; on the one hand, due to external pressures coming from the ongoing formation of the Norwegian, Swedish, and Russian states, and on the other hand, the growth of Saami communities, the spread of new ideas concerning sources of livelihood, and the fall in the amounts of game. The transition to reindeer herding and a no-

madic lifestyle changed the nature of Siidas: they got bigger and the distance between the winter village and summer villages increased. This change also gave birth to private ownership among the Saami. Nowadays, the Saami sources of livelihood have diversified. Many of the Saami have been forced to abandon their nomadic lifestyle, because of economic pressures, cultural assimilation, border politics of the Nordic states and exploitation of the Saami land for the mining and hydro-electric production, for instance. Presently, very few of the Saami get their main income from reindeer herding, but it is still seen as symbol of the Saami culture. For instance, if there is a Saami art exhibition or documentary about the Saami made or organized by the Saami, the reindeers are almost unexceptionally very visibly positioned. Today, in addition to reindeer herding, important professions for the Saami are tourism, handicrafts, trade, culture, media, and education. (Lehtola 2002, 23-27; Horn 2004.)

States and the Catholic Church started active work in Lapland during the 16th century. This meant increase in missionary work, the introduction of taxation, and the systematic creation of colonies with ethnically mainstream inhabitants. Smaller-scale missionary work had, however, already started in the 12th century, but it now became systematic and the animistic and shamanistic religion of the Saami was forcefully diminished bit by bit. The missionary work was not without its political intentions. For instance, the Swedish state started to claim Saami lands as its own while the missionary work proceeded. At the same time, the political organization of the Saami villages was forced to change. Traditional village court sessions were replaced by public governance procedures (e.g. a so-called people's court was held during the annual market) and the leadership of the Saami villages was taken care of by royal bailiffs instead of the village elders. (Lehtola 2002, 30-37.)

In the 20th century, state ethno-politics towards the Saami culture in Finland can be divided into three phases in accor-

dance with the concept taken from the John Berry's (2000) theory of acculturation. The first phase can be referred to as segregation and it lasted through the early decades of the 20th century, continuing in some forms until the end of the Second World War. At this time, there was no special state interest in interfering with the Saami culture, although many legislative acts and governance procedures influenced the Saami culture. These were, for instance, changes in the state borderlines, border policies, and the Reindeer herding act (1932), which gave legal power to everyone – not just the Saami – to herd reindeers in Lapland. In the fields of literature, research, and cultural policy, Saami cultures were mainly seen as archaic, needing to be segregated from the western influences so that they could remain “authentic”. This led to the “museumizing” of the Saami and their culture along the features, which were considered to form the essence of the Saami culture. If some Saami wanted to practice ways of life, which were not “authentic” for the Saami, they were seen as not genuine and degenerated. Whether authentic or not authentic the Saami were seen as “culturally inferior”, and this justified the political, social and economic domination and repression of the Saami and their land. (Lehtola 1999.)

The second phase of the ethno-politics started at the end of the 1920s and lasted until the 1960s. This can be referred to as the phase of marginalisation and assimilation. On the one hand, the Saami were marginalized politically and culturally: the interests, demands, and representative organisations and delegations of the Saami were not taken into consideration. Still the Saami culture and languages were seen as ancient relics. It was required that people should be displaced from their cultural roots in order to give them the possibilities to succeed in the inevitable modernization process. The flipside of this was the need to culturally assimilate the Saami into the Finnish mainstream culture in the name of their survival. The central administration tried to teach the Saami the Finnish language and

modern lifestyle, mainly through the educational system. Saami children were taken into boarding schools and they were not allowed to speak their native languages. The common idea of ethno-politics at that time was that, as cultural relics, the Saami were bound to become culturally extinct, and so this assimilation process was seen as beneficial for them. (Kulonen et al. 2005, 24-25; Lehtola 2002.)

The third phase started during the 1970s, after the “ethno-genesis” of the Saami. During the early phase of the period associations and movements of the Saami strengthened, and there were remarkable rise in publicity of the Saami artists. This period can be called as the period of integration, although elements of marginalisation and assimilation still remain in the governance of the Saami people. In this phase, the Saami have their official, recognized representative bodies (The Saami Parliament), which negotiate with the central administration about the issues relating to Saami cultures. There is also legislation that secures the position of the Saami languages and cultures. The basic governmental rationality is that the Saami have the right to maintain their cultures at the same time as there is a desire for the Saami to be an active part of a multicultural Finnish society. However, questions relating to land ownership and use have shown that the administrative good will towards the Saami concerns only some parts of their culture and heritage, and not those which can be seen to have more profound economic consequences. (Eriksson & Karppi 2002; Kulonen et al. 2005, 24-25; Lehtola 2002.)

Lapland travelling and tourist industry

Many researchers, administrators, churchmen, and adventurers travelled in Lapland between the 17th and 19th centuries; however, modern Lapland tourism started in the 1920s and 1930s in Finland. At this time, transportation (busses, cars, trains) and traffic connections improved to the point – mainly because of the road from Rovaniemi via Ivalo to Petsamo – that large-scale tourism became possible. It was at this time that the Finnish traveller's association (Suomen Matkailijyhdistys) was established and it built the first hotels and bed and breakfast accommodation in Lapland. During this time, the tourism focussed on nature experiences (hiking) and understanding and perceiving the scale of the fatherland and its peripheries (so called national romanticism). The second wave of the Lappish tourism took place during the 1960s and 1970s, when road connections and means of transportations were further improved. Another reason for this second wave was the construction of large modern tourist centres with hotels, restaurants, shops and slalom slopes. Although the classic hiker type still remained common among the travellers, the number of "holiday tourists" increased strongly. The third phase of Lapland tourism took place after the mid-1990s, when tourism started to recover after the economic recession at the beginning of the decade. The building of tourist facilities by private companies, and not the state, is typical to this new phase. Subsequently, tourist centres have expanded fiercely and the hiker and holiday tourist have been joined by a new traveller type, namely the experience seeking tourist. This new type of traveller seeks safe experiences in events that take place, for example, near tourist centres or are organised by them. These kinds of events are snow mobile and creep safaris, short cross-country skiing trips, gyms and spas. (Lapin ympäristökeskus 2004; Länsman 2004, 50.)

Presently, the significance of tourism in Lapland is of primary importance. In 2003, the tourist industry in Lapland

directly employed 3472 people and the income from tourism was 377 million euros. It is clearly the most significant means of livelihood in Lapland. The growth from the 1990s is remarkable. For example, in 1995 the turnover of programme services (businesses offering events packages), the safari business, and travel agencies was 10 million euros. In 2003, the amount was 56 million euros. The number of labour years in the aforementioned branches of the tourist industry has risen from 183 to 476. At the same time, the tourist industry has “internationalized”, although the domestic tourists still constitute the majority. 59 % of the overnight tourist stays were domestic and 41 % foreign in the northern parts of Lapland (the so-called Saami home area) in 2003. (Lapin liitto 2004.)

Exact figures conveying the output of the Saami as tourist service providers are not available, but according to various media sources and discussions with informants and researchers, the number has increased. It is, for instance, rather typical that families who practice reindeer herding organize small-scale farm tourism (accommodation, activity programmes, catering). The Saami have also gained ground as full-time tourist service providers and in the semi-public tourist service organizations (e.g. nature centres maintained by the Finnish Forest and Park's Service).

Although the actual presence of the Saami agents is rather small in the wider field of the tourist industry, their symbolic presence is far more expansive. The Saami and their culture (e.g. colourful clothing, reindeer herding and joik music) is exploited by the tourist industry in many ways: Tourists can buy dolls looking like the Saami children from the Santa Claus Park in Rovaniemi, hear joik music in nature centres and museums, and see people with copies of Saami clothing and reindeer standing outside tourist resorts. A large proportion of the organized Finnish tourist industry sees the Saami as an exotic group and culture that can be taken advantage of when marketing experiences and images of Lapland to tourists. The tourist

industry makes good use of Saami images originating from the descriptions of old travel books at the same time as reproducing them in modern contexts. These external representations are sometimes described as “cultural over-exploitation”: rarely so they match the representations that the Saami would give off themselves and their cultures, and they are produced without hearing the opinions of the people they concern. (Aikio 1999; Länsman 2004, 14, 22; Saarinen 1999.)

This drawing below represents the most blatant exploitation of the Saami culture in tourist industry. It is taken from the book called “The Lighter Side of Lapland for Businessmen” which purpose is to tell enticing story about the exotic Lapland for the private entrepreneurs. In this picture many of the stereotypical features of representation are present: the Saami man has double-edged tongue as a metaphor of unreliability; big breasted naked woman dances on the fire as a metaphor of wild and natural sexuality of the Northern women; the Saami man sleeps while sitting on the wood with *kuksa* (wooden cup) as a metaphor of imagined alcoholism of the Saami; white reindeer, birds and fell are part of the man and *visa versa* as a metaphor of primitiveness of the Saami.



Picture 1. Example of exceptionally rancid way of representing the Saami and Saami culture in tourist industry (Uuttu-Kalle & Anikari 1997, 4-5).

Postcolonial research on tourism emphasizes that tourism has major impacts on cultures it deals with. As far as tourism has become the main economic power in many of the areas which might be called exotic from westerners' point of view, it has influenced heavily on those "exotic cultures" (e.g. Kupiainen 2000). The most explicitly tourism changes the structures of means of livelihoods within the communities it concentrates. Implicitly it influences mobility of populations and other demographic features, symbolism, arts and crafts, people's identities and so on. According to postcolonial research tourism can be seen as a reproducer of colonialist power structures and

as the (post)modern form of colonialism. Especially when tourism is in the hands of western businesses or private owners, who do not have backgrounds in the areas to which tourism concentrates, it easily advances the division of western rulers and "ruled natives". As such, it also reproduces image of civilized western cultures and exotic "others", whose cultures only reasonable use is to entertain westerners. On the other hand, tourism can function as a resource for indigenous people (e.g. Kupiainen 2000). For some it is the context where old traditions can be maintained, because they would not otherwise do so. People produce arts and crafts and teach youngsters how to do them, because they are sold for tourist purposes (e.g. Sami Duodji label among the Saami). For some indigenous people the tourism is also direct source of income. The Saami with their own resorts and products can also use tourism in representing their cultural features for westerners from their point of view.

Tourism is irreversibly visual activity (Urry 1992, 172). Even without any technical means (video recorder or camera) tourist visually observe environment and record sights into her/his mind. Already before particular travel takes place, the visual plays important role in travelling: tourist decides her/his destination or travel route according to the images appropriated from tourist guides and/or travel descriptions. The catalogues and "pre-gazes" include and create images about the destinations, which conduct traveler's attitudes and emotions towards environment, people and locations in destination. Images cause excitement, anticipation, fears and so on in the mind of traveler. Susan Sontag (1977, 10-14) has argued that having camera transforms person into active participator, makes she/he the subject in relation to object of the photographic activity. She claims that photographic activity gives photographer priority to see and have knowledge of objects in the way that they themselves never can see or have. In the case of the travelers' photographs in my data, this is true in some cases, but in many cases the travelers take their photographs with them,

when they visit the people they have photographed again. Many of them have shown their pictures for the objects of the photos and heard their experiences. So, photograph is not simply just a way to capture the right to visualize the object, but also a mean for communication about visuality.

Photographs have great significance for memory and retrospection of the photographer/traveler. Through this kind of visually mediated remembering travelers construct their identities within the frameworks of time and space. Through watching photos and remembering the events, situations and people in them, travelers create self-narratives with the timeline and reference to locations, where the photos have been taken from. At the same time, they construct their identities in relation to the people in photographs, their objects, the "others". "Other" does not refer necessarily to the negative connotation of the word here, but to the somewhat Freudian conceptualization according to which one's self-identification always occurs in relation to the constitutive other. (Garlick 2002, 296.)

As Sontag suggests, I do not approach tourists and travelers as passive receivers of the messages expressed in different contexts of their travels, but as active producers and decoders of meanings. Travellers do not necessarily adopt the views and representations offered as such, but rather, fit them into their existing cultural interpretation systems – or conceptual maps – and in this way give new meanings to the things they experience. Travellers who do not know about the Saami cultures and people closely might receive and interpret the tourist industry images of the Saami as reindeer herders and somewhat primitive people as truths, whereas those who know them better, look these images critically.

As previously mentioned, users of the mainstream tourist industry (so called holiday tourists) are not the only kind of travellers in Lapland, although they are the majority. There are still a large number of self-motivated travellers, who do not use organised tourist services such as hotels, safaris, and restaura-

rants. They participate alone or in groups in long hiking and skiing trips and sleep in tents or the modest wilderness cabins found throughout the area. These kinds of travellers have closer connection to nature, the local people and their cultures than "holiday tourists". They are "relatives" – often even in the strict sense of the word – of those who started their travelling in Lapland after the war. At the time, there were no hotels or tourist services, because all of the buildings had been burnt down by German soldiers during Lapland War 1945. Travellers had to seek help from local people if they wanted, for instance, to sleep indoors or use a boat. In the case of many travellers this started a long-lasting friendship and periodical host-guest relation between them and the locals. (Länsman 2004, 49-80.)

Like holiday tourists, these self-motivated travellers seek peace with nature and cultural experiences from Lapland, yet it can be said that they do so in a deeper sense than the first ones. They seriously want get to know the local people, habits, and nature. Most of them have many friends among the local people in Lapland, many of them who are Saami. These are the travellers, whose photographs I analyse in this paper. Most of the people from whom I have collected my data, belong to the previously mentioned Felltrack association. The purpose of the association is to maintain its members' enthusiasm towards Lapland and its local cultures by publishing a magazine and organising meetings, seminars, and hiking and skiing trips to Lapland. Felltrack was established in 1946 and since then, its members have travelled to Lapland again and again with the purpose of getting to know the Saami culture better and to appreciate the close connection between the Saami and the Lapland nature. (Tunturilatu 1999.) This desire for knowledge and experiences has inspired many of the association's members to photograph and document their trips. Many of the travellers have had exotic and romantic expectations of the Saami culture to begin with; however, these expectations and views have changed during their many trips.

What do the travellers' photographs portray?

I have categorized the travellers' photographs according to what they portray. The categorization constructs six categories, many of which are subsequently divided into subcategories. First of all, the data includes a lot of photos about *the Saami dwelling places and buildings*. These photographs can be divided into two "subcategories": those which portray traditional and historical dwelling places, and those which portray the present and modern dwellings of the Saami. Common to both subcategories is that dwelling places are set in the natural environment; small villages in the middle of the fells or lonely cabins in the forest. They are pictures, which help travellers to remember where they have been and what they have seen, but at the same time this way of portraying the everyday living environment of the Saami, can be interpreted to place them into the "traditional catalogues", which represent the Saami as exotic, distant, poor and "natural" people. When the travellers represent the Saami life as part of the Lappish nature, they reproduce the images of the Saami culture's authentic side and do not emphasize the recent changes taking place in their culture. It is kind of a visual metonym of the Saami way of living: although the ways of dwelling of the Saami have diversified remarkably since 1960's, travellers gaze them still as something sequestered by choice – similarly as the tourist industry have done for decades.



Photo 1. Photo from the historical Saami dwelling place in Saariselkä area.

The second category consists of photos of Saami people. There are first of all photos about people, who travellers do not know, but whom they have identified as the Saami because of their clothing or some other external identification mark. These photos are typically from the travellers' first trips to Lapland, when they did not personally know the Saami people in the pictures. If the companions of photographers are present in photos, they do not communicate with the Saami, but wonder about their appearance. These photos (see the example below) are typical tourist photos, and to which fits well Susan Sontag's and Roland Barthes' argument on photographing as an activity of capturing the right to produce visual knowledge about its object. Photos are not taken back to their objects to evaluate and tell their interpretations of them. They do not change stereotypical visual orders of travellers concerning the Saami, but reproduce and strengthen them. These photos function as evidence for the traditional visual orders, which base on differentiating "us" from the Saami "others".



Photo 2. Family wondering the Saami man with traditional clothes from a certain and safe distance in Inari in the beginning of 1960's.

There are also photos about the Saami people in their everyday life-environment, doing their everyday tasks and routines. This group of pictures connotes a close relationship to the Saami and requires the cultural competence necessary to identify people as Saami without any identification marks. The travellers have taken these pictures after they have got to know the Saami personally. These photos represent different perspective to the travellers' gaze than the previous and what Sontag argues to be natural for photographic activity: the Saami are not passive objects of the photographic activity, but actively influence on the scenes in which photographs are taken and have usually chance of discussing about the interpretations and knowledge of the photos with the photographers later on. The third subgroup of people photographs consists of those portraying a familiar Saami person(s) posing for the photographer. These photos bear similar connotations about the travellers' gazes as those taken from everyday life situations. Here, it is normal that the Saami pose with their traditional clothes on and in their traditional living environment, but one can immediately sense a more profound connection between the photographer and their objects from these photos than from the "tourist photos" mentioned earlier: In these portraits one senses respect for

their objects, but in the "tourist photos" one senses wondering about and exoticism. While taken these photos, the Saami in them have been able to decide what kinds of clothes they wear and how do they pose. Many of the travellers from whom I collected the data told me funny stories about these situations and the situations where they showed these pictures for the photographed people. It happened very often that the Saami persons changed their clothes several times before the photographers were allowed to take pictures and afterwards they wondered how they should have wore something else and posed in other positions. The fourth group of people's photos are those that portray the travellers themselves or their companions with the Saami in the moments of encounter between the travellers and the Saami. They are also usually taken in everyday life situations and reflect good relationships and long lasting contact between the photographer and the photographed.



Photo 3. Pierra-Juuso posing for the traveller with his celebration clothes on by his own request.

