BARENTS STUDIES

Vol. 3

Issue 1 / 2016

BARENTS STUDIES ●● *Peoples, Economies and Politics*

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

Publisher
The Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, Finland, in cooperation with The Barents Institute, UiT The Arctic University of Norway and The Luzin Institute for Economic Studies, Kola Science Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences

ISSN 2324-0652
(Electronic publication: http://www.barentsinfo.org/barentsstudies)

Design and layout
Mainostoimisto Puisto Oy

Cover photograph
Tom Malmanger

Language checking
Pirkko Hautamäki (primary)

Barents Studies: Peoples, Economies and Politics
is published in electronic form.
This journal is an open access publication and is free of charge.

SCOPE OF THE JOURNAL

Barents Studies: Peoples, Economies and Politics is an international journal that publishes double-blind peer-reviewed articles. The journal was established through a cooperative project and has a rotating editorship. The project partners are the Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland (Lead Partner, Finland), the Luzin Institute for Economic Studies of the Kola Science Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Russia), and the Barents Institute at the University of Troms. (Norway). The project was financed by the Kolarctic ENPI CBC programme, national financers from participating countries, and the project partner institutions 2013-2014.

For more information, see: www.barentsinfo.org/barentsstudies

This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

VERTAISARVIOITU
KOLLEGIALT GRANSKAD
PEER-REVIEWED
www.tsv.fi/tunnus

CONTENTS

BARENTS STUDIES: *Peoples, Economies and Politics*
VOL. 3 | ISSUE 1 | 2016

EDITORIAL

The value of comparison

AILEEN ASERON ESPÍRITU *Chief editor for this issue*
aileen.a.espiritu@uit.no

This issue of the *Barents Studies* journal includes three double-blind refereed articles and four young scholar profiles.

We present three very different articles that foreground three important studies located in the Barents and Euro-Arctic regions. Despite their diversity, one of the overarching commonality among them is that they all use comparison in order to make cogent observations about historical and present-day communities in the Barents High North and Arctic. The use of comparative method had its academic heyday in the late 1960s and the early 1970s (Collier, 1993). The value of doing comparisons in academic research still remains and the articles in this issue speak to its strength as a tool of analysis. Comparisons also permits scholars to move beyond micro level analysis, in effect, giving us the advantage of seeing the forest for the trees. And it allows us to make important analysis relevant for communities and governments outside of our geographic space and purview.

Bjørnå and Mikalsen's clearly written and richly analysed "Working for development in the High North: Mayoral strategies and leadership styles" gives readers a valuable, and somewhat surprising, conclusion that mayors from diverse locales and economies in the Norwegian High North employ the same strategy of emphasizing "their role as political/policy entrepreneurs". Such an inference could only be garnered by doing on-the-ground local interviews of the municipalities on which they focus, as Bjørnå and Mikalsen had done. The authors' cogent analysis of these three communities' mayors and then their comparisons among each other leads us to conclude that such model comparisons in the specific geography of Northern Norway warrants replication in other regions in the Arctic and in other parts of the world.

Moi's article "Imagining Northern Norway: Visual configurations of the North in the art of Kaare Espolin Johnson and Bjarne Holst" also employs comparison. It introduces us to how the beguiling art of these two artists, compared and contrasted by Moi, and filtered through Benedict Anderson's seminal work on nationalisn, *Imagined*

Communities, created a Northern identity for those living in Northern Norway. Through Moi's article, moreover, we are pleased to present these mesmerising images of Northern Norway as interpreted, imagined, and painted by Espolin Johnson and Holst. It is not coincidental that a mural copy of Espolin Johnson's powerful *Grenselandet (The Borderland)* appears in the waiting area of the police building in Kirkenes, calling attention to the local geography and this Northern border region's historical relationship with Russia and how such powerful interpretive images sill have the potential to intrigue, awe, and reflect local identities.

In our third refereed article in this issue, Nilsen and Jòhannesson gives us detailed case study analyses of three energy megaproject developments in Northern Norway and Iceland in their article "Assessment of the firm–region coupling in the Arctic: Local content and innovative institutional regulations", confirming once again the saliency of doing comparative analysis. Concluding that there is a symbiotic relationship between the combination of "local content and innovative institutional regulations" and Global Production Networks (GPN) can be beneficial to local communities with megaproject developments. Of particular note is the authors' conclusion that "external regulations on GPN behaviour facilitate regional development" – useful knowledge for a seemingly peripheral High North and Arctic on the cusp of further industrialisation and development. It would serve local communities planning large projects that have global implications to take note of this useful study.