The third category of photos consists of those portraying the Saami *sources and means of livelihood*. The photographed livelihoods vary depending on the photographer's experiences and knowledge of the Saami. Those travellers who visit Lapland for the first time and do not have personal connections with the

Saami pick up working Saami from the tourist centres and road banks. The first sub-group of photographs consists of images about tourist and souvenir shops, in which there are either actual Saami or people who wear similar clothes while working. Connotations these photos bear, relate to the myths of the Saami which are historically constructed in travel literature and industry: Saami wear celebration clothes all the time; they live surrounded by artefacts made of reindeers and ancient religious equipments such as shaman drums; the Saami live and work for tourists to wonder them. These photos represent somewhat one-sided way of seeing the Saami livelihoods through the framework of tourism and serving travellers. It does not open up the reality of reindeer husbandry, for instance, but represent the relation of the Saami and reindeers as something entertaining.



Photo 4. Man and woman wearing Saami clothes and standing in front of their souvenir shop in the road bank between Hetta and Kilpisjärvi in the early 1960's.

The second subgroup of livelihood photographs links to the previous one, but is more contradictory. It is formed of photos portraying reindeer herding and husbandry. Some of these photographs are taken during the first trips to Lapland, but most of them are taken after having visited several times already. The difference between these two is that first-timers' pictures are taken from the cars or are in other senses distant; they have not been taken from within or near the actual reindeer herding situation. Whereas the photographs taken by those travellers who have visited Lapland several times and know the herders have a certain kind of intimacy in them, the photographs concern events inside the reindeer fence or portraits of the herders. However, both groups visualize the Saami according to their traditional and "authentic" way of life. Most of the photos do not have modern machinery such as snowmobiles in them, although they are widely exploited in modern reindeer husbandry. Those few photos that include machinery mirror the travellers' acceptance of the modernisation of the Saami ways of life.



Photo 5. Man and boy earmarking a reindeer during reindeer extraction near Vuotso village in 1990.

The third group of livelihood photos consists of those portraying arts and crafts or people practicing handicrafts. This

subcategory can be positioned between the tourist photos and those with a more interactive atmosphere in them: On the one hand such photographs are taken because the Saami are typically known for their handicrafts. On the other hand, there is a clear and conscious tendency to separate the practices and products of these handicrafts from those of the tourist handicrafts. As such, the photographs are taken out of appreciation for authentic Saami handicraft, in order to portray their uniqueness and beauty and the hard-working artists behind them. This signification is given to the portrayed crafts by those travellers who have visited Lapland several times and feel deeply interested in Saami traditions and arts. In other words, photographic gaze at handicrafts draw both from catalogue of tourist industry visualisations where the Lapland is seen as area of cherishing traditions without separating the actors of the handicrafts, and from the representations that the Saami give about themselves as active producers and revisers of handicrafts, and who combine modern and traditional features. There are also few photographs about the Saami researchers, teachers, and artists. These photographs are taken by travellers who know Saami culture and actors well and know how to get into the events in which they can be seen. These photos break the myths of the Saami livelihoods and do not fit into the stereotypical catalogues of the tourism. They represent the Saami as active actors in the areas of modern knowledge production and cultural policies.

The fourth category consists of travellers' photographs about *religious places and objects*. This can again be divided into two sub-categories. Firstly, there are pictures about the ancient Saami religious symbols, patterns, and sites (see below). These are taken both by travellers who visit Lapland for the first or second time and are there more or less in the role of tourist, and by those who have visited Lapland several times and know the Saami culture. For the former group, these sites are kind of a curiosity. As such, their representation and idea draws from the

ones of tourist industry. Travellers photograph these sites, because of the knowledge adopted from tourist brochures and advertisements. This gaze, thus, strengthens the stereotypical view of the archaic and natural religious essence of the Saami. For the active travellers, these objects symbolize respect for the old Saami tradition. They can also reflect travellers' critical attitudes towards the present religious beliefs of the Saami and the gaze of signifying natural religion as an important part of real Saami culture. Both groups photograph these sites because of the mythical narratives related to them in the Finnish ethnographic studies, stories and tales, which are the main sources of travellers' knowledge about them. The second subcategory of religious photographs concerns Christian religious symbols, patterns, and sites. These photographs are taken by both active travellers and first-timers. First-timers take these pictures because of the conduct of the tourist guides, but active travellers often shoot them, because their Saami friends have told them to be significant for them or for the whole local Saami culture. This whole category of religious motifs reflects the commonly held Finnish belief that the Saami have a strong relationship to religion: earlier in history this was a relationship to the natural religions, shamanism, and animism, and after the forced Christianization of 13th-19th centuries, to Christianity. As such it can be interpreted to include reflection of "othering" view on Saami, according to which "they" are more religious oriented and ethno-cultural than us "westerners".



Photo 6. Famous Ukonkivi island in Lake Inari used to be the sacrificial place for the Saami people up till beginning of 20th century.

The fifth and final group of photographs consists of images focusing on the *nature of the Saami land*. First of all, there are pictures of animals such as reindeer, typically associated with Saami cultures in Finnish literature and/or cinematic narratives about the Saami. One animal that is particularly represented in pictures is the white reindeer, which is a mythical ancestor-like animal for the Saami and represented as one shamanic form in a very famous Finnish movie (*White deer*) made in the 1950s. Objects like white reindeer connote with the traditional visual order concerning the Saami, where they are represented as indelibly connected to nature, with animistic beliefs and other exotic and even un-civilized features (cf. picture 1). The second aspect of these nature photographs relates to the mythical nature sites of the Saami land. These are either sites to which some important Saami narratives are attached or which are important for the Saami people for some historical reasons, or they are sites to which Finnish narratives about the Saami or local cultures are attached. For example, there is a photograph portraying a small lake that reminds people of a human foot-

step and stories have been spread among the travellers that the local Saami consider this to be the footstep of an ancient giant. However, there is no folkloristic evidence as to whether the Saami people have told this story or not. These photos are usually taken by the active travellers who know the Saami tales or tales about the Saami natural sites, but they tell more about the imagination and interest of the travellers themselves in the mythical beliefs than the ones of the present Saami.



Photo 7. Mythical white reindeer.

Myths revisited: Tourists and vagabonds

According to Roland Barthes (1977) photographs have three message dimensions: the linguistic, denotative (coded iconic), and connotative (uncoded iconic) message. In my analysis, I have concentrated on the two latter ones. When stereotypes and myths are considered, the most interesting dimension is the connotative one. It is what Barthes also refers to as the cultural message because it is based on shared cultural ways of representing things and interpreting those representations. The Finnish Lapland travellers, for instance, have been more or less socialized into particular ways of thinking about Lapland. This includes a certain way of seeing what Lapland

and its people are – the cultural gaze of Finns towards Lapland and the Saami. This “visual order” has been formulated in the synergy of newspapers, school books, documentaries, and fiction movies, tourist guides, experiences from earlier travels, stories and photos of other travellers, Lappology studies, and old travel literature.

What can be referred to as a hegemonic gaze of Lapland tourism is the one that is repeated in the mainstream tourist industry; for instance, in tourist guides, hotel brochures and the catalogues of tourist resort web-pages. Although this gaze is not unchangeable and similarly repeated in every context, it can be said to generally consist of traditional means of livelihoods (reindeer herding), colourful Saami clothes, which then closely binds Saami culture to the nature of Lapland, and the mystique and exoticism of Saami culture. The mystique and exoticism is achieved usually through the features of the old shamanistic religion (e.g. pictures and motifs of the shaman drums). (Aikio 1999; Lehtola 1999; Saarinen 1999.) Using Barthes concepts, this is the visual myth of Saaminess in Lapland travelling.

The connotative messages of photographs of active Lapland travellers do and do not draw on this mythical visual order. Some of the photographic motifs are the same as those which can be found in the organised tourist industry, and as such carry, at least apparently, similar messages to those of the tourist industry catalogues. Active travellers do, for instance, photograph the close connection of the Saami and nature. This kind of gaze comes from their own interest concerning the nature of Lapland and their willingness to see the Saami as people who still have a close and healthy relationship to nature in these modern times, when environmental problems are present all over the world. Their photos do not carry similar connotations of primitiveness as tourist industry photos. This is where the messages of active the travellers’ photos also radically differ from the Saami representations of the old travel literature. In the latter, the close nature relationship of the Saami is consid-

ered as inferior to modernized Finnish people who are more educated, have institutionalized governmental structures, and are part of the developed and industrialized “western” societies (e.g. Topelius 1876). Whereas in the travellers’ photographs, this arrangement is almost completely in contrast: the care for nature implicit to the Saami culture is valued as positive and the wasteful lifestyle of the western world as negative. Similar difference in connotations can be found from the photographs concerning livelihoods and the Saami people. Although they are often portrayed within the frame of the Saami cultural traditions, there is a strong sense of respect present in the pictures.

If I compare the change in the themes and messages of the photos from the 1930s and 1960s to the photographs of the 1980s and 1990s, the differences are surprisingly small: historical dwelling sites, religious objects, the Saami people in their homes, at work, and posing for the photographers, were as often the subjects of the photographs then as they are today. What is more important for the photographic messages than the change of period is the “personal development” of the photographer. Whereas the general travellers’ gaze towards the Saami seems to stay somewhat unchanging over the course of the 20th century, personal gazes change depending on the numbers of travels and encounters with the Saami people. The more that close encounters occur, the more the gaze of photographer changes from the tourist-like portrayal of people, livelihoods, and clothes to a closer, warmer, and more understanding treatment of the subjects. At the same time, the role of the photographer has also changed. If the Saami are usually portrayed alone or in the Saami groups in earlier photographs, the more continuous contact that photographers have with them, the more often both travellers and the Saami are captured in the same picture.

Another change in photos of the active travellers is that the instruments of modern livelihood, as well as the machinery designed to help in everyday life, has become more acceptable

as subject matter in such photographs: although there were snowmobiles and electric ovens in use during the 1960s when many of the active travellers visited Lapland and got to know the Saami livelihoods for the first time, they can rarely be seen in the images taken. Later on, they were incorporated into the photographs as part of the Saami everyday life. The photographs of other modern means of livelihood portray the changes in Saami culture and everyday life in yet another way. Teachers, researchers, and artists at work in modern surroundings connote the photographer's acceptance of the "modernization" of the Saami culture. The pictures of researchers and modern artists can be interpreted as images of modern features and the liveliness of Saami culture; this is not the museum culture of the past, but a living and progressive culture, the members of which adapt to new circumstances through, amongst other things, new professions. In the words of Sara Ahmed (2002), one can say that the travellers' gaze is not so much attached to old stereotypes as it used to be and that they let the Saami - the subjects of their photographs - surprise them. In other words, they appear in the pictures as if they would not necessarily be expected. The myth of the authentic Saami culture with the representations of reindeer herding, fishing or hunting is, thus, declining as a hegemonic way of portraying the Saami.

As already suggested above, I have divided the messages of the travellers' photographs into two: 1) those representing the "tourist gaze" and 2) those representing the "vagabond gaze". The tourist gaze is mainly based on the catalogues and the visual orders of the tourist industry. The subjects - Lapland nature, the Saami, and their cultural symbols and artefacts - are photographed from a certain distance and they remain as exotic others, interaction with whom remains distant. Indeed, the tourist gaze approaches the Saami as objects: They do not and cannot influence the substantive quality of the photographs, at least not to any great extent. Furthermore, the tourist gaze

comes from and reproduces the perspective of genuine and unchanging Saami culture, in which man and nature live together, modernity cannot be seen, and old cultural traditions have significant value. Vagabonds are those, who travel in Lapland and photograph their objects with very few determinant preconceptions. They let the environment and especially local people surprise them. In the photographs of "vagabonds", the Saami are very much present. The photographers, or their companions, often pose with the Saami in the same picture or the joint presence can be sensed otherwise, for instance, from the eyes of the person being depicted when they look at the camera or their easy appearance in the situations in which they are photographed. In the vagabond gaze, the Saami are more (active) subjects than (passive) objects and they ascend from the position of 'the other' to the position of companions who have a reciprocal relationship with traveller and photographer.

Active travellers' photographs of the Saami, their Northern living environment, and their culture, show that myths and visual orders, which are based on old Finnish travel literature, and which are reproduced by the present tourist industry, are not matters of course among the Lapland travellers. Old myths do have certain significance, especially among the travellers who visit Lapland for the first time, but among those, who continuously visit there, the significance of these myths declines and is compensated for by the new visual order that is constructed in the constant interaction with the Saami. It does not have similar mythical structure, which determines the form and content of the photos, but is more open for alternative representations of the Saami and Lapland. By 'alternative', I mean those representations that somehow question the old stereotypes and portray the people, environment, and cultures differently. I finish this article with the photographic representation, which diffuses the roles and identities of the travellers and the Saami, photographer and photographed. It is taken from the Norwegian village called Skibotn and portrays the Saami man with

traditional clothes taking tourist photo of the filled polar bear placed in the middle of the village. Let it remind us, how photographic representation always bear contradictory and mixed connotations and can in many ways fracture stereotypical visual orders.



Photo 8. Unknown Saami man photographing filled polar bear in Skibotn in 1960's.

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Social Transformation, Crime Perceptions and the Role of the Social Sciences

A Personal Account from Iceland

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Abstract

Iceland is in the midst of a radical transformation, both in terms of internal and external changes. On the heels of these changes Iceland has experienced an increase in the level of crime, associated with a deepening crime concern, especially with substance abuse. The social sciences have a decisive role in this process, to broaden the public and political debate on social problems by linking the crime situation to the changing social and economic order. Therefore, it is contended here that social scientists should aim to influence society and make their contribution serve as a basis for informed and sensible social policies. It is a vital role to speak out on public issues, backed up by the best literature with a vision of a better life for all of us.

Keywords: Social transformation, crime, social sciences, social problems, drugs, alcohol, abuse

In the aftermath of WWII, Iceland increasingly came into contact with both European and North American countries after centuries of almost total isolation. The present worldwide process of globalization thus constitutes an even more radical break in Iceland than in most other western countries (Gunnlaugsson and Bjarnason, 1994). Iceland's population has more than tripled since 1910, from about 85,000 to more than 300,00 in 2007. In 1910 two-thirds of the population lived in rural areas, but in 2000 this was true of less than 10 per cent. At the same time the occupational structure of Iceland has also radically changed (Gunnlaugsson and Galliher, 2000). This transformation has, therefore, preoccupied a large proportion of the Icelandic social science community. Moreover, in a small society such as Iceland, any academic community is too small to maintain a viable discourse solely within its own ranks. Therefore, owing to the tiny academic audience, social scientists have published some of their work in magazines of more general interest and in the newspapers. Even though this work has to be pitched in both data analysis and theoretical elaboration, this access to the societal discourse has helped the social sciences to gain recognition in the public debate on various social issues, which in turn has strengthened the foothold of sociology in the wider society (Gunnlaugsson and Bjarnason, 1994).

In this chapter, I will address the nature of various social problems associated with the development of Icelandic society and how Icelanders have reacted to these problems. Specifically, the crime situation in Iceland will be evaluated in comparative terms, what crime types are perceived to be most serious and how Icelanders have responded to crime. Finally, we reflect on the public role of sociology and how it has influenced my work as an academician in this small and modern society.

Crime in Iceland: In Comparative Perspective

As with other social data in Iceland, the status of criminological records of crime violations was for a long time relatively primitive compared to most other western societies. Many indicators show however that the official Icelandic crime rate for serious offenses to be lower than in most other modern nations, such as the rate for homicide, armed robberies and serious narcotics offenses (Gunnlaugsson and Galliher, 2000).

Marshall Clinard (1978) selected Switzerland as the best candidate of a modern nation with a low crime rate. The Danish criminologist Flemming Balvig (1988) argued that Clinard's focus was mistaken since Switzerland actually had a similar crime rate to other European nations. Perhaps Iceland was a better candidate than Switzerland as a nation without a high rate of serious offenses although Iceland is far from being a crime free paradise. As Durkheim (1893; 1933) pointed out at the turn of the 19th century such a paradise does not exist. Crime is not only inevitable in any society, but is also a necessary social behavior since it causes punishment, which in turn facilitates cohesion and maintains social boundaries. However, the precise nature of the criminal behavior may vary according to the type of society and the type of collective sentiments. At a time of both internal and external changes, as have been occurring in Iceland, crime and punishment have become essential.

Fear with the Influx of Drugs and Alcohol Abuse

Crime concern has indeed deepened considerably in Iceland in recent years, as can be detected in public attitude surveys. The crime type Icelanders appear to be most concerned of involves the influx of drugs into the country (Gunnlaugsson and Galliher, 1995). A separate drug police was established in the early 1970's under formal supervision of an independent drug court in stark contrast to legal procedures. This court was

not disbanded until 1992, but the drug police still operate as a separate unit. Moreover, the drug police force has grown considerably in recent years, making the drug police the largest specialized police force in the nation (Gunnlaugsson and Galliher, 2000).

Despite the firm institutional response in Iceland to the drug problem, which the famous Norwegian criminologist Nils Christie (1996) has described as being the hawks of the Nordic countries, cannabis use among the young increased in the 1990's and has been found to be not very different from the use in Scandinavia. Yet, useage of harder drugs such as heroin or cocaine/crack has been almost non-existent in Iceland (Gunnlaugsson and Thorisdottir, 1999).

The concern for drug use parallels closely with the concern for alcohol use which has a long history in Iceland. For most of the 20th century beer was prohibited in Iceland while all other alcoholic beverages were allowed (Gunnlaugsson and Galliher, 1986). Moreover, the Reykjavik Police annually arrested during 1990-94 about 2200 persons for public drunkenness in a city with only 100 thousand citizens. On the whole about half of their prison space has been devoted to incarcerating persons whose only offense has involved intoxication (Gunnlaugsson and Galliher, 2000).

During 1974-1990 more than 2400 individuals were arrested each year for driving while intoxicated which translates to a staggering one percent of the total population being arrested each year. Not surprisingly this figure is significantly higher than found in other Scandinavian nations. The penalties are not lenient by any means; once arrested for the third time a person has faced a mandatory prison sentence and in the 1990's the number of inmates serving time for DWI routinely surpassed 20 percent of the entire prison population (Gunnlaugsson and Galliher, 2000). Yet in the late 1990's this percentage decreased markedly with new developments in prison alternatives, most notably community work instead of confinement.

This focus on alcohol problems certainly seems to suggest that alcohol consumption must be substantial in Iceland. Therefore, it must come as a surprise to learn that according to official information on alcohol consumption, Icelanders consume significantly less alcohol than most other western nations (World Drink Trends, 2000). Still, this category of violations is noteworthy in Iceland and the same can be said about the public debate and continuous measurement of how much Icelanders drink, especially the young generation. Not surprisingly, sociologists have certainly found their role in mapping out the extent and volume of this situation.

Beliefs Regarding the Genesis of Local Criminality

National attitude surveys have repeatedly shown that substance abuse, along with difficult home life, is believed to be central in explaining the genesis of local criminality. Interviews with key people in the criminal justice system and among inmates themselves have also demonstrated the substance abuse and crime link (Gunnlaugsson and Galliher, 2000). Moreover, in a government sponsored research on domestic violence, most women victims also explained this violence by mentioning substance abuse as the leading cause of the violence inflicted on them by their spouses (The Justice Minister Report, 1997).

Thus, it appears that substance use is one of the largest offense categories within the criminal justice system and is also believed by most to be central in explaining local criminality. Even though the crime situation has changed and deepened in recent decades associated with industrialization and urbanization, individual and social psychological explanations, such as substance abuse and difficult home life, continue to be dominant. Social factors such as the changing structure of modern society, social class divisions, and unemployment, do not yet seem to significantly enter the picture as factors explaining the local crime situation.

Crime in Iceland: A Social Realist Perspective

It has repeatedly been demonstrated that in relatively small and homogenous nations we could expect low crime rates (Adler, 1983). Iceland's population is very small and homogenous with only a trace of minority ethnic or religious groups. In societies with diverse ethnic and cultural groups social conflict and crime has often been found to be the consequence. Iceland, being a small nation also enables its members to maintain closely knit primary social bonds, which according to many noted criminologists such as Nils Christie (2000), is central in keeping the crime rate down.

Moreover, Iceland has possessed a relatively equalitarian and cohesive social structure, partly because Iceland has never had a monarchy or aristocracy which has in turn intensified the likeness of its people. Slum areas have not become an integral part of Iceland's urbanization and education and health care have for the most part been free of charge further reducing social class disparities and most likely also crime.

Iceland became a fully independent nation in 1944 after a totally peaceful struggle with Denmark for almost a century. No blood was ever shed, no lives had to be sacrificed and no one ever had to serve time in prison. The path to independence was characterized by the use of dialogue; to reason with the Danes and gradually Iceland gained full independence through entirely legalistic means.

Finally, Iceland has never had a standing army of its own and controls of guns have been extensive. The police and prison guards have not carried guns and social conflicts between classes or between the people and the government have for the most part been very peaceful.

Substance Abuse Concern: A Constructionist Perspective

First, it has to be pointed out that many countries, especially Nordic nations, have a similar concern over alcohol use. In Iceland this concern has had many dimensions which can be shown among other things in the peculiar beer ban, while all other alcoholic beverages were allowed. It was argued for instance in Parliament that the drinking habits of Icelanders show that Icelanders are not able to use alcoholic beverages as civilized persons and at times the Viking blood was given the blame (Gunnlaugsson and Galliher, 1986). Tolerance for alcoholic consumption appears to be at a minimum, perhaps reflecting the Protestant ethic which Weber (1905; 1977) discussed in his famous book on the genesis of capitalism. Icelandic authorities have over time adopted many strict policies to control the availability of alcoholic beverages which in part have helped shaping the local drinking culture (binge drinking). With internal and external changes, the government in Iceland gradually liberalized its alcohol policies and drinking patterns have changed and become more like what is found in other European nations.

In the latter part of the 20th century the influx of drugs became an additional grave concern and an ideal boundary maintenance mechanism in a changing society with increased international air travel (Gunnlaugsson and Galliher, 2000). Drugs are generally imported, and are therefore perceived as being a foreign threat to a nation that has for centuries been isolated and small. Consistent with Iceland's cultural aversion to mind-altering substances is that in the Icelandic language the common term for drugs is "eiturflyf" which translates literally as "poison medicine".

Moreover, drugs seem at times to have the tendency to serve as convenient scapegoats for various social and economic problems, i.e. blaming drugs or its alleged effects on its users for a variety of pre-existing social ills that are typically only

indirectly associated with it (Reinarman, 1996). The possibility that abuse of drugs may be an expression of various social ills of a modern and changing society, an expression which certainly might intensify the problem, is seldom seriously considered. Here, the role of sociology becomes crucial; to broaden and enlighten the public discourse on social problems.

The Role of the Public Intellectual

The fear of crime has grown dramatically in the past few years in Iceland even though the crime rate has not changed to the same degree and still is lower compared to many other western nations. Icelanders increasingly believe punishments to be too lenient and they are most concerned about drug use. Moreover, the cause of local criminal behavior has typically been individualized and felt to be substance abuse (Gunnlaugsson and Galliher, 2000).

These findings are not unique to Iceland and not surprisingly similar empirical observations can be found elsewhere (see for example Roberts and Stalans, 1997). Public sentiments towards crime tend to be similar in this modern and globalized world where national boundaries are gradually losing their force. Crime is constantly felt to be more serious and drug crimes the most serious law violations and the causes of crime are typically reduced to individual faults.

Thus, being a social scientist is now even more pressing than ever before and sociology increasingly an international discipline. We are dealing with social forces which are predominantly international in nature, and they can also be manipulative and even repressive, which can be shown in the international war waged against drugs (Nadelmann, 1993). This makes comparisons across nations not only useful but also necessary, we can and should learn from each other. Moreover, the voice of sociology must be heard, not only among sociologists, but also outside the ranks of the discipline itself. Sociology is in

fact the only discipline able to demystify the social forces shaping our existence and in turn gives our profession a vital role in society.

What we do in the social sciences matters, not only to our profession but to a wider audience as well. We can and should participate in the public debate about social issues. And we have some classic examples in our field who have advocated this role like C.W. Mills (1959) and Alfred Lindesmith (1965) who confronted the Drug Control Establishment in the United States as was demonstrated in a recent book by David Keys and John Galliher (2000).

In the spirit of these scholars and others, I early on presented my research findings to the local media in Iceland. In the mid 1980's, when I was still a graduate student, I wrote a lengthy article on the subject in a popular magazine (Mannlif, 1985) and later gave a detailed interview in Iceland's largest daily on the subject (Morgunbladid, 1986a).

The reactions to my surprise were quite dramatic and another daily paper openly criticized the findings (Thjodviljinn, 1986) and the director of the *State Council Against Alcohol* (Afengisvarnarad) also responded with a lengthy article in the paper criticizing the results (Morgunbladid, 1986b). I was accused for failing to see the material benefits of the beer ban to Icelandic people, which I had found to be minimal. As a sociologist I had located the ban in a comparative and socio-historical perspective where the ban was found to serve a vital symbolic function for various social groups in society (Morgunbladid, 1986c). Moreover, I had described the arguments for both the ban and its abolition by citing Parliamentary debates on the subject over time.

Since I became faculty at the University of Iceland in the early 1990's this public role has always been a part of my career. The local media has been quite receptive to what social scientists have to say and that has certainly helped in playing out this role. Moreover, not surprisingly, the subject of crime

and deviance makes it easier to participate in a public dialogue since this topic frequently makes the headlines in the popular media, just as it does in other countries. Here, it is very important for social scientists to step in by not allowing the debate about various social problems to be exploited by sensationalized media and various interest groups who have vested interests to trumpet the crime and drug problem. In Iceland, even to a larger degree than in most countries, we regularly experience moral crime panics, which at times produce public fear and anxieties and at the same time intensify misguided social policies, not the least crime policies.

In the past few years we have seen some instances of this sort in Iceland and I have felt it to be a professional obligation to come out in public to intervene backed up by my own research or by citing relevant literature on the subject. To mention a few of the subjects my public role has involved I can here name a few. For example, it has been incorrectly alleged that youth violence is becoming rampant and more serious (Morgunbladid, 1993). There has been a consequent media and public outcry for stiffer punishments (Morgunbladid, 1996b and Dagur-Timinn, 1997). Public fear of drugs has been heralded (Morgunbladid, 1995; 1998 and 2000), as has the impact of mass media on violence in society (Morgunbladid, 1996a). These topics are familiar which makes it relatively easy to apply the criminological literature to the situation in Iceland. I have written more than 30 articles in the local media about these issues and other crime related issues in the past few years and given dozens of interviews in the local radio and television. Usually, a sensational event triggers my participation in the local media. Here are two examples (Gunnlaugsson, 2001).

Two Examples of Participation in the Public Debate

First, I felt it to be my professional obligation to enter the public debate when the Icelandic Minister of Justice, in a public

address in 1996, urged judges to hand out stiffer penalties for violent offenses. According to the Justice Minister these crimes had increased and were becoming a more serious threat. Apparently the Justice Minister was echoing recent news reports in the local media on this subject and the public mood which often tends to favor harsh penalties.

I responded in a newspaper article in the largest daily paper that the data does not show this crime to be increasing in Iceland (Morgunbladid, 1996b). If anything, police data showed serious cases of violence to be decreasing. Moreover, I argued that stiffer penalties would not solve this problem by citing and discussing various research findings on the subject, in addition to reflecting on the social reality of many violent instances.

It is unknown whether this article had any impact, but not much later I was invited to give a keynote address to a convention held by the *Icelandic Society of Judges* where about 100 local judges, sheriffs and legal experts were gathered together in their bi-annual convention, to discuss the issue of punishments. The audience turned out to be receptive to my arguments and this shows that public participation can open up opportunities for academics. This presentation also led to an invitation to submit an article on the subject to a local journal on legal studies (Gunnlaugsson, 1998).

The second example involves the local drug control policy. Early in 1999, or only a few months before Parliamentary elections, a new drug bill was introduced in the Icelandic Parliament (Parliamentary Files, 1998-99). This bill called for mandatory prison sentences for drug trafficking and drug sales stipulating a minimum of two years in prison, but no such provision existed in the law. In the preamble of this proposal, it was stated that the drug problem was felt by most Icelanders to be the most serious crime problem facing Icelanders and that the public believes penalties to be much too lenient. My crime survey research findings were cited to back up these proposed measures.

Suddenly I found my research to be used to justify a very misguided crime policy and also being used to bolster some political careers just prior to political elections. I felt I had a responsibility to publicly criticize this proposal and I did so in a lengthy article in Iceland's largest daily (Morgunbladid, 1999).

I discussed the horrible situation in the United States with drug incarcerations sky-rocketing without improving the problem of drug abuse. Moreover, I urged MP's to reflect on the issue for a moment; to calculate and estimate how many more people would have been locked up in prison if this bill would have been passed like a decade earlier. What a monster we would have created in our criminal justice system and is that really what our Parliament wants to do? Is this how we want to tackle this social and public health problem we are facing? I did not get any reactions in the paper, but for whatever reason the bill was not passed in Parliament and it did not even make it to the floor debate. In 2001, the maximum penalty for drug offenses was however increased to 12 years in prison instead of the 10 years stipulated in the previous legislation. Yet, the minimum prison sentence of two years was not included in the bill.

Public Role and Academia

As is well known, the public role is not rewarded in academia and this holds also for Iceland. We do not have any academic incentives to carry out this role, we do not get promoted or even a pay raise by submitting articles and giving interviews to the popular media. And this is not the whole story either. By reaching out to play this public role, one runs the risk of stepping on the toes of powerful people and groups who can possibly undermine your career or even the existence of your discipline. Therefore, it is tempting to choose subjects which are not controversial and are relevant to societal and governmental interests and therefore help the discipline to earn credibility in society. Yet, our field must go beyond the immediate social

situation, we must be able to reflect upon alternative ways to handling social issues even though it might run counter to the powers of the present. We are a part of an institution which is accountable to the public which should be reflected in our work.

My experience in Iceland shows that in a small society academics are very likely to become involved in the public discourse which means that a total separation between scholarly work and social policy can be difficult. Moreover, we are a part of a field that not only has as its mission the mapping of social phenomena, but perhaps has its best moments when it elaborates on the liberation of the human spirit, and aims for an emancipation from dominant notions of social reality. Even though we sometimes feel that our input does not have much impact, it should not stop us. In my view, we have no obligation to be successful, only an obligation to try.

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Domestic economy and commodity trade among West Siberian Reindeer herders

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Abstract

This paper shows how seemingly contradictory concepts of economic activity among Arctic reindeer nomads are united under one livelihood. On the example of the velvet antler trade between nomads and Far Eastern businesspeople, I show how tundra people welcome integration in international trade. Their involvement in a rather recent economic activity shows how they cleverly manoeuvre in the arena of opportunities for diversified incomes. Nenets nomads make explicit distinctions between different spheres of production, as a result of which the nature of money becomes personalised: the source of income determines the sphere of spending. The argument is in this and other cases that involvement in global economy does not have to replace but rather supplements a solid basis of traditional subsistence or domestic market production.

Keywords: International trade, domestic mode of production, reindeer nomadism, Nenets, Russia, West Siberia, theory of money

Introduction

Indigenous peoples, particularly Russian Northern remote reindeer nomads, are often portrayed as brave defenders of a harmony with nature and sustainable lifestyle, basing on intuitive relations and irrational worldviews. In these terms the Nenets reindeer nomads of West Siberia can be seen as one of the most vivid examples of 'noble savages' in the 21st century (Kohl 1983, Stammler 2005). Refuting such simplistic notions, I show in this paper how herders unite seemingly contradictory concepts under one livelihood, navigating cleverly between traditional nature use and exploitation of short term market advantages in a globalised economy.

On the example of the velvet antler trade between Nenets reindeer nomads and Far Eastern businesspeople, I show how tundra people flexibly take on previously unknown forms of economy and welcome integration in international trade, even though most think that velvet antler production harms the animals. Their involvement in this rather recent economic activity shows how nomads and their representatives cleverly manoeuvre in the arena of opportunities for diversified incomes. The globalisation of trade brought such opportunities to the remotest regions of the Arctic, where indigenous people cooperate with incoming trading organisations where necessary for their aims. Even though trade is known to the inhabitants of West Siberia for many centuries, reindeer antler is a new resource for herders not used within the subsistence economy and became increasingly popular with the opening up of Southeast Asian markets.

Drawing on ethnographic research between 1998-2006, I argue that agency for such commercial activities among nomads develops best on a stable base of subsistence and market meat production, providing a safety-net to fall back to - in case risky ventures on the global market fail. This leads, I argue, to a diversification of economic sectors with a clear culturally

bounded hierarchy, where the new risky business is a supplement to the foundation of the nomadic livelihood. The distinction between high revenue market adventures (through velvet antler) and constant stable economic backbone activity (through subsistence and market meat production) can also be tracked in the spending practice of the income gained from these different economic spheres. The analysis of this spending practice contributes to anthropological discussions about the nature of money and theories of exchange. The material presented here supports arguments about the subjectivity of economic decision making on the ground. I argue that economic reasoning is personalised to an extent, where the reputation of the source of income becomes for decision making more important than pure monetary value. Culturally bounded morality thus is the principal factor giving a hierarchical structure to different sectors of a multiple northern nomadic economy.

Reindeer herders as producers of image and commodity

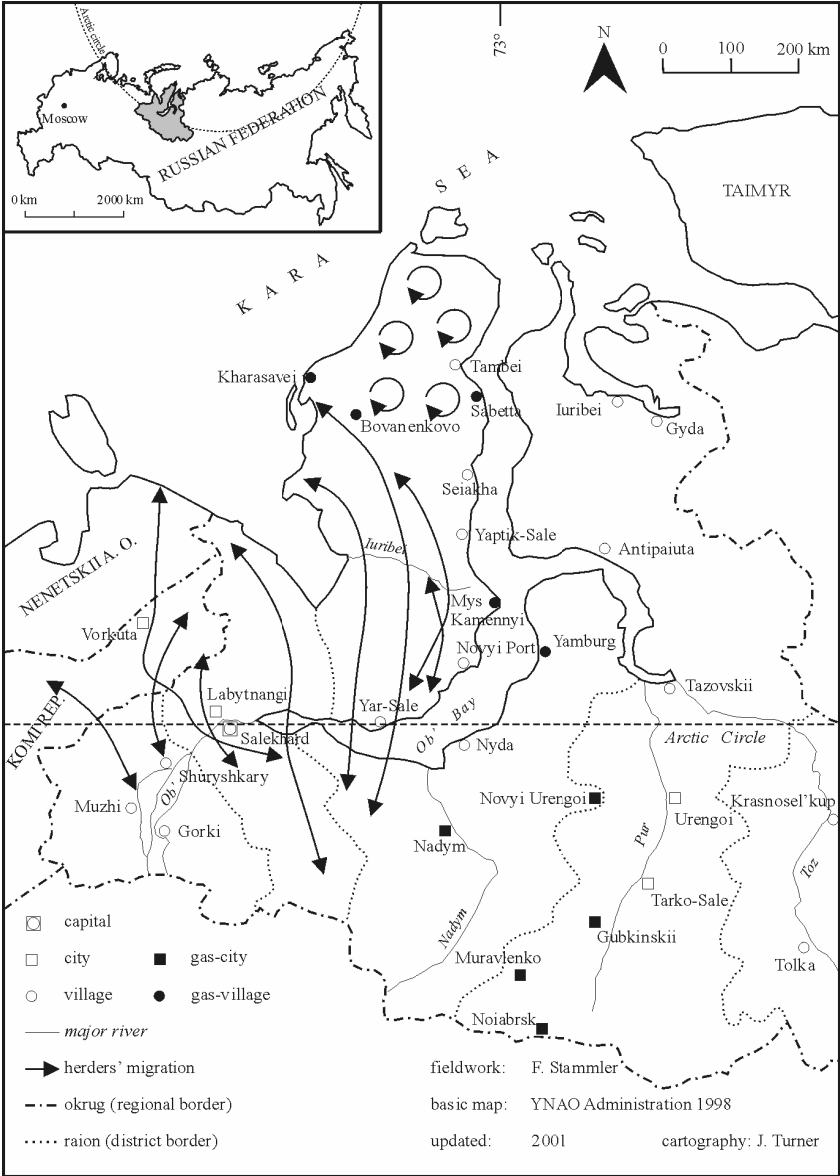
Indigenous people of the North have succeeded to gain a positive global image of following a sustainable livelihood, basing on a subsistence economy that relies mainly on the use of renewable on-surface resources of the North. The Yamal-Nenets Autonomous region, where fieldwork for this research was done, today has the world's biggest herds of domestic reindeer, counting 540000 animals all together. It is also the number one gas producing region of Russia. In comparison to the income from gas exports, the economic importance of reindeer herding is close to nothing. However, for the approximately 15000 mostly indigenous people directly occupied with herding reindeer on the tundra, this animal is their main resource, for subsistence and market production, for all basic and extended needs. Reindeer herding and the nomadic livelihood of the herders has also become an important popular regional identity marker, used to advertise a successful coexistence between 'tra-

ditional' (reindeer herding) and 'industrial' (gas extraction) use of nature (see Stammler 2005: 179f, see photo 1).