Featured young researchers

As varied as the refereed articles are in this issue, so are the featured young researchers we introduce to readers here. Young scholars Camilla Brattland, Morgan Ip, Maria Lvova, and Gerald Zojer are either from or have decided to live and/or work in the Barents Region. Their research foci and approaches ensure academic analyses of the Barents Region that reflect the complexities of everyday life, environmental concerns, transnational relations, and political economies found in Barents Arctic communities. Already well-versed in their own research fields and research production, our featured young researchers for this issue also demonstrate that they are engaged in the communities that they research, often involved in activities outside of and relevant to their research fields. As Brattland avers, her lived experience and involvement in her own Sami community informed and informs her research foci. Ip's own interest areas have been primed by his background as an architect and time spent in the Canadian Arctic among Inuit communities. Lvova, originally from Arkhangelsk, Russia, credits her professional academic interests squarely on the opportunities offered by the ad-

vancement of the Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation over the last two decades. Zojer, doing his doctorate on environmental governance in the Arctic and its interplay with economic development, admits to falling in love with the North leading him to uproot from Germany to a remote town in Finland's Arctic. Each of these young researcher's commitment to creating new and cutting-edge knowledge and research located in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region is laudable. As research on the Barents Region advances, they will be pivotal in shaping how that scholarship and knowledge capacity-building will be further shaped and expanded.

Recent international economic, social, and political vicissitudes have ironically both drawn and pulled focus away from the Barents Region. Events such as the refugee crossings in the Arctic border between Norway and Russia in the Autumn of 2015 and increased NATO training exercises in 2016 have garnered much attention in international presses. At the same time, deindustrialization and sanctions-induced economic recession between Russia and Europe have seemingly diminished our regard for this fledgling Northern region. Whatever the changes and stagnations that local and global political, economic, social, and cultural events bring to the Barents space, what will create an enduring record of the diverse stories of this region arguably will be its art, literature, research and scholarship that will be done by academics, young scholars, writers, and artists who are intent on giving voice to communities here. The *Barents Studies* journal is but one vehicle for such stories reflecting dynamism, robustness, perhaps apathy, and even dystopia of Barents Region communities.

As we grow as an academic journal, it is strongly evident that it will be a diversity of stories, multidisciplinary in their approaches, that will fill our pages. In so doing, we hope that the telling of such stories will have *comparative* relevance for others in the Barents Region, the Arctic, and around the world. In other words, we expect that the articles such as the ones published in this issue will have resonance in other parts of the world that ostensibly have little in common with the Barents Region. We hope they reflect commonalities in peoples' everyday lives as they negotiate globalisation, massive industrialisation, economic recession, human security issues, human rights, gender and class inequalities, environmental degradation, population decline and increase, and cross-border relations, just to name a few. The possibilities for academic research and publications on the Barents Region are dizzying indeed. Our goal is that such a diversity of topics will continue to be found here in the pages of the *Barents Studies* journal.