Photo 1: The regional flag of Yamal-Nenets Okrug: reindeer as regional identity. Photo: Florian Stammler

All the reindeer herding is done in a highly mobile way, with herders performing extensive migrations varying from 100 to more than 1000 km a year (see map).



Map 1: Yamal-Nenets Okrug, West Siberia, main migration routes of reindeer nomads (Stammler 2005, 76).

In Pre-Soviet and Soviet times, reindeer herding was done mainly for subsistence, transport and for production of meat. In the period of perestroika and the first decade after the fall of the Soviet Union, many reindeer herders said that producing velvet reindeer antler (*'panty'*) had become equally important for their income as producing meat. However, the nature of this income, as I will show below, had important implications for the spending behaviour of the earners, and the importance of *'panty'* as income has decreased after the boom in the 1990s.

The *'panty'* business shows how a risky 'unsustainable' activity develops under the umbrella of a livelihood that looks ideally 'sustainable', (subsistence and meat production of nomads in the tundra), where tundra nomads looks like remote naïve 'noble-savages' acting according to their intuition. In the following I shall give a rather lengthy ethnographic account of the *'panty'* business for several reasons:

- a) because it is a new activity in reindeer herding completely generated by a demand outside of herding, out there in the 'global economy'
- b) this business is seen by many as endangering the health of reindeer herding on the long run
- c) to show how grounded ethnography contributes to our understanding of general economic processes
- d) the way in which reindeer nomads use this business shows the idea of supplementarity instead of replacement in Nenets reindeer herding lifestyle. It strengthens an argument made in earlier work (Stammler 2005) that this livelihood is not in danger of extinction from inside. Reindeer nomadism can, however, die out when pasture resources are devastated by industrial development, but this is a topic covered in other publications (Stammler & Wilson 2006).

'Panty': a Far Eastern commodity conquers the tundra¹⁴

Velvet antlers, in Russian '*panty*',¹⁵ have a long tradition as a medicine in Asia. Its first use was documented in China 100 BC (Grover & Renecker 1994: 1). The past as well as present demand for the raw material comes mainly from China and its neighbouring countries. According to old Chinese sources, the extract of velvet antlers "reduces hot temperedness, dizziness, strengthens male kidneys and testicles, cures involuntary ejaculation of male semen during sexual intercourse with a ghost during the sleep" (quoted in Iudin 1993:3).

With the economic liberalisation in Russia and China, consumers in Asia have become potential customers and the reindeer herders the potential producers of this mysterious medicine, *panty*. National and international trade with this commodity affects the way of life of Yamal reindeer nomads, and it affects how they react to their integration into a network of worldwide exchange. My main argument with this material is that global connectedness has become an additional feature of Nenets nomadic lifestyle, but it has not replaced their intimate relations with their renewable surroundings (such as reindeer, pastures, spirits, sacred sites...).

Fresh velvet antlers: chronology of a commodity

Originally, *panty*, velvet fresh antlers, were not an invention of the North. Before Perestroika, the southeast Asian mar-

¹⁴ An earlier version of the part on antler-ethnography in this paper was published in Stammler 2004. Research for this paper was supported by the Max-Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Germany, the BALANCE project of the EU, contract number EVK2-2002-00169, and the ENSINOR project of the Finnish Academy, contract number 208147.

¹⁵ Although being aware of the English meaning of this term, I would like to encourage the reader to accept this as the Russian "terminus technicus" throughout this contribution. I use it therefore in italics and without quotation marks throughout this article

kets were satisfied mostly with raw material coming from New Zealand, China, to lesser extents North America and from poached animals of different origins (Grover & Renecker 1994). Within Russia, the most important source animal for this raw material are marals (*Cervus elaphus maral*) in the Altai mountains. Although the first Chinese bought *panty* also from reindeer as early as 1910 (Iudin 1993:62), real production only started in the 1970s, and this mostly in state farms in the far east of Russia, in rather small quantities. Antlers from reindeer were developed as a business resource most efficiently in Alaskan reindeer herding (Naylor et al 1980: 259), and on a much smaller scale among Evenki herders in China (Beach 2003). In 1993 the world production of velvet antlers from all species, including reindeer, was estimated 300 tons (Grover & Renecker 1994: 2). Russian reindeer were not included in that figure.

The medically relevant ingredient in the fresh antlers is called *pantocrine* (for southern animal species) or *rantarine* (for reindeer). *Panty* are rich in amino-acids and many other relevant elements, analysed in detail by Russian scholars (see Iudin 1993:63–69). In America the substance is advertised for its richness in chondronitin sulfate (CSA), glucosamine sulphate and type II collagen (Kaylor, n.d.). It was only after perestroika that *panty* became significant as a source of income for reindeer herders in Russia. There as well as in North America, *pantocrine* is sold as having similar effects as Echinacea, strengthening the overall condition of the human body.¹⁶ (Kaylor n.d.). Apart from medical preparations, in China and other Asian countries *panty* are also consumed as dried chips in restaurants.

In Yamal the real boom in panty business began in the beginning of the 1990s, when the limits on entrepreneurial ac-

¹⁶ See e. g. the instructions for use for “cigapan”, which can be purchased in pharmacies in Russia. For American medicines advertising with scientific evidence for pantocrine, check:

<http://www.powerhealth.com/detail.cfm?pageid=421>,

<http://www.natraflex.com/velvetantler.htm> (accessed 02/05/2007)

tivities in the Soviet Union fell, Chinese and Korean traders could become more active, and simultaneously the need for additional income increased because of the lack of state support. By the mid 1990s, prices skyrocketed and reached a historical high around 300 \$ per kg dry panty. Considering that with a big reindeer herd a herder could extract around 150 kg per summer, this value equivalent in money would have been quite substantial (45000 \$). However, most of this value went (as in many other cases too) to middlemen instead of herders directly). Since West Siberia was the only region in the former Soviet Union to experience growth of domestic reindeer after the end of the planned socialist economy (Stammler 2005), it was here where building up a velvet antler trade network was most promising. However, an economic crisis in Southeast Asia and (as some informants say), the broad popularity of Viagra (see Hippel & Hippel 2002) have led to a drastic decline of prices, which after 2001 became more or less stable at 60 \$ per kg dry weight. This led to a reaction on the market too, since with the high transport expenses connected to *panty* production the profit margin melted down close to zero. Currently the business is only viable for traders if they succeed to connect to free transport capacity, for example empty helicopters from oil or gas companies or border guards ('*panty-hitchhiking*', see below).

An ethnography of panty production

Velvet antler (*panty*) production is closely linked to the seasonal nomadic cycle of reindeer herders. Reindeer (*rangifer tarandus*) is the only animal where both of male and female reindeer grow antlers, and also bulls and castrated bulls. Depending on the weather and the quality of the pastures, the antlers reach their full size, up to 50 cm, towards the middle or the end of June. After this, for approximately 4 weeks, is the optimal time for cutting the fresh antlers off the deer. Usually, it

is done a bit later than this ideal time suggests, from mid-July to mid-August. An ethnographic sketch should illustrate the process of *panty* production in the herders' eyes:

Anniko and his family have a mid-sized reindeer herd of slightly more than 1000 reindeer in North Yamal. In June, the antlers are already quite well developed, and they know that soon the helicopter will come. What the collecting enterprise normally does is to fly by helicopter to every reindeer herder's camp preliminary, in order to agree on an exact date for the collection of *panty*. The guide of the helicopters has to have an immense local knowledge of the land in order to locate any nomadic camp in the region on a particular day in summer. So they fly to Anniko to ask him how many kg of *panty* he wants to cut this year. He answers 300 kg (fresh wet weight). Then Anniko chooses from the goods in the helicopter offered by the trader: fresh bread of the day, tea, tobacco, pasta, spices, newspapers, books, rubber boots, a bottle of vodka and two apples for the children. During this first flight, the *panty* collecting company brings to the tundra a variety of the most common goods, which reindeer herders normally buy. Anniko and all herders get these goods in advance, basing on relations of trust with the trader, before having cut the antlers. The entrepreneur writes the price of the purchase in his account book, and when the *panty* are collected, he counterbalances the given *panty* (payment) against the sold goods, and sees whether there are debts or profits. The first visit of the trading helicopter is the occasion for the herders to order more or different goods. The entrepreneur writes down the order and the prices.

This first flight is necessary because usually private camps are not connected by any means of telecommunication. Only through personal communication does an entrepreneur know what his customers would like to buy this summer, how many kg of *panty* they want to sell, and on exactly which date he will be able to collect the *panty*. Cash at this stage does not play any role. The whole pricelist of goods is calculated in kg of

panty. During the first visit of the trader, no *panty* are collected, since they are not cut yet.

Two days before the agreed day of collection, Anniko and his family start the cutting process. The deer have to be driven to a self-made corral in the tundra, and the *panty* animals have to be chosen and separated from the rest of the herd, either by lassoing them or by rounding them up in front of the nomadic camp. Most herders choose to cut antlers only from castrated bulls or those bulls that are not considered to have very good reproductive capacities. Reproductive bulls are considered to be weakened unnecessarily by *panty* cutting, and females should have their antlers because they will need them when competing for the best pastures in autumn and winter, and they should not be stressed too much since their main task is feeding the calves that usually are born 2-3 months before the *panty* harvest. The cutting itself is done jointly by several herders per deer, since one or two men have to keep the animal calm while one is sawing the antlers. Ideally, after the cut, the wound which is normally bleeding is treated with a bandage and iodine to stop bleeding and disinfect.



Photo 2. Cutting fresh reindeer antlers, mid July, Yamal Peninsula
Photo: Florian Stammler.

One or two days after the reindeer herders have cut and packed the *panty* in linen sacs, the helicopter comes to collect the raw material, if the trader or the air company has not gone bankrupt in the meantime (which happened during 2001 field-work). Only then will Anniko know whether he sold more or less *panty* than he got goods in advance. Before the *panty* are loaded on the helicopter, the herders get the goods that they ordered. Anniko got this time a spare piston for his snowmobile, batteries for his Chinese tape recorder, some tapes with recent Russian disco music for his sons, canvas for his chum (nomadic tent) and ammunition for his gun. Moreover, he got some more food since he has run short of bread and tea. However, all the goods that he took are not essential for his camp's survival, even though they make life easier and more pleasurable. Anniko sold 300 kg *panty*, which equals 2/3 of the price of a *buran* (Russian snowmobile), of which he already has two that do not work very well.

Normally, Anniko does not know the actual price of the goods he ordered and purchased. He trusts the entrepreneurs, because they know each other. They are his only interface to the outside world, because only they know how the herders migrate and where they stand during antler cutting time. If one entrepreneur charges dishonest prices for Anniko, he will work with another one next year. This time it turned out that he took less products from the helicopter than he sold *panty*, which means that the trading enterprise owes Anniko money. He can take goods equal to this sum in early winter when he migrates to the trading post. In the 1990s *panty* had become as important as a means of income as meat for him, but he spends the income from *panty* differently than the one from meat production, even though there is an overlap between the two. This is why he slaughtered less male reindeer, resulting in a slightly higher share of males in his herd, since he did not want to cut antlers from his females. The fact that many herders made similar husbandry decisions lately resulted in what Anniko's neighbour

calls “the overcrowded tundra” (*tundra perepolnilas*). Many young people think that living in the tundra as a reindeer herder, producing *panty* and meat, promises a better economic return than to live in the village with a badly paid job.

Once the *panty* are collected, Anniko and his family can live in peace for the rest of the summer until the slaughtering campaign begins in October. His son Nikolai mentioned how the growing market competition over *panty* collection affected heavily their lives in the 1990s. In 2000 during one month, eight helicopters flew to his camp in the tundra to ask for *panty*. This is because different enterprises competed with each other for the velvet antlers of one and the same household. Anniko decided to give smaller amounts of *panty* to each of these enterprises. Such a competition was not welcomed by all herders, as they did not have enough time in summer anymore for repairing sledges, tent covers, clothes, harnesses and the like. In general, during the high peak of competition in the 1990s, the summer had become too hectic, whereas recently the market has consolidated and the situation ‘calmed down’.

Why panty production is unstable and suspicious

The increase in *panty* business of the 1990s led among herders and their representatives to growing concerns about the consequences for ecology and economy in the tundra. Most herders in Russia nowadays agree that cutting *panty* has on the long run detrimental consequences on reindeer health; even though earlier literature stated that it does not negatively affect reindeer (Iudin 1993). Experts have also started to argue carefully that currently the consequences are not empirically studied yet, and funding to do so is lacking.¹⁷ On the other hand, *pantocrine* is advertised as an ‘animal-friendly’ product by researchers closer to the business. Their argumentation is that

¹⁷ Alexandr Yuzhakov, personal conversation, Salekhard 2001

unlike rare and wild animals, reindeer are 'farmed' and do not die from *panty* production.¹⁸ This picture, however, may fit better to Alaskan and Canadian conditions than to Siberian reindeer nomadism where strong transport bulls play such an important role, and herders started getting concerned about long-term reindeer herd health rather than health of particular animals.

Indigenous politicians have several times suggested at official congresses to put a ban on *panty* production. The underlying idea was that this kind of production is unsustainable and threatens reindeer herding as nomadic livelihood and as a cultural identity marker for northern indigenous minorities. However, all such attempts were so far refused by herders themselves. Most informants argued that official sedentary representatives do not have authority to interfere, since they can afford with their salaries in cities all kinds of luxury, whereas herders can use only *panty* for 'lifestyle' purchases.

Accounts of the detrimental effects of *panty* production for reindeer vary:

- Herders told that bulls become weak without antlers: "earlier you could drive a sledge-team for a whole day, nowadays you have to stop after a few hours".
- Reindeer with cut antlers gain less weight in summer, which badly influences their overall physical condition to survive the harsh winter and spring time. Reindeer use the antlers during the worst mosquito harassment to chase the insects away. Fresh antlers with their high blood content attract mosquitoes more than other parts of the reindeer body, which saves the overall physical condition of the animal. Without antlers, the reindeer body itself is more vulnerable to insect bites.
- Cutting *panty* from females or reproductive bulls is believed to lead to genetic degradation and decrease of overall herd health. Therefore, most herders, unlike their American

¹⁸ Kaylor, n.d., see also the adverts at www.velvita.com.

colleagues, cut only from adult castrated animals, even though in the very peak years of the business, the temptation of good income was too big for some to resist.

- However, one respondent also mentioned a positive effect of cutting *panty*, sounding equally logical to laymen: cutting the panty directs all the energy from healthy summer pastures into the reindeer body rather than to the antlers. This should make reindeer gain more weight, not less, in case the mosquito harassment is not too strong. This respondent, however, had himself a strong involvement in the *panty* business, which is why he might have a commercial reason for giving such an explanation. The argument is similar to accounts from antler production in North America, where some deer farmers argue that it is good for animal and humans to cut the antlers in time. However, the strongest such case was made for farmed white tailed deer, which is very different from reindeer (cf Len 2004).



Photo 3: Antlers are most attractive targets for mosquitoes. Herders recently started to use heavy chemicals for mosquito relief (not the most ecological way of protection, but better than DDT, which was used in Soviet times).

Photo: Florian Stammner.

Basing on this information, we can say that cutting antlers is seen unhealthy on the long run by herders – even though many opt for it because of a good immediate return. Even though reindeer do not die from this activity, cutting *panty* should be different from cutting sheep’s wool, since the latter’s health is not affected long-term, whereas according to herders reindeer health is negatively affected.

How panty enter the global economy

When the *panty* are cut, a herder gets the equivalent of app. 150-250 Russian Roubles per kg, (maximum 7 EUR, as of 2005). Alaskan herders got 8 USD for one pound of *panty* as early as 1977 (Naylor et al 1980:260), and 30 USD currently¹⁹. This indicates that Russian herders get less than their western colleagues. Nonetheless, herders with big herds can get for their *panty* the equivalent of half a Russian snowmobile in one season. After collection from the herders, the entrepreneur flies the *panty* to a base village and puts them into an underground ice chamber in the permafrost. Here, the *panty*, according to the rules, have to be kept frozen for 20 days. After this period, *panty* are shipped (by boat or helicopter) to one of the centres for drying, if they are not dried in a self-made drying facility.



*Photo 4. In 2000, 30 Tons of frozen panty were shipped from northern Yamal for drying.
Photo: Florian Stammler.*

¹⁹ Information from Gregory Finstad, Reindeer programme, University of Alaska Fairbanks. Email communication from 02 May 2007.

When the *panty* arrive in the south, they can already be unfrozen, and have to be put for about four hours in a dry heating room of 70–72 degrees (Iudin 1993:71). Afterwards, they are put in a wind dryer for 24 hours. This process is repeated until the material is dry.

Then, the collecting enterprise has several possibilities involving various trading routes and middlemen, resulting in end prices reaching from 15 \$ for immediate resale to middlemen to 60\$ directly to Moscow or the Far East (more detailed in Stammler 2004: 113). One defining criterion for the commoditisation of the business is the stage, at which far Eastern entrepreneurs, mostly from China or Korea, enter the business.

In some cases Chinese traders have made it to Yamal, either the capital Salekhard or even Yar-Sale (a reindeer herding village) in order to buy raw material directly from the local deep freezer, for a price of around 15-20 \$ (2005). In this way all the added value from processing goes to the Far East. In other cases Nenets entrepreneurs together with Russians engage in the business more actively themselves, organising part of the processing or transporting. Either the *panty* are shipped by train raw to Moscow, or they are dried in the Yamal Okrug and then shipped to Moscow. In the latter case, the first middlemen from the Far East have to pay +- 60 \$ per kg.

In Moscow, the *panty* business is highly flexibly and unstable. The enterprise bringing *panty* to Moscow calls the phone number of a private house, normally where Koreans or Chinese live. The entrepreneur announces that he has a certain amount of *panty* to sell right on the spot. He gets a call back from a Korean or Chinese businessman, who then comes to meet him and pays for the *panty* right away in cash. This businessman normally does not disclose his identity, nor does he give his own phone number. He organises shipping to his home country, along unofficial trading routes in order to avoid problems with taxes and border guards (bribing increases the costs). In China

or Korea he sells the *panty* on, either as extract for medicine, or chips for restaurants.

Unfortunately, from the point when the *panty* arrive in Moscow, we know almost nothing about the further trade lines. The only information I could get is from a Japanese colleague who did fieldwork on a Chinese market in Seoul in April 1996, where 500 grams of cheap dried *panty* slices were offered for 40,000 South Korean won (\$52), which works out at \$104 per kg. This product is called *Rokkaku*. The traditional Chinese medicine, probably a highly concentrated velvet antler extract, is called *Rokuju* and was sold for 241,071 won per 75g. This gives a price of \$4,185 per kg! (Takakura 1997: 74–89). This huge price difference can only be explained after more research is done on the Far Eastern side in Chinese and Korean language. What we know is that from any city onwards, *panty* business is dominated by very unstable structures, which change very quickly. In some cases in the 1990s, this instability influenced the producers of the raw material in the tundra, where *panty* collectors could not keep their promises and did not deliver goods for the *panty* collected. Therefore, the business has a very unstable reputation among reindeer herders.

Panty-hitchhiking: new trade routes in the 21st century

With a resale price of 60 \$ per kg dry panty (for which you need 3-4 kg fresh raw material), renting helicopters at official prices of 2000 \$ per hour (2006) is not an option anymore. Therefore the flurry of new entrepreneurs at the end of the 1990s (many of them native (Stammler 2005, ch 8)) has disappeared from the scene, and in the whole region only 3 companies survived, which have divided the market among themselves and now operate without competing against each other. The time where herders were the targets of 8 competing helicopters are gone. Nowadays *panty* production is viable from an

economical point of view for a trader, if he can organise 'hitchhiking' on helicopters that are already paid for. Such a situation is more likely to occur in regions with intensive natural resource extraction or preparation for it, such as the Yamal Peninsula. For example, in 2005 the two main traders engaging in the business used transport according to a sophisticated system of sharing, mutual assistance, barter and informal agreements:

A helicopter was used for bringing supplies and a new shift of gas workers to a remote village close to summer pastures of herders on a Saturday morning. The crew of the helicopter were friends with the trader, who also ran a section of the remote village. He invited the crew for the weekend. However, in Russia flying helicopters during night time and on Sundays is forbidden. Therefore, the crew took out the black box of the helicopter, refuelled manually with unofficial fuel from a gas deposit, and flew to all reindeer herders for *panty* collection during Saturday night and Sunday daytime. None of these flights was recorded anywhere. Much of the flying had to be less than 30 m over the ground in order to avoid radar coverage by flight authorities. After a nice relaxing Sunday evening and night, the helicopter was officially refuelled on Monday, taking a gas worker shift back to the city. The helicopter was in addition loaded with *panty* up to the ceiling, overloading it to the very limit. This way the *panty* 'hitchhiked' for minimal expenses to the city, where they were sold on to traders from the Far East.

The other trader partnered with an indigenous entrepreneur and was himself an experienced pilot employed in a leading position in a regional air company. His wife worked as the chief flight dispatcher on one of the main airports in the region. This enabled them to fly with minimal expenses according to similar principles like in the first case. These cost-cutting measures can be seen as making the most efficient use of expensive non-renewable resources, at the same time contributing to

Russia's 'economy of favours' that has become so typical after the Soviet Union (Ledeneva 1998).

The character of income and the nature of money

For herders, the income from this recent commodity, *panty*, challenges the orientation of their economy to subsistence and meat production. From a market point of view, producing *panty* was for at least a decade more profitable than producing meat, but still this new commodity has neither become the only, nor even the major economic activity of the reindeer herders.

One reason for this is the reputation of *panty* cutting among the nomads. A major contribution of anthropology to understanding economic processes was the subjectivity of economic behaviour and the finding that many cultural factors beyond monetary or other forms of calculation influence actors' decision making. One such important factor is the reputation of the income generated from a particular activity. This turns 'the market' into a culturally bounded unit (Carrier 1997, Humphrey & Mandel 2002). Even more, research has also shown that money itself loses its anonymity and universality when it becomes embedded in a system of cultural symbols and hierarchies (Hutchinson 1996).

The perception of the *panty* production and business is very ambiguous among the producers (the herders). The business is considered dirty and mafiotic, and the income is highly risky and unreliable. One year the business might work well, next year it might not, for reasons beyond the influence of herders themselves (e.g. the development of Viagra). Therefore many think it is better not to rely on income from this commodity. *Panty* has therefore always been an additional, supplementary source of income on top of the main reindeer herding production - meat for subsistence and the market. It is noteworthy,

however that the division between commodity and domestic use of a resource should still be conceptualised as two parts within one integrated economic system among herders. Gude-man (1994) has rightly argued that categories such as 'market' and 'community' sphere of exchange do not exclude each other and are not always easily separable in real life. Nonetheless, *panty* in the tundra are produced exclusively for the commodity sphere.

Correspondingly, the things that reindeer herders buy from such a supplementary income are goods or services going beyond the basic needs, such as spices from Caucasus, fruits, items for leisure times, tape recorders, music and the like, as well as expensive equipment such as snowmobiles, expensive services such as university education for the children, or expensive luxury such as housing in town. All these things are not essential for reindeer herders' nomadic lifestyle on the tundra, and all of these are considered a luxury. Thus, income from *panty* enables the herders to increase their standard of living beyond the needs of survival. Some richer herders can afford to buy a snowmobile every second year, e. g. to equip their boys, just as some western school children get a car for their 18th birthday.

This clear cut difference between basic needs and extended non-essential needs allows us to conceptualise *panty* income as a sort of special purpose money (Parry & Bloch 1989). Hutchinson (1996) has shown for the African Nuer pastoralists along similar lines how income from a low prestige business is spent only for non-essential if not unnecessary purposes, but never for economically, let alone culturally prestigious purposes. Hutchinson's informants would not have paid bride prices with 'shit money', gained from carrying the excrements of the rich to the waste deposits in a city. Unprestigious money must not spoil prestigious events or rituals. A similar argument was made by Graetz (2003), who found that African agriculturalists working in small scale gold mining would rather share

their income among working colleagues and friends within the mining communities, then taking the money out of its context and sharing it with relatives in their culturally bounded systems of exchange and trade. They would rather spend this income within the same sphere where it was generated, away from home, e.g. on alcohol in pubs of the mining village, or for entertainment, and all available leisure expenses.

Along similar lines, reindeer herders would rather spend money from *panty* for luxury items such as snowmobiles, TV's, Videocameras, DVD players, or vodka. As I have shown before, most of these items stay outside of the nomadic life so far. If they enter the tundra they are regarded as luxury supplements or entertainment for herders. One might compare this 'special purpose income' with the position of stock exchange incomes among western 'hobby brokers'. The *panty* market is also seen as hectic, unstable, and full of dishonest people, just as the stock exchange. Therefore people do not rely too heavily on this income for their everyday life, but nonetheless like to engage in the business.

This is why the backbone of the reindeer economy in Yamal is still meat production. Counting too much on *panty* income means investing in an unpredictable branch of the economy. The heavy fluctuations on the *panty* market have shown that this is dangerous for herders. However, in spite of its bad reputation, cutting *panty* is still seen as a legitimate source of income, and as Pine (2002:77) has pointed out for Poland "almost any means of obtaining it [money] is legitimate". We could conclude that *panty* for the herders express best their quest for the incorporation of their nomadic economy into world capitalism without becoming detached from the social processes within their communities.

Nash (1994) has found that engaging in the global economy does in many cases not lead to a depletion of subsistence activities. Continuing from there, I would argue that risky economic ventures in the global economy develop best on a solid

stable domestic economic base, here e.g. meat production and tundra exchange. If this basis will continue to be important, the intimate relation between humans and their animals in this form of nomadism will remain intensive and not fall victim to an increasingly dominant ideology of rationalised sustainable development (cf Beach and Stammer 2006). In this connection between the “global” and the “local”, we see the proof against the evolutionary assumption that we have subsistence economies in “pre-modern” societies, whereas commodity exchange takes place in the global economy. Evers (1996) and others point out that both can occur simultaneously in one community, in the reindeer case even using the same resource.

Conclusion and outlook

This paper provided an assessment of a particular adaptation to rapid social and economic change among reindeer nomads of West Siberia. I have illustrated the process of economic integration of a remote arctic community into an international trading network, while at the same time showing how the community managed to maintain their more stable domestic foundation of their nomadic economy.

Basing on ethnography of velvet antler (*panty*) production and trade, I have shown that rapid integration in market adventures should not be seen as a ‘transition’ from one economic form to another. High risk commodity trade does not exclude subsistence and domestic market production. Economic actors in this case rather unite both elements. The case of reindeer herders makes this even more obvious, as it is one and the same resource – reindeer – that is used for engaging in both economic spheres.

The ethnography of *panty*, velvet reindeer antler business between Korean or Chinese customers, Russian traders and Nenets reindeer herders, revealed that different purposes of using one resource result in a clear divide not only of eco-

conomic activity itself but also of spending practice. The divide goes along the lines of basic needs, subsistence, market production for staples, resource sharing (through multiple use of reindeer in the tundra) on the one side, and luxury, entertainment, fun and non-essential needs (through *panty* trade) on the other side. Supporting arguments from African anthropology, the study demonstrated how this divide creates culturally meaningful categories of income, embedded into criteria of reputation, prestige and taboo. I argue that these categories of income follow a culturally bounded logic, which is rational from within the actors' point of view.

Where commodity trade supplements, but does not replace nomadic subsistence lifestyle, money is not merely a generalised anonymous means of exchange, but bound to special purposes and cultural meanings, which are not turned upside down by integration into global economic networks. Thus, in Yamal, and elsewhere in the North, the reindeer herd is still the principle wealth and the supreme form of property (Stammler 2005), not the equipment in town bought with *panty* money or a full bank account. In this context market integration and commoditisation do not always have to be accompanied by a marginalisation of nomads or a change of social strata among them. Commodity trade in Nenets reindeer nomadism does not turn herders into passive victims of globalisation that have to cope with outside pressures. They rather display a lot of agency, taking outside changes as an opportunity to benefit.

However, this does not mean that reindeer nomads are endlessly resilient. On the contrary, they are vulnerable, because unlike many other communities, they rely mainly on one resource. If that resource - reindeer - is gone, only fish can help to satisfy some basic needs, even though it is recognised as being of minor prestige to reindeer herding (poor people's income who cannot afford a big reindeer herd). Industrial development of the reindeer nomads' tundra therefore should pay particular

attention to preserving the principal resource base of their economy.

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The Challenges of Living off the Forest

The Transformation of Forestry Sector in Northwest Russia

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Abstract

Based on the rich, descriptive data of the existing ethnographic accounts this paper explores the aspects of resilience in three different forestry communities. According to the employed retrospective analyses the earlier success of those communities was formed since the time of early industrialisation by the symbiotic coexistence with a local harvesting enterprise. The period of turbulent transformations, however, significantly changes the livelihood patterns of the studied forestry settlements. The research focuses on the changes that the transformation of forestry sector has brought along. It also takes notice of the new trends related to the local employment, changing roles of forestry enterprises and forestry villages on the basis of extensive empirical research. The paper evaluates several topical issues of today's forestry complex and provides insights into the current developmental pathways of today's Russian forest industry from the perspective of forestry villages.

Keywords: Transformation of forestry sector, community resilience, forestry settlements, action research ethnography

Introduction

The structural change in Russia, during the transition period into the new economy, has had a destructive impact on the livelihoods of forestry communities (Autio 2002, Kortelainen & Kotilainen 2006). During the Soviet era, the means of livelihood for forestry villagers were more diversified, with a variety of small production plants and workshops that used wood as a raw material. After the collapse of the Soviet regime and during the economic reorganisation many forms of small scale industrial plants and workshops disappeared. Today forest harvesting companies are still the biggest local employers in forestry villages, and wood procurement has a huge impact on the local livelihoods. Furthermore, forestry in Russia has been one of the main sources of wealth for the rural population. Indeed, in contrast to coal, oil, and gas, the raw materials of the forest are for the most part renewable, when managed and used properly. Therefore the development of the forest sector, in the territories rich in such resources, can be regarded as the means to maintain, or even improve the life of the local communities by providing employment opportunities, higher standards of service, and local infrastructure. (Södör, Järvelä & Tarasov 2005).

In all societies, the impact of procuring wood depends essentially on the society's structure, on its forest ownership, and on the way the procurement is organized. It should be emphasized that the concept of forestry in Russia differs from that of some other countries, specifically those in the West (Petrov & Lobovikov 2001, Wardle et al. 2003). In Russia the concept at work is that of *forestry complex* that refers to the system of forestry and to the forest industry. Forests are primarily state-owned, and forest management is the responsibility of state-owned territorial *forest management units (leshoz)*. The tasks of such forestry systems include forest planning, forest fire protection, and protection from diseases and from wreckers, forest restoration, various forest care tasks, protection of biodiversity,

preparation of forest stock for forest users (harvesting companies), control of forest use, and various other functions (Kortelainen & Kotilainen 2002, Piipponen 1999, Blam et al. 2005, Södör, Järvelä & Tarasov 2005). The privatised *forest industry* consists of various industrial fields that are connected to one another: timber harvesting, wood processing, pulp and paper mill industry, and forest-chemical industry. Timber harvesting, as part of the forest industry, concentrates mainly on the wood harvesting and processing tasks. Harvesting enterprises acquire forest concessions from the local forest management unit for industrial loggings for a maximum of 49 years. In the context of the present study, the *forestry villages* are understood as locally embedded industrial production units, which belong to the forest industry complex and are characterised as partly or entirely dependent on wood harvesting activities (Blam et al. 2005; Södör, Järvelä, & Tarasov 2005).

The paper aims to evaluate several topical issues of today's forestry livelihoods in Northwest Russia by applying community resilience framework. Based on the rich, descriptive data of the existing ethnographic accounts of life in three different forestry villages this article starts with a retrospective overview of the soviet forest industry, its formation and development since the time of early industrialisation. The paper then focuses on the changes that the newly introduced logging technology and harvesting techniques have brought along. It detects current strategies of logging practises in the field. It also takes notice of the new trends related to the local employment, changing roles of forestry sector and forestry villages on the basis of extensive empirical research. The main goal of the present article is to provide insights into the developmental pathways of today's Russian forest industry from the perspective of forestry villages.

Community Resilience

The fundamental question of the present research project is how the forestry villages cope with economic transition in Northwest Russia. However the main subjects of the villages are not easily apparent. At a first sight, the subjects are the forestry companies and the habitats of forestry villages, but at a deeper level, the study is focused on tracing the ways their symbiotic coexistence forms, reproduces, and maintains the assets for local livelihoods and for community resilience.

Internationally, new impetus to promote sustainable development was triggered by the widespread adoption of the term "Sustainable Livelihoods". The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development claimed in its Agenda 21 to advance "sustainable livelihoods for all"; this was to motivate and activate local actors to move towards a more sustainable way of life. Sustainable livelihood was introduced in terms of resource ownership, and access to meet basic needs and to acquire livelihood security, especially in rural areas (Singh & Gilman 1999; Carney 1999). However, the sustainability of livelihoods depends intrinsically upon the community's resilience to cope with, and recover from shocks and stresses. Therefore, in this research sustainability of forestry livelihoods is studied by mapping the resilience of the forestry communities. Community resilience is defined within this study as the ability of communities to cope with stresses and disturbances as results of social, economic, political and environmental changes (Adger 2000; Folke 2001). The concept of community resilience is characterised in the scholarly literature by elastic qualities as hardiness and invulnerability. Rather than meaning resistance to development and changes, community resilience implies a buffer to recover from negative events, and it accounts for the capacity to successfully adapt to changing circumstances (Langridge et al. 2006; Lebel 2006; Redman 2003; Gunderson & Holling 2002).