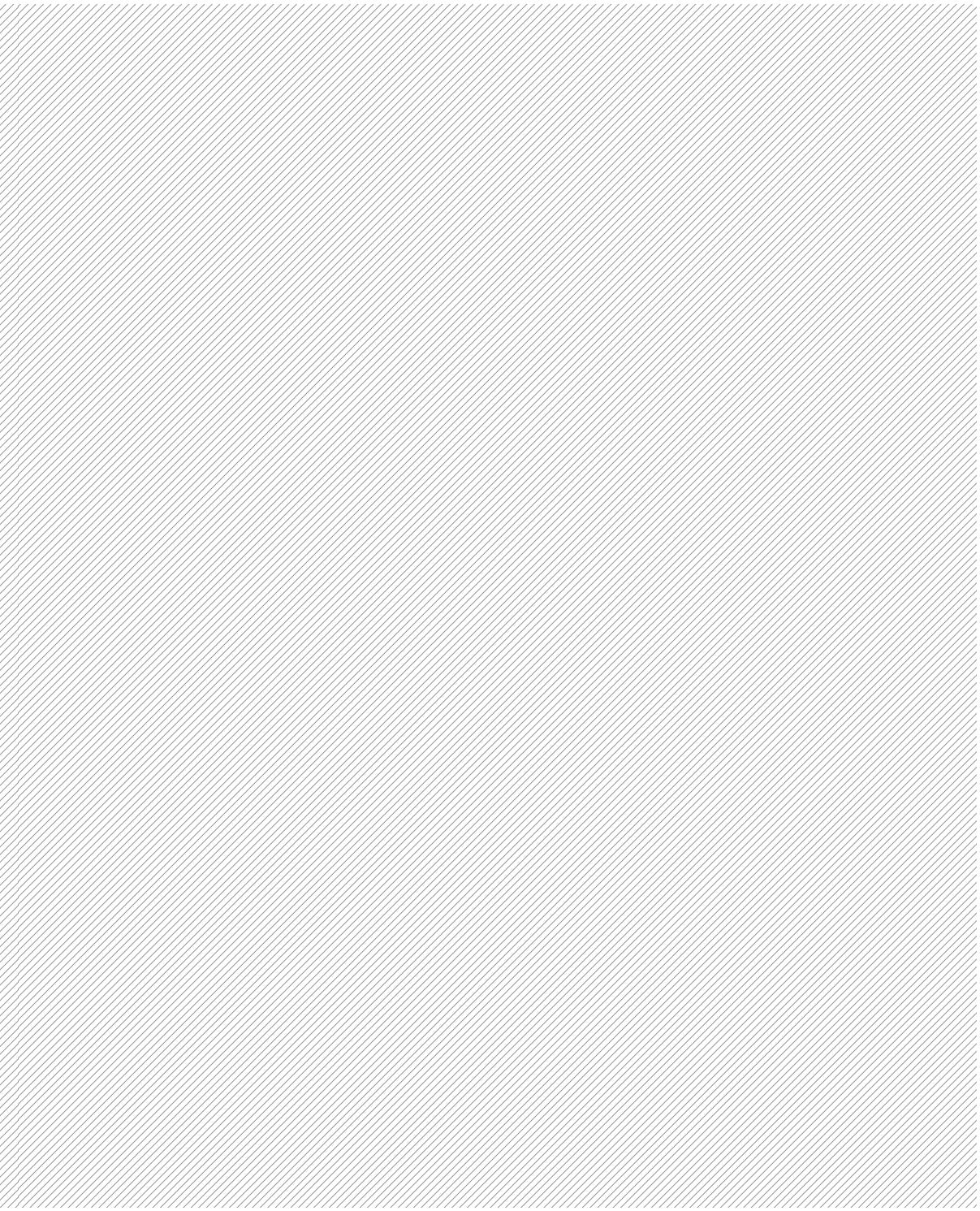
I would like to acknowledge and thank the seven anonymous referees who generously gave their academic service to review the tree academic articles published in this issue. I would also like to thank the contributing authors for their patience and due diligence in editing their research articles into publishable quality. Diverse as they are, they were all a pleasure to read and I was enriched by each of them. Tom Malmanger, whose photograph graces our cover for this issue deserves our gratitude for his generosity in allowing us to use his brilliant *Aurora Polaris – Hammerfest* taken on a dark Barents Arctic night at the end of November 2015. Much like previous artistic images of the High North and Arctic, Malmanger's photograph inspires and conjures imaginings of a cold, remote, yet, in this image, thriving urban Barents Region distinguished by the spectacularity of Northern Lights.

As always, I would like to thank my co-editors Monica Tennberg at the Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi and Larissa Riabova at the Luzin Institute for Economic Studies of the Kola Science Centre, Russian Academy of Sciences. I would especially like to thank Larissa for allowing me to use two of the Young Researcher profiles that she had already collected for her own upcoming issue.

***Aileen A. Espíritu**, Kirkenes and Tromsø*

REFERENCE

Collier, David. (1993) "The Comparative Method." In Ada W. Finifter, ed. *Political Science: The State of the Discipline II*. Washington, D.C.: American Poltical Science Association.



ARTICLES

Working for development in the High North: Mayoral strategies and leadership styles

HILDE BJØRNÅ
Professor, Department of Social Sciences,
UiT The Arctic University of Norway
Corresponding author: hilde.bjorna@uit.no

KNUT H MIKALSEN
Professor, Department of Social Sciences,
UiT The Arctic University of Norway

ABSTRACT

How do experienced mayors in northern Norway approach issues of local growth and development? What are their strategies and leadership styles and to what extent do they differ in their attempts to strengthen the economic viability of their municipality? The question is pertinent, for two reasons: First, issues of development and growth tend to be fairly open-ended with few standard solutions, with ample room for tailoring strategies and policies to local problems and challenges. Second, because the problems and challenges facing these mayors tend to differ, one would also expect their strategies to vary. Having examined the mayors' strategies in some detail, we found that they did not. Is there a logic of appropriateness at work here, confining the gamut of available (and acceptable) policy tools, a standard repertoire of strategies that constitutes a panacea for coping with problems of growth and development?