In the present study the concept of community resilience aims to build a link between different factors of resilience. The diagram in Figure 1 provides a tool to more easily understand the complex interaction between the most important factors that have an impact on the outcomes of social resilience. The category Dynamics of Community Resilience embraces the economic, social, institutional, and ecological elements, all of which are components of sustainability. The term resilience in the present context is conceptualized as a dynamic interaction between the internal and external risks and the protective processes of a livelihood system, through which the aforesaid system reinforces its continuity without losing its original function, structure and identity.

In the case of a forestry community, community resilience depends on the surrounding natural resources, the community assets and the economic activities practiced in the analysed community. State ownership and governance of the forest resources are fundamentally linked to the total resilience outcome. While the nature of resilience, from an ecological perspective, can be perceived in terms of availability of timber, it intrinsically depends on the levels of forest restoration and governance. Decreased resilience in the forestry communities may be associated, for instance, with the lack of forest stock for harvesting. Enhanced resilience in human-natural systems again, will not only improve local livelihoods and local economy, it will also strengthen many other intangible assets considered important for the community's wellbeing.

Is resilience a relevant concept for evaluating forestry communities? The study aims to assert the hypothesis that the resilience of forestry communities is ultimately determined by combination of the assets, strategies, activities, external/internal risks and the effects of constant policy changes, both spatially and chronically. In general, all the above factors are constantly interacting to mould the domain of resilience, and therefore providing also the preconditions for the sustain-

able livelihoods of a forestry community (Södör, Järvelä, & Tarasov 2005).

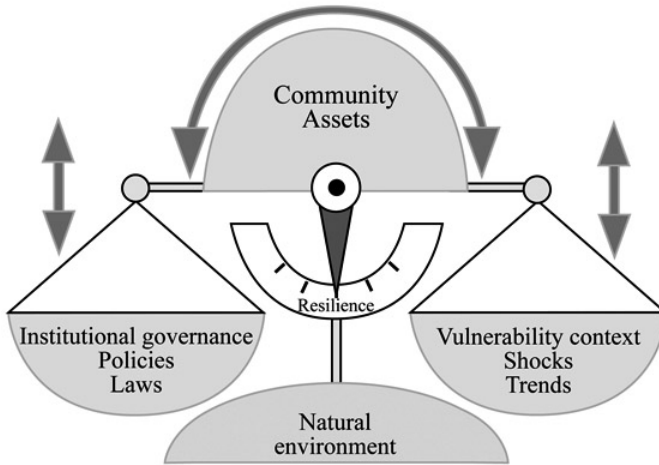


Figure 1. Dynamics of Community Resilience: A simplified view of the interaction between the most important factors of community resilience (Södör, Järvelä, & Tarasov 2005).

Data and methods

A methodological strategy was developed by the research team (see also Södör, Järvelä, & Tarasov 2005), with the aim to combine the ethnographic field research with the simultaneous search and collection of relevant information on the local application of particular social development principles, in this case sustainable development principles. This research strategy, named Action Research Ethnography (ARETNO), tries to reconcile realism and social constructionism by closely observing the everyday life in action, that is, in the pursuit of livelihoods and in the framework of cultural tradition. This is essentially a qualitative strategy based on an ethnographic approach that concentrates on the local, bottom-up ideas and views of the

subject. Empirical research methodology, therefore, is applied to examine key informants and stakeholders in the villages, so as to determine and measure the local assets and resources for sustainable livelihoods. In addition, documentary materials, including history, are collected to connect and compare local case studies, thus producing a more general framework of the socio-economic and socio-cultural driving forces within the analysed region. The ARETNO methodology includes a careful consideration of the ethical concerns related to the local stakeholders through out the whole course of the study and during the dissemination phase of the results. The basic principle is to maintain the confidentiality of all respondents with regard to any information they may provide, by citing them anonymously, unless the information was given in an expressly non-confidential manner, such as, in a public forum or accompanied by stated agreement of the individual for direct citation using his or her name (Södör, Järvelä, & Tarasov 2005).

The fieldwork in the forest villages of North-West Russia was performed between 2003-2007. This comprised 18 intensive field trips lasting from one to two weeks at a time. The village of Mondoma was the main case study of the research project, therefore it received most visits. The complete list of the field research data presently consists of 71 recorded in-depth individual and group interviews; unrecorded discussions with various stakeholders, and observations that are both reported in a field diary. A part of the core interview material is from key informants like the company management, entrepreneurs, and public officials; another is from the employees of the local service, logging, and other industries. The overview of the village life and its historical background was further strengthened by interviews with older members of the community who are now retired. The in-depth interviews were conducted in Russian by the members of the project. The recorded interviews were later translated and transcribed into English by a Russian-native translator.

Description of the research field: Three villages - different cases and combinations of livelihoods

Although industrial forestry villages generally share a common historical heritage, there are yet wide varieties of crucial factors that equip some of them with assets and leave other in a less favourable position amid the new market economy. The analysed villages Mondoma, Shugozero and Kurba (see Figure 2) were purposefully chosen for their difference, as it was considered to be an appropriate method to bring variety and enhance the comparative aspect of the study. In order to assess the authenticity of the observed trends in forestry livelihoods, also additional irregular single visits have been paid to various other forestry villages, forestry enterprises and their logging sites. Whereas examining the livelihood dynamics in the main village (Mondoma) of the present study provides a comprehensive picture of life in a sole forestry village, an investigation across multiple sites in the field remains a key factor in revealing the existing diversity. The comparative approach exposes the complexity of the wider context, and provides with stronger analytical tools to assess smaller localities in a wider Russian context, or even to trace the trends at a global level.



Figure 2. Map of research sites (Södör & Järvelä 2007).

Mondoma village is an example that effectively illustrates through its history how village development was influenced by the prevailing state ideology. The village started to grow as a result of the local company's logging activities in the 1960s. From the point of view of its creation and development, Mondoma represents an industrial settlement where the local forest harvesting enterprise and its work always played a crucial role. Due to its location, in comparison with other logging centres of the company Beloserski Lespromkhos, the village turned out to be strategically central. At present with a population of about 1,100, Mondoma is the main timber processing centre of the company with a lower landing, completely renovated modern sawmill, and a port. Access to the Volga-Baltic navigation channel enables the direct loading of large river and seagoing ships with logs or wood products. The major activity of this centre is the transportation of wood from the other branches of the company to the centre's shipping and processing facilities. As a result of a long-term symbiotic coexistence of the company and the village community, Mondoma can represent a plausible example of sustained development.

Kurba is a village that was purposefully founded for logging activities in the 1960s. Even though the village (with circa 300 inhabitants) is located at the heart of Leningrad region, it is remote and almost cut off from the rest of the world. Being highly dependent on logging activities, the development of the village was halted by the bankruptcy of the original local harvesting enterprise in the 1990s. Nowadays, although there are already some signs of economic recovery, the lack of a permanent local logging company is perceived as the biggest drawback for the village's development. The distant location seems to be partially responsible for the lack of other industrial activities besides the timber harvesting in the area. In addition, location on the territory of the natural park Vepsky Forest limits harvesting operations in the area.

Sugosero is a rural village with about 3000 inhabitants. It features a variety of livelihoods and it is situated in an area rich in forest resources. An agricultural enterprise, heir of the former Soviet kolkhoz, is the biggest single employer in the village having approximately 200 employees. Additionally, there are numerous employment opportunities in the public sector. The village has a local hospital, a polyclinic and a home for the elderly, which is financed from the regional budget and whose clients come from all over the region. The service sector is growing and numerous small shops are opened in the village. In the logging business, there are presently activating four or five different companies; however, they employ a relatively small percentage of the local work force. Additionally, because these companies are registered in the nearby town, they pay no taxes to the local budget, and therefore harvesting activities have relatively little impact on the local development.

The transformation of the forestry sector: The Formation of Soviet forestry

The industrialization of Russia dates back to 1929 when the development of industrial production was considered most important task for the progress of the national economy. The targeted speed and scale of the national production envisaged by the development plans of the soviet state could not be reached and maintained without mechanisation. The importance of forestry among other industries, resided in the providing of timber for rebuilding the Soviet economy before and after the II World War. The industrialisation was started along the early Five Year Plans by opening up the natural resources to extensive exploitation. The funds obtained from the export of timber were used to import large quantities of foreign machinery to equip the growing industry with modern processing facilities. Foreign companies were employed for installing the new machinery and training the soviet workers (Pochinkov

2004, Autio 2002b, Moran 2001, Osminskii et al.1960). Following the state's development strategy, temporary logging enterprises were increasingly founded along the floatable rivers and railroads from late 1920s till late 1960s. These new logging companies were originally planned to be mobile by nature, so that when all of the forests were harvested in an area in 20-40 years, they could be easily transported to another location. (Osminskii et al. 1960, Nikulichev 1999).

At the beginning of the 1930s timber harvesting operations in the country took place mostly in winter. Seasonal workforce was often lent from the local collective farms (*kolkhozes*), because there was hardly any agricultural activity in winter. The typical logging technology of the lumberjacks of that time consisted of an axe, a hand saw and a peasant horse with a sled. While horse-drawn transportation on ice tracks was used in the winter, an abundant network of rivers served as "highways", and facilitating the floating of logs downstream in the spring and summer. Finally, the industrial consumer logs were shipped in the form of big lumber rafts, or by railroad (Pochinkov 2004, Osminskii et al. 1960, Nikulichev 1999, Södör, Järvelä, & Tarasov 2005).

In the earlier days of Soviet forestry there were the limitations like long physical distances, and the use of horsepower that demanded workers to live close to the logging sites. Physical distances were also determined the logging companies, possessing huge forest territories, to create multiple logging centres (as in Mondoma's case). Bearing in mind economic efficiency and final products delivery it was more feasible to organise and concentrate wood processing, cutting into assortments and storage of products in one exploitation centre. This resulted in the development of local wood processing, which satisfied the needs of the exploiting company and of the local community; the excess production was directed to other industry processing destinations. Throughout those times the timber industry faced serious problems with labour recruitment. Many people came to work from other regions, but they often left before the end of the

logging season. The seasonal nature of the logging operations and the high turnover of unskilled labour did not help increase the productivity; instead it resulted in additional problems and a continuous need for work reorganisation. In order to create permanent cadre of workers it was necessary to change the logging technology radically, and to improve the living conditions of the employees and their families. (Osminskii et al. 1960, Nikulichev 1999).



Photo 1. Removing branches with axes was heavy manual work still in the 1960s (Golubiova 1967).

Due to the forestry sector's low output and contribution to the national economy, the State began to concentrate more on technological modernisation. In 1937 appeared the first tractors to transport logs out of the forest, and ten years later emerged the first trucks. The first technological modernization in the 1940s had a significant impact on the development of the logging industry. At the same time, the timber harvesting operations became year-round activities. Most of the labour intensive tasks at the logging sites were mechanized. Lumberjacks got

armed with the electric chain saw and gasoline engine driven “Druzhba” chain saw in 1950s, which facilitated and speeded up the work. The timber was hauled to the upper storages by tractors and winches. The logging companies built networks of forest roads for trucks and narrow-gauge railways to arrange the transportation of timber to the lower storages, to the floatable rivers or to the national railroad system. In the lower storages the timber was sorted, and then single-type product batches were shipped further. (Redko 2002, Osminskii et al. 1960). Also women were substantially employed in the industrial production. They often performed heavy manual post-harvesting tasks (see Photo 1).

The forestry settlements developed along with industrial plants. During the 1950s and 1960s the harvesting enterprises gathered pace in constructing well-organized workers’ settlements with shops and canteens, schools and medical aid stations, clubs and libraries (see Figure 4) (Nikulichev 1999, Osminskii et al. 1960). Although, these settlements were planned to house workers for temporary logging operations only, they expanded and transformed into permanent villages with the entire infrastructure needed for the everyday life. The timber harvesting companies played the leading role, since they had the largest impact on a village's life. They were the main employer, provider of infrastructure, and local authority (aside from the local municipality). This explains why the village communities had such a high level of trust in their logging company (Redko 2002; Pochnikov 2004; Järvelä, Södör, and Tarasov 2004a).



Photo 2. Completion of the village club house (From the archives of Mondoma school).

The period of transformation

The logging technology progressed with big leaps during the first decades of the Soviet state. Further, the rather slow technological development was largely caused by the prevailing economy that did not encourage the industry to improve the quality of the forestry technology, mostly because of cheap work force, dictated prices and lack of competition (Timoshina 2006). As a result the traditional domestic harvesting technology which was prevailing in 1970s and 1980s has remained in use until today. This means that hard manual labour is still employed in a high proportion in harvesting and in production operations (Blam et al. 2005). Therefore in the context of the new market economy, the Russian forestry appears evidently backward, described as labour intensive and with low profitability.

At the time of planned economy, the forest use was officially determined to acquire the maximum wood supplies for

the national economy with the minimum expenditures. The instructions were simple: close to the consumers, satisfying the needs, and as cheap as possible. Most popular, naturally, became concentrated clear-cutting. The first marks of over-harvesting appeared in 1970s. The growing volumes of clear-cutting, dictated by the planned economy and the needs of the industry, caused the depletion vast areas of forests in the European part of Russia. Between the 1970s and the 1990s, the logging volumes stabilized and the extent of forest restoration (statistically) nearly matched the areas of clear-cutting. (Blam et al. 2005, Pochinkov 2004).

The economic recession that followed the collapse of Soviet Union resulted in the vast destruction of rural livelihoods and in a dramatic decrease of the living standard. In the small rural towns most of the production plants and factories were closed, while in the countryside the agricultural kolkhozes went bankrupt. In the period of economic paralysis, the forest industry remained in many places the only provider for local employment, producer of income, and local tax revenues (Järvelä, Södör, and Tarasov 2004a). The fact that considerable proportions of the Soviet time forestry enterprises did not possess their own wood processing facilities, since the logging companies were originally specialized only in delivering wood for industrial processing in other regions, made their business very vulnerable to the domestic markets. The continuous use of outdated logging technology and inefficient harvesting practices were translated into the continuous reduction of harvesting volumes by the logging companies, and partially caused by the sharp fall of the domestic demand of raw material (Södör, Järvelä, & Tarasov 2005). In the processing industry outdated processing equipment and the lack of investments still hold back production volumes (Tilli et al 2004). Between 1991-2001 logging volumes were reduced almost by threefold. In 2000 the export of sawn timber reduced in 2 times and the export of round timber increased to 35%. Accordingly, the period of eco-

conomic transformation is highly characterised by the selling of round wood to the West, rather than processing it into products locally (Grigoryev 2002, Pochinkov 2004).

The current state of forest industry can be described in following facts: While Russia employs up to 8% of its industrial workforce in the logging industry its volume of GDP remains only at 2.5%. Having almost one fourth of the forests of the planet, its returns from wood product exports globally amount to only 4%. It is not surprising, because unprocessed circular timber is the basic article for export, and the product with the smallest added value (Tarasov 2006, see also Grigoryev 2002, Pochinkov 2004).

Exploitation of natural resources

The general conceptions of how to use the natural resources have been changed since the bygone deep Soviet times. At that time, the planned economy was strictly imposed from the higher echelons. The Soviet system shaped its citizens to become professional workers and to rigidly fit in to the national economy. Within the structure of the forest industry complex, the forestry settlements were just the plain *industrial production plants* where economic efficiency was the sole criteria to be applied and followed (see the cases of Mondoma and Kurba).

One might think that the local people remained passive and did not vocally express their concerns related to the sustainable use of the local forests. In fact, despite that the forest and land were owned by the state, the Soviet model of forest industry resembles the model of *community forestry*. As for example in Mondoma and Kurba, it would have been impossible to make the distinction between the village community and the company's logging centre, in the earlier days. The inhabitants' voices have been heard and taken into consideration, especially in matters of living environment. Although the residents of these industrial villages first came to work as intruders, their

relationship with their natural living environment changed once becoming "natives". The fact that the "exploitation of natural resources" had to be replaced with the "responsible and sustainable use of natural resources" is clearly visible in the history of Mondoma village. The local company acknowledged already in 70s that if they would follow the orders received from above, they will run out of the forest stock in 10-15 years:

"First it was planned to harvest a certain amount of timber around here in 20 years time [in Mondoma], and then leave this village and move to some other, untouched spot [...] 70% of such villages stopped functioning in several years, while we managed to reach some sustainability and stability here."
(Male, deputy director of the local harvesting company, Mondoma).

Today the use of the new technology means that most of the manually conducted work phases will be gradually mechanised. Growing volumes of timber will be cut by harvesting complexes, consequently the upper storages at logging sites will become out of date, and most of the small forestry villages seem to lose their importance in the wood procurement chain. The intensification of logging operations has risen concerns about the sufficiency of wood resources. Although the growing logging volumes do not necessarily indicate over logging, because increased volumes can be based on forest stock that previously was physically unreachable or could not be reached with older technology or techniques, the forests are often depleted around forestry villages. Still in 1970s the normal distance to a company's logging site was about 30km on average. Nowadays the logging sites of a company could be as far as 60-70km, and that is still in the limits of "normality" and transport profitability for a company (especially in Leningrad region). Concerns about the "drastic" changes perceived in the local environment are expressed especially by the older generation of forestry communities. The elderly women clearly remember

that in 1960s the forest was still growing behind their garden, in contrast nowadays wood is fetched from as far as 100km distance:

If the logging company stops wood harvesting, there is nothing else to do here. It will happen some day, I know that. The trees will be cut, sooner or later, and life here will stop. They do re-forest, but the trees grow really slow, you know that – a hundred years... And they really cut a lot (Female, pensioner, Mondoma)

The people of working age generally have a more neutral opinion about harvesting activities. They tend to be more informed about sufficiency of available forest stock; besides, they know that the growing volume of timber is nowadays acquired by using more effective and ecological selective logging techniques:

They [the forest harvesting enterprise] plant new trees annually, I consider this kind of activity as preserving the nature. Well, I guess the old trees should be taken away in order to let the young ones grow in better conditions. Well, it's half and half, harm and use (Female, office worker, Mondoma)

Surprisingly, none of the scrutinised villages suffered from the lack of forest stock. Furthermore, there are signs that under the conditions of market economy and partially under the pressure of western consumers the logging companies are moving towards more transparent business and that they are adapting to ecologically and socially sustainable operating strategies. The certification of companies' ecological and socio-logical policies is accepted as the best guarantee to perform transactions with a Western counterparty. Although, being small and remote, the analysed forestry villages are part of the global transnational wood business and their livelihoods at the moment highly depend on the western markets. For example the strikes at paper mills in Finland in

2005 had immediate negative impacts on the wood procurement in the form of diminished export demand in Mondoma. On the other hand, the rebuilding process after the 2004 Tsunami (in Asia) caused an increase in the demand for sawn timber products in Asia.

Harvesting and processing practices

Traditionally the Russian harvesting system relies mainly on whole-tree harvesting with manual felling, in which the trees are limbed and skidded to an upper storage, and then the obtained logs are transported to the lower storage to be sorted and cut into the desired assortments. At present there are applied various combinations of manual or mechanized felling and assortment technologies (see Photo 3). The Scandinavian assortment-harvesting technology, consisting of a harvester and a forwarder, is emerging but because of some specificities of the Russian forests, the lack of skilled and motivated labour, and the high price of the new technology the old system remains often more appropriate. Proper harvesting methods are determined mostly by the technological potential of a company, and by availability of human resources (see also Karvinen, Vällky & Torniainen 2005, Södör, Järvelä, & Tarasov 2005).

The case of Mondoma shows that new logging methods introduced in the 1990s enabled to free some employees from the logging process, and use their potential when starting the local wood processing plant. Other benefits brought along led often to a more ecological, economically efficient, and more profitable harvesting. In selective logging, for example, the logs are cut by chainsaw into the desired assortments at the stump, and then moved to an upper storage for sorting. Although the method has lower manpower efficiency in volume terms than mechanical logging, it provides with a more even quality, which ensures a better price for wood batches. The new processing technologies also enable using low-grade deciduous

wood, which in Soviet times had practically no demand in the domestic market as there was no industrial technology available to process it, and it was considered to be a low quality species with no local value other than for heating. Nowadays aspen and birch pulpwood have their increasing share in the export. (Södor, Järvelä, & Tarasov 2005).

Currently, there are several factors that determined the enterprises to start modernising their harvesting practices. In reality this process is embodied most often by the usage of modern harvesting equipment. However, the economical importance of tools and technologies for the local deep processing of wood, and the potential of waist wood reprocessing is widely understood. According to technical estimations, only about 53 percent of the felled timber is actually available for further processing, therefore the utilisation of wood residues has remained a challenge for years. The example of Mondoma shows that when equipped with advanced technologies and handled properly, there could be practically no waste left during harvesting and processing activities. The local wood processing may favour the use of wood residues, as it significantly expands production and raises profitability, at the same time it may stimulate the development of a new type of wood processing-related small-scale entrepreneurship. Unfortunately most logging companies, at the moment, cannot even think about investing in such production technologies.



Photo 3. Logging teams are often assigned the motor saw logging technology, and accompanied by the Russian skidding tractor.

Photo: Uuue Södor.

The low level of production technology, insufficient investments and the lack of deep timber processing facilities are seen as the main factors that hinder the development of today's Russian forest industry. Taking into account the characteristics of these harvesting enterprises to the list should be also added the insufficiency of forest roads, and the increasing costs of transportation and of energy. The responsibility to maintain the social services and infrastructure is considered an additional burden that may slow down the economic growth of a company (see also Blam et al. 2005, Leonov 2006). According to the empirical results of the study, there can be detected a tendency of the Russian forestry companies to extensively orient themselves towards the Western markets.

The Russian forest industry is caught in a dilemma of exporting unprofitable unprocessed timber and having limited capacity for domestic processing. The deep processing of wood is considered to be a substantially crucial point for the further development of the Russian forest industry complex. It is believed to be obtained more through orientating on the domestic market, which already is recovering from the economic recession (see also Pochinkov 2004, Leonov 2006). The protective effect of higher export duties on unprocessed timber ordered in 2006 by president Putin to promote domestic processing is currently highly disputed. Earlier the players in the forest industry were divided into winners and losers according to their geographical location, and their access to the western markets. The harvesting enterprises closer to borderlands tended to concentrate more on transactions with round timber, while those in distant locations tended to invest in the processing activities. Now there are indications that such a steep increase in custom duties on raw timber would turn western industries to other sources of supply. That means another shock therapy especially for borderland regions where the logging companies have very limited processing options or even none at all. The Russian state seems expecting that such an export tariff would raise the inter-

est of Western companies to invest in processing in Russia. After all, it is questionable whether Western companies are encouraged enough when seeing that Russian state itself considers the field too risky and unprofitable.

Employment

The significance of the forest sector as the main source of wealth for the rural population, the biggest local employer and the biggest provider of tax money for the analysed regions, remains particularly high in 1990s. The restructuring of the labour market, the reorganisation of work, the impacts of technological development and globalisation have transformed the field of current Russian forestry sector, making it more diverse and complex. The emerging new trends had an implicit impact on the resilience of these forestry villages. On the one hand, the use of new technology results in decreasing options for local employment. A pair of forwarder and harvester tractor can easily replace logging teams of 20 workers, consequently involving less people in productive logging activities. On the other hand, the new equipment requires highly qualified and skilled workers. To complicate matters further, often there are not enough locally available, motivated and skilled employees for the business.

Reorganisation of work

The impact of gaining economic efficiency can be seen in the changed ways of organising work. For example the need for tight networks of logging centres has substantially decreased, since there are not enough people left in villages to put logging teams together. Furthermore, it would be economically unviable to put together workers from different villages as it becomes time consuming, inconvenient and unprofitable. In the village of Mondoma, the logging teams of the harvesting company are

transported on a daily basis from the nearby town, Belosersk, and also as much as two-thirds of the saw mill employees commute from there. The men from Mondoma work as truck drivers, machinery repairers and perform other various maintenance tasks. Surprisingly, no locals work on conductive manual harvesting tasks (selective logging). The motivated male labour in Mondoma, to a large extent, has acquired professions that are better paid, valued, and that offer a permanent secure employment. In addition, there are clear indications that the younger generation refuses to work with poorly designed domestic tractors. When there is a need to update the technical equipment, it is necessary to keep in mind the fact that the older generation is rather afraid and reluctant to be trained to operating a modern harvesting tractor:

"Working with them is so dirty and hard; caterpillar-tread tractors creak, scream and tremble. They are in constant need of repair; the operators are covered in motor oil and their hands are covered with scratches. Strong, healthy guys would rather work with a chainsaw. They might earn less than the tractor operators, but even for more money, they won't take the tractor. Nevertheless, people know that in order to survive, they do not have other options other than to work. We can instruct them and train them in work methods and how to use technology. But we don't give them axes any more." (Male, deputy director of the local harvesting company, Mondoma).

The emergence of the new technology is accompanied by a sharp rise in the extent of income segregation. However, the salary level is not the only motivating factor. People in the villages appreciate stable and more or less convenient work. Manual selective logging with a chainsaw is considered rather a hard exhaustive physical work that nowadays tends to draw more the attention of those who live in small rural towns, who do not have other options for stable employment and income.

In Shugozero the number of local people employed by the forestry sector is relatively low, only 160 of circa 3000 inhabitants. The local respondents are convinced that young people would not work in manual logging tasks, but rather leave to work in the city:

“Besides, the young leave the village, and the retired or middle-aged people do not have a burning desire to work in forestry. And the salaries of harvesters are not that large, approximately 15000 rubles a month, and the job is rather dangerous and the conditions are harsh, so the young tend to leave, and the people who remain here are those who have no choice but to stay.” (Female, head of local forest management, Shugozero).

Often, the changing policies determine the appearance of diverse practises in concluding forest leasing contracts. Although nowadays it is customary for the leasing contracts contain paragraphs about the employment of local people, and the contribution to the local community, the contracts agreed before 2002 at district level lack such stipulations. Even though today the leasing contracts are undertaken at the level of local forestry management units, the situation still has not eased off:

“When we leased felling sites to the enterprises, one of the major points in the contract was employing local labour force. Russian Forest Company tried to fulfil it, but now, as you know, only Lespromhoz hires local labour, the rest bring their workers from Tikhvin.../ But if the lespromhoz will be sold to foreigners, the foreigners will come to work here and bring their harvesting machines, and of course the local workers are not skilled enough to work with new machines.” (Female, head of local forest management, Shugozero).

According to the local respondents in Kurba today only 6 people are employed by the harvesting company that arrived to conduct logging operations in the area in late 1990s. The branch of the local forestry management unit has altogether 14 lumber-

jacks. In comparison, 380 workers were on the employment list of the local harvesting company in 1960s:

“Just walk around the village, you’ll see it with your own eyes – here are no people left, nobody who would work. Only old people who are getting older and will all die soon. And the young leave the village... And I can’t say that the whole village is filled with alcohol addicted people, no! 3 or 4 addicts we have, but not more. It’s just that we don’t have any people here at all. Very few people we have here. And I don’t think those who moved to the city would come back. It’s much easier to live in the city, you know.” (Female, head of local forest management, Kurba).

There are strong indications in all studied villages that the younger generation, brought up at the end of the Soviet times, is much better adjusted to cope with the modern constant instability. They more easily have grasped new values in the society and live accordingly, including consumption and appreciation of availability of public and social services. Life in straitened circumstances offers no choice for self-fulfilment especially for the women. Beside, the effects of a shrinking public sector are translated into the immediate reduction of employment opportunities for them. Hence, the profession of a forester in the sphere of conductive harvesting operations is often experienced as incompatible or not well-balanced with regard to the family life. As uncertainty and unstable employment in small villages does not correspond with the needs of young families, it determines even the logging workers to move to the towns in the search for more secure working conditions, higher salary and more options of harvesting enterprises to choose from. The picture therefore becomes rather peculiar: while a harvesters move away from the villages, the logging companies bring their employees to work on a weekly shift basis from towns. Therefore, it can be argued that harvesting becomes a nomadic profession, an assignment kind of project, in which case the labour market

is easier to be organised in towns, and workers to be assigned to the needed location.

Coping with workforce shortages

When concentrating the attention on the overall working attitudes of those employed in the forestry industry, it can be noted that, the lack of work motivation and increasing alcohol abuse, also among young people, is mentioned by our respondents several times. During the Soviet times the pressure exercised by the state to maintain work discipline was strong; and discipline was strictly enforced at the work place:

“The rules were very strict. If you’re absent one day for no valid reason, you won’t get your monthly bonus. If you are absent two days in a year, you won’t get your annual bonus. It was tough. And now one returns from work already drunk, cannot get out of the car, even.” (Male, retired forester, Kurba).

The prolonged periods of unemployment and insecure income are blamed to be the main causes for the heavy degradation of rural workforce. Probably a whole generation may be lost as a consequence of the period of economic transformation. Especially in the remote rural areas alcoholism is often mentioned to be a very serious problem. The discussions with the logging managers of other companies than our case villages confirmed, as well, that either there are no workers available locally, or the local workers lack motivation and they have to be looked after constantly, and that they disappear for days after getting their pay checks.

Another serious challenge for the employment policies can be summed up into the following question; where from to get the workers for the new technology? The director of one harvesting company affirmed that it is no easy task to get good employees for demanding tasks on harvesting and forwarder tractors. For instance, he mentioned that when he worked in

Komi, he hired officers from the army air forces, because they were already used to computers and to strict work rules. The other, most typical solution to overcome the lack of workforce is to use harvesting teams of Ukrainians. Most commonly, the Ukrainians have signed a contract for one year ahead. As they come only to earn money, they are motivated, and they work hard:

“The Ukrainians’ daily yield is higher than that of local workers, besides, local people do not seem to be eager to work. When the Ukrainians come here, they have a goal – to earn money. So they work, and work hard.” (Female, head of local forest management, Shugozero).

Often the company rents a house for their logging team. Some team members may have their wives with them. While men are at work the women clean, cook and do laundry at home. The teams of Ukrainians are often assigned the motor saw logging technology, and accompanied by the Russian skidding tractor.



Photo 4. A pair of forwarder and harvester tractor can easily replace logging teams of 20 workers. Photo: Uuve Södör.

The shortage of workforce seems to accelerate the modernisation of logging technology. Recently more and more harvesting complexes (a pair of harvester and forwarder tractor) have been introduced in the fields (see Figure 6). Nevertheless, the local companies cannot always afford to invest in their own harvesting technology; therefore there is a tendency to hire Finnish or Estonian harvesting complexes to carry out logging operations. Although the use of these complexes in most cases is more expensive than the local workforce, they are more efficient – they can work up to three shifts in a row, they can be trusted, and to have them contracted may be more convenient for the managers as well. The difference in productivity between the Scandinavian and the domestic technology is estimated to be more than fivefold. However, their services are costly; every cubic meter harvested has extra cost. The logging managers in the field use rather harsh words to protect their choice of Scandinavian technology over the local workforce. As they put it, in many cases outsourcing the harvesting operations or hiring contractors would be more convenient than to manage the poorly motivated workers who do not care about the new technology, who are inefficient and who need to be constantly controlled. It is not rare that the companies' own workers are replaced by contractors who carry out the harvesting activities, so that a logging company may have no workers at all. Presently, the process of fusions and outsourcing, like in Shugozero, seem to be the least beneficial for the local development, providing minimal taxes and minimal local employment.

Changing roles of forestry companies

Traditionally, the forestry enterprises were founded on densely forested areas and they were defined as local companies, operating locally and employing local inhabitants. Therefore, the industrial forestry villages were bound to a certain forestry enterprise. These forestry communities used to be

highly dependent on the harvesting enterprises for employment, social and physical infrastructure and services. Dependency, however, was mutual. The companies, as well, had to practise their recruitment policies to domesticate the workers and to secure the workforce needs for the industry. Today those companies that still have a monopoly position in the local logging operations, that also inherited a heavy load of social responsibilities as founders of forestry villages and still carry on their social programs, can be called *first generation* harvesting companies. However, the nature of new - *second generation* logging enterprises appears to be rather different. Now, along the newest trends, leasing possessions can be small, sometimes for short periods of time, and they are no longer located close to the territories of a certain human habitation. Especially the newest technology (harvesting complexes) allows companies to be more mobile - nomadic.

In the case of Shugozero, four-five different companies work side by side and have different leasing plots that are not necessarily concentrated into one spot. As ownership of forest leasing concessions acquired through auctions may consist of several plots that are far from one another, the old patterns of employment are often replaced with new ones. The consequence of the fact that enterprises increasingly transport their harvesting teams from the nearby towns is that logging operations have a minimal impact on the local employment. The tendency of the logging companies to get more mobile and to concentrate their processing plants in bigger centres, alienates further the forestry enterprises from local communities. For example the closing of small sawmills in Shugozero and Kurba translates not only into the scarcity of options for local employment, but it also means the lack of wood residues, which the inhabitants used to buy cheaply in order to heat their own households.

In the light of the facts presented above, the question that comes forward is whether the forest harvesting enterprise

represents the leader of local development or it is simply an enterprise focusing on its business transactions, solely interested in maximising its profit. The involvement of the *first generation* logging companies in the local development was often contradictory. Since 1990s the responsibility for providing with social assets has been passed from the state enterprises to the local municipalities. However, the emergence of competitors like new private companies and entrepreneurs in the timber harvesting sector is presently leaving room for frictions over the use of the infrastructure that was originally built by the local first generation enterprises. There are also conflicts with regard to the shared responsibility for maintaining these infrastructures.

The building and maintaining forest roads is the best example illustrating the importance of locally built and maintained assets. Since the construction and maintenance of forest roads is necessary for harvesting activities, these roads, without doubt, still belong to and are maintained mainly by the companies of the first generation. However, the new timber harvesting companies that use the same roads, as well as other infrastructure, but who are not required to, and do not, contribute to the maintenance of the aforementioned roads, are considered to be, in most cases, "free riders" (Södör, Järvelä, & Tarasov 2005). Unfortunately, the current forest ownership and forest codes do not encourage the locally sustainable forest management. It is clear that these companies, with forest leasing contracts shorter than 5 years, which amount to some 72% of the existing forestry companies (Tarasov 2006), would neither invest in the local timber processing, the building of forest roads, nor perform reforestation and contribute to community development (Södör, Järvelä, & Tarasov 2005, Holopainen 2004).

The dissolution of the symbiosis between the logging companies and the forestry villages is the most unfavourable development. The disintegration of the forestry sector is at present sharply separating the business from the social domain.

Consequently, there is a risk that under the conditions of the new market economy, the power and interest of local enterprises in the local community matters may decrease. This is an alarming situation for the municipalities that are still too weak to take full responsibility for their social and physical infrastructure, since they lack both the financial means and the necessary experience for an efficient management. It has been shown through empirical observation that, at present, the social infrastructure in the forestry villages was preserved best only in those cases where it was maintained by the forestry enterprise (e.g. in Mondoma) (Södör & Järvelä 2007). The socioeconomic status of the inhabitants in a large number of populated areas and forestry villages is directly influenced by the economic reforms taking place in the forestry sector. Certainly, the preserving of industrial plants with enormous infrastructures and an inherited heavy load of social services cannot be accommodated competitively to the world economy. The current reforms, which imply reducing work places and selling unprofitable units in forestry enterprises, may not necessarily serve the local social policies. Even so, there is a consensus among the industry and the local authorities that it is not possible to save all the forestry settlements. (see also Leonov 2006, Blam et al. 2005).

Conclusions

The analyses of the risk management and the level of community resilience in the history of the forestry settlements reveals the wide spectrum of mechanisms through which the chosen settlements and the corresponding local forestry enterprises cumulate their capacity to cope with and adapt to stress factors. In the case of forestry communities, the resilience is formed through the dependency of surrounding natural resources, of economic activities practiced in the community, and of community assets (see Figure 1). The state ownership and the

governance of the forest resources are fundamentally linked to the total resilience outcome.

In the forestry settlements that live off the forest, in which the livelihoods are entirely dependent on the timber harvesting activities, all inhabitants appear to know that without logging and wood processing there are no positive prospects for the village. The biggest risk in these forestry communities is often associated with the lack of sufficient forest stock for harvesting. Resilience of a community in this case is highly dependent on the level of forest restoration, maintenance and governance. Besides, according to the empirical results the sustainability of harvesting operations can be enhanced by using more ecological harvesting technologies and techniques. Surprisingly, none of the scrutinised villages suffered from the lack of forest stock. The major risks for local resilience were instead associated with the ever-changing policies, the growing pains of municipal reforms and with the transformation of the harvesting industry.

The empirical results of the study clearly indicate that in terms of sustainable forestry livelihoods, it cannot be underestimated the importance of *first generation* companies in generating local assets. Over the years, they have invested in timber processing, forest road building, in new technology, reforestation and ecologically sustained logging operations. The social assets built for community wellbeing had always played a remarkable role in the forestry villages. The localities where one dominating company conducts logging operations may still enjoy a considerable input in the community's development. As such, the well integrated cooperation between stakeholders may have fruitful results in local assets-building and therefore enhances the community's resilience. The findings of the study strongly indicate that the logging companies of *second generation* are no longer clearly identified as local companies. These enterprises display strong tendencies towards out-sourcing, and dilution of local centeredness in their business transactions, and their fusion policies concentrate more on economic efficiency.

The current forest ownership and forest code do not encourage the locally sustainable forest management. It is clear that these companies, with short forest leasing contracts would not invest in the local timber processing, the building of forest roads, the perform reforestation, or in the community development. The second generation companies, especially when activating in the areas with a higher business concentration and a more diversified economy, tend to focus on basic business activities. Obviously, it does not mean that they cannot be active local stakeholders, but as they do not have deep inherited responsibilities towards the local community, their contribution may remain only at the level of voluntary donations.

The most unfavourable development is the dissolution of the symbiosis between the logging companies and the forestry villages. The disintegration of the forestry sector is at present sharply separating the business from the social domain. Whether or not in today's market economy settings a company should carry on with tasks that normally are part of the state's responsibilities remains a question on its own. Nevertheless, such arguments support the conclusion that if the social responsibility factor is fading away in the business sector, it needs to be compensated through other means. Despite that, the present policies concerning the tax regulation and the distribution of wealth have been perceived by the local stakeholders and inhabitants as absolutely unfavourable to the resilience of the forestry settlements. The current state of the forestry sector strongly indicates the need to find a consensus in defining the future course of the development strategies, which is suitable both for the industry and for the forestry settlements, such a course that instead of ravaging their long-lasting symbiosis, would integrate them as self-standing parts of the functional regional economies.

Finally, it needs to be acknowledged that the original Soviet time single-economy model, in terms of timber extraction for industrial use, appears entirely inappropriate for providing

sustainable local livelihoods in the new framework of market economy. While complete economic dependency on the harvesting activities makes the economy of forestry villages highly vulnerable, investing in the public and private service sector would be an option for providing local employment, and for fighting with the increasing degradation of the rural workforce. Diversifying the options for local livelihood would enable the village communities with more economic strength and assets to cope with the challenges. By preventing the depopulation of rural areas the scarcity of forestry workers can be as well avoided. It is sure that without permanent inhabitants these villages cannot survive, more importantly, one cannot expect the entire Russian forestry sector to be planned and organised with in-brought labour or hired technology from the West.

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Institutional information

International Association of Circumpolar Sociocultural Issues (IACSI)

What is the IACSI?

IACSI is an international scientific association devoted to the study of different socio-cultural aspects related to the Arctic and Antarctic regions. The Association is integrated mainly by scholars from Social Sciences, Anthropology and Humanities, and also from individuals with different backgrounds but interested in these perspectives and themes. As a new association which looks for integration and cooperation, we are also looking for new members in both circumpolar regions.

What are we after?

Assuming the importance that the socio-cultural approach has for a holistic understanding of the circumpolar phenomenon, we have also considered the need to study the "circumpolar theme" in its bi-polar dimension: the Arctic and the Antarctica, in order to look for convergences and divergences under the debates "local/global", "North/South", "development/sustainability", and also looking for the production and transference of knowledge. In this sense, we privilege scientific investigation with reference to:

- Local Communities in Extreme Environments
- Social Problems and Human Well-being
- Participation and Community Attachment
- Habitat and Identity
- Minorities and Native people
- Migration

- Environment and Sustainable Development

What do we do?

- Generate scientific and academic projects bound up with circumpolar socio-cultural issues.
- Organize once a year an international seminar on the circumpolar socio-cultural issues.
- Organize cultural events, such as Films and Documentary Festivals related to these issues.
- Support academically the "Arctic & Antarctic International Journal of Circumpolar Socio-cultural Issues", published annually.
- Encourage relationships and academic collaboration between Universities and Research Centres sited in one or both circumpolar regions.
- Promote international workshops, seminars, and conferences.
- Contribute and award prizes to investigations, and activities concerning to solve problems in one or both circumpolar regions.
- Establish nets with national and international institutions, associations and NGOs linked to the matters which are the interest of the IACSI.

Membership

The members can be individuals or institutions. Individual membership: € 30 (thirty Euros), including one copy of the annual issue of "*Arctic & Antarctic...*". Institutional membership: € 100 (one hundred Euros), including two (2) copies of the annual issue of "A&A-IJCSCI". In order to apply membership, take contact to the chairperson nearest to your geographical location and pay the membership fee to the bank account mentioned in the very same context. Membership fee contact and bank account information:

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Universidad del Salvador (Buenos Aires, Argentina)

Founded in 1956, is the first private university in Argentina, and one of the largest in the country. It has different locations, namely: headquarters in the city of Buenos Aires, in Pilar and Mercedes (province of Buenos Aires), and Virasoro (province of Corrientes).

The main objectives of the Universidad del Salvador are: a) to emphasize academic excellence, b) to value diversity and pluralism, c) to form competent professionals and researchers with a critical judgment, d) to promote the development of knowledge through teaching

and research, e) to impact the society as a whole not only through the theoretical analysis of the problems but also providing the possible solutions, f) to foster the internationalization of the students and staff.

The Universidad del Salvador has international joint programs in both undergraduate and graduate levels. It has different Faculties, namely: Administration Sciences; Economic Sciences; Education and Social Communication Sciences; Law; Social Sciences; Philosophy, History and Literature; Medicine; Psychology and Psychopedagogy; Science and Technology. The University also includes the Graduate Schools of Agronomy, Veterinary Medicine, and Food Technology, and the Schools of Theatre Arts and of Oriental Studies.

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- Research Institutes and Laboratories

Within the scope of the Vice-Chancellorship of Research and Development are Research Institutes which form part of the Vice-Chancellorship itself such as the Institute for Drug Addiction Prevention, the Institute for Environment and Ecology, the International Institute for Complex Thought ; the International Institute of Corporation and Economy Law of the Mercosur and the International Institute of Studies and Formation on Government and Society. Taking these institutes into account, there are within the USAL: 26 Institutes, 4 Centres, 10 Areas and 1 Extension Chair that perform research activities. Similarly, the USAL has 52 laboratories, 1 room for Sylvan Prommetric Examination, 1 AATP room, 3 Weather Stations, 2 Hydrologic Stations, 4 Hydrometric Stations, 1 biotherium, 3 workshops and 1 astronomical observatory.

- Research at the USAL: Thematic Areas

The USAL does research on several thematic areas such as: the environment and sustainable development, health, history, geography, linguistics and literature, psychology, psychopedagogy, psychoanthropology, Eastern studies, agronomy, food technology, biodiversity, the use of the energies, Environmental Law philosophy, complexity, social networks, sociology, social management, local development, volunteer work, territory distribu-

tion, urban planning, heritage, leisure, tourism, informatic development, Mercosur, law, distance learning, mathematics, social communication.

- Multidisciplinary Research Programmes

Within the Research Department multidisciplinary research programmes are coordinated by network with other institutions. At present, there are nine ongoing multidisciplinary programmes being developed; foreign institutions participate in three of them: Geo Cities; Globalization; Circumpolar Studies Program; International University Laboratory of Social Studies. Ethics and Globalized Economy: Volunteer Work and Social Networks; Society and Culture in the Globalization Processes; Legislation Harmonization; District, City and Local Community; Environmental Intergenerational Volunteer Work; Research Management and Administration at the USAL.

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University of Iceland

Faculty of Social Sciences

The Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Iceland is the largest and most robust institution of its kind in Iceland. The Faculty has been a leader in educating managers and experts in the field of social sciences and research in these fields in Iceland for over three decades. The Faculty's role is to increase and impart exemplary and internationally recognized knowledge in the field of social sciences through scientific research, teaching and services to the Icelandic labour market. The Faculty has been a leader in this field from its establishment in 1976.

The Faculty is divided into seven departments:

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Imaginaire du Nord

The International Laboratory for the Comparative Multidisciplinary Study of Representations of the North

**University of Québec in Montreal
(Canada)**

The *Laboratoire international d'étude multidisciplinaire comparée des représentations du Nord* is a centre for research, documentation, publication and expertise on the Nordic and Winter imaginary in literature, film, the visual arts and popular culture. It is intended primarily to encourage comparison of the different Nordic cultures as exemplified by Québec, the Inuit community, Scandinavia (Iceland, Norway, Denmark and Sweden) and Finland. The Laboratory was founded by Daniel Chartier and is directed by him.

The Laboratoire has led to the creation of an open, multidisciplinary research network, based on a decentralized yet collective work plan and supported by advanced information technologies. The research objectives of the Laboratory are three-fold:

(a) To study Québec literature and culture from a northern perspective by examining the aesthetic use of the North as a component and the underlying issues, while bearing in mind a more general and dialectic objective, which is the establishing of the parameters for a definition of northern culture.

(b) To carry out a comparative study of the different literary and cultural forms produced by Québec, the Inuit community, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Denmark, Greenland, English Canada and Finland.

(c) To determine how representations of the North operate and are received both diachronically and synchronically: how the North, from the myth of Thule to popular representations in the visual arts and film today, constitutes an aesthetic and discursive system that maintains constant tension between the representation of the real and the creation of an imaginary world.

Research and Projects

Since it was set up in 2003, the Laboratory has brought together some 15 researchers from about 10 universities (in Québec, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, France, Israel, Canada, Germany, England, Iceland and Spain) who have used the infrastructure developed at UQAM to study the Nordic imaginary. The Laboratory is a research infrastructure that brings together, in a free and open manner, researchers interested in studying the Nordic and Winter imaginary. In addition to projects directed by associated researchers and dissemination activities, a number of funded research projects are being carried out at the Laboratory on the theory of the imaginary and representations, cultural and literary history, comparative studies, as well as popular and media-based culture.

- Research infrastructure of the International Laboratory for the Comparative Multidisciplinary Study of Representations of the North (Chief researcher: Daniel Chartier)

- Season of severance: winter as a structuring force for the Nordic literary imaginary—comparison of Québec and Finland (Chief researcher: Katri Suhonen)
- Iceland and images of the North / Ísland og ímyndir Nordursins (Chief researchers: Sumarlídi R. Isleifsson and Daniel Chartier)
- The idea of “North” in Québec literature (Chief researcher: Daniel Chartier)
- Towards a cultural grammar of North and the Arctic (Chief researchers: Daniel Chartier and Heidi Hansson)

Teaching

Students may enroll in a research group in the Laboratory. Research groups receive credit in the M.A. and Ph.D. programs of the Département d'études littéraires at the Université du Québec à Montréal. A B.A.-level seminar is offered periodically. Depending on the semester, individual and group work may involve establishing the corpus and analyzing literature and film; it may take the form of a student symposium. About 10 students from different universities work at the Laboratory as paid research assistants. Graduate students are welcome to participate in the Laboratory's research activities. All activities are part of a universal framework in which students contribute as researchers. Lecturers are invited by the Laboratory to come and speak. Postdoctoral researchers also participate in the Laboratory's activities.

Documentary Collection

The Laboratory has one of the largest specialized libraries on the Nordic imaginary and the issues related to its study. Its documentary collection includes 6,000 literary works, essays, films and articles.

Its researchers have developed an innovative series of data banks (containing works, illustrations and quotations) which are continually updated. As of May 1st, 2007, these banks contained some 35,000 records, including:

- An annotated bibliography of more than 6,000 literary works with a Nordic component written by the Inuit community or in Québec, Finland and Scandinavia

- An annotated bibliography of more than 8,000 studies on the Nordic imaginary and Nordic cultural issues
- An annotated filmography of more than 1,000 films
- A bank of more than 11,000 citations related to the Nordic imaginary, classified according to elements, figures, constructs and themes
- A bank of more than 8,000 illustrations of a Nordic nature, described and annotated.

Since the banks are interconnected, they can be queried by means of multiple criteria and key words; these criteria enable users to link thousands of representations of the North derived from literature, the visual arts, popular culture and film.

To perform its work, the Laboratory has premises equipped with 12 computers, 2 servers and a variety of video, photographic, digitization and viewing equipment.

All researchers are welcome to use the Laboratory's resources. Access to the collections and data banks is based on the principle of collective and reciprocal contribution.

Publications

The Laboratory disseminates works on the Nordic imaginary through its own print series and other publications.

The "Jardin de givre" series reissues significant, out-of-print works on the Québec and circumpolar imaginary for research and education purposes.

The "Droit au pôle" series disseminates literary and cultural studies and analyses that enable readers to understand and interpret the Nordic imaginary.

The works published by the Laboratory are distributed by Presses Universitaires du Québec (www.puq.ca)

To contact the Laboratory, please refer to its website:

www.imaginairedunord.uqam.ca, or email:

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Master's Programme and Doctoral School in Cultural Policy

University of Jyväskylä
(Finland)

Cultural Policy - Research and Training

Master's Programme and doctoral school in Cultural Policy form significant centre of excellence on cultural policy studies at the *University of Jyväskylä*.

Both research and training focus on the theories and practices of cultural policy for identifying the challenging problems arising in the framework of international cultural policy. Master's programme and doctoral school locate at the *Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy*.

The aim of studies and research is to interpret and evaluate the role of culture in the context of social, political, economical and technological development. The students get quality teaching and mentoring, provided by national and international experts, preparing them for research and challenging careers that require expert knowledge on broad issues and developments in the fields of arts and culture. The subject areas, upon which the research and training is focused, include actors, instruments and impacts of cultural policy, the relationship between new technologies and arts, access and participation, culture and economy, the position of multiculturalism within cultural policy, and cultural / creative industries. Developing a relevant research methodology within the field of cultural policy is another key principle of our overall strategy. The theoretical viewpoints are derived from the disciplines of political science, sociology, philosophy, social and public policy, or arts and culture studies.

Key areas of research and training expertise:

1. Theory and History of Cultural Policy
2. Cultural Diversity and Citizenship
3. Art World, Culture and Technological Change
4. Actors, Instruments and Impacts

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Foundation for High Studies on Antarctica and Extreme Environments

(FAE, Argentina)

The Foundation for High Studies on Antarctica and Extreme Environments (FAE) is an NGO devoted to know and divulge everything about local community problems in extreme environments as well as Antarctic and circumpolar matters in a broad sense. This task is carried out through an holistic approach - a process of integration that includes a great variety of combined factors: social, cultural, territorial, psychological, economic and environmental ones.

The notion of extreme environment is considered from a point of view which tries to go beyond an ethnocentric notion of “extreme”, namely:

- a) environments with “determining geographic factors” which turn difficult the community life and human settlement, although these native populations develop significant socio-cultural adaptations
- b) environments with “determining social economic factors” which in some cases lead big population sectors further the “resilience phenomena” (survival in spite of serious determining effects) that could happen responding to the demands of the moment or structurally.

Every environmental issue is considered inside “local/ global”, natural/ built-up” and “sustainable /non sustainable” dialectic. For this reason the Foundation attaches great importance to environmental assessment and socioeconomic impact of any human undertaking either local, national or regional.

Teemed up by a body of professionals and scientists from different areas with broad experience on sociological, psycho-sociological, educational, anthropological, and environmental issues, the Foundation tries to find production and transference of knowledge with reference to Extreme Environments in general terms and Circumpolar Regions in particular ones, by means of:

- a) Scientific Research and transference of the results to public and private institutions either national or international with reference to:
Natural and Built-up Environment
Local community
Social Problems
Sustainable Development
- b) Drawing up educational programs for the different levels emphasizing the use of multimedia distance education modality.

Main activities

- a) Generate academic- scientific projects bound up with extreme environments, either natural or built-up as well as convergences and divergences between different circumpolar regions

- b) Publish books and Journals about issues bound to the subjects the Foundation deal with.
- c) Design, develop and assess seminars, intensive academic programs, tertiary and university syllabus for presential and distant education modalities.
- d) Design general policies in areas the Foundation is interested in.
- e) Carry out environmental impact assesment on socio-cultural and socio-economic undertakings.
- f) Promote national and international workshops and /or scientific conferences.
- g) Contribute and award prizes to investigations, and activities concerning to solve problems taken into account by the objectives of the Foundation.
- h) Tend to establish nets with national, foreign and international institutions and NGOs linked to matters which are the interest and purpose of the Foundation.

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Subscriptions

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Authors should submit an electronic copy of their paper in Word format file with the final version of the manuscript by e-mail by attached file to the responsible Editor and the co-Editors:

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