Keywords: *Mayors, developmental policies, logic of appropriateness, northern Norway*

BARENTS STUDIES: *Peoples, Economies and Politics*
VOL. 3 | ISSUE 1 | 2016

1. INTRODUCTION

Research on local political leadership has documented the role of mayors as important policy entrepreneurs and agents of local development (Goldsmith and Larsen 2004; Bjørnå and Aarsæther 2009; Bäck et al. 2006). This raises the question of the possible consequences of mayoral turnover for the policy agendas and priorities of local government (Wolman, Strate, and Melchior 1996). We approach this issue from the opposite angle by looking into the possible implications of leadership continuity rather than turnover, probing into the leadership styles, policy agendas, and political priorities of close to "tenured" mayors of three municipalities in the northern or Arctic corner of Norway. These mayors are leaders of communities located in what is frequently referred to as the "High North" (Skagestad 2010), where issues pertaining to identity, demography, economic growth, and business development have spurred cross-border cooperation and institutional innovation (Hasanat 2010; Hønneland 1998). The larger context, then, is a region facing challenges of demography, growth, and development, where programmes and strategies have been designed and steps taken in order to rectify problems that, historically at least, have been typical of geographically remote areas (Arctic Human Development Report 2004; Barents Regional Council 2013). Rectifying these problems, however, also requires leadership and initiatives at the local level, where the challenges are most acutely felt (Røiseland et al. 2009). On this local level, in communities and municipalities, such challenges may vary in both scope and character from one municipality to the next. How are these policies and strategies tailored to local needs, then? This is the perspective in our attempt to explain what we consider an interesting puzzle revealed in a recent study of local political leadership (see Mikalsen and Bjørnå 2015): why do experienced political leaders facing different problems adopt similar strategies with regard to growth and development? Taking the differences between "our" northern municipalities into account, as well as the tendency of issues pertaining to development and growth to be fairly open-ended with few standard solutions, we started from the assumption that "our" mayors would take different approaches to developmental policy and political leadership. As demonstrated by what follows, this turned out not to be the case. While the problems and challenges facing these municipalities were different both in character and in magnitude, there were few, if any, differences in the mayors' approach to addressing them. What then are the basic characteristics of their (common) approach, and how can the commonality of strategies in the face of different circumstances be explained? Is it the outcome of leadership experience, where one learns what works and what does not? Does it reflect a standard and limited repertoire of strategies that has proved instrumental in coping with problems of growth and development in the

past, or is it a product of norms and expectations constituting what amounts to a logic of appropriateness, confining the gamut of policy tools available (and acceptable)?

2. INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE AND EMPIRICAL SETTING

Norwegian municipalities are important providers of public services and play a crucial role in implementing the welfare state (Bennett 1993; Goldsmith 1990; Leemans 1970; Lidström 2003). This has led observers to speak of the welfare *municipality* rather than the welfare *state* (Kjellberg 1988; Nagel 1991). As such, Norwegian municipalities have broad responsibilities, irrespective of size, which – one would assume – requires strong leadership. They run primary schools, kindergartens, and homes for the elderly and disabled, provide social and technical services, decide certain environmental issues, organize planning processes, and maintain local infrastructure. Most of these responsibilities are decreed by law. Municipalities employ about a fifth of the work force, and their aggregate running costs amount to 18% of mainland Norway's gross domestic product (Statistics Norway 2013).

Norwegian local government has been categorized as a council-manager type with a council and an executive committee, both chaired by the mayor, and a municipal bureaucracy headed by an appointed and powerful chief executive (Mouritzen and Svara 2002). Norwegian mayors are formally elected by the council, or rather, by its executive committee for a four-year term. There are no term limits. The *formal* powers of Norwegian mayors are limited to chairing the meetings of the council and the executive committee and to deciding their agendas. They are also authorized to act as the municipality's legal representative and to sign official documents on its behalf (Sletnes 2015). The mayors face few institutional constraints and have, as a consequence and in practice, come to play a more powerful role than their legal mandate provides for. As the leading representative of the local community, the mayors are almost invariably expected to get involved in matters well beyond their formal powers rather than limiting themselves to the role of council "president" (Baldersheim 1992; Willumsen 2012). Goldsmith and Larsen (2004), for example, suggest that Norwegian mayors also have a role to play as territorial representatives, not just symbolically but in managing or negotiating a complex environment.

The negatively delimited domain of local government opens up for municipal engagement in community development (Bjørnå and Aarsæther 2009). This allows mayors to take on the role of policy entrepreneurs promoting economic growth, attracting prospective investors, and lobbying central government. In fact, the mayors' political

standing depends very much on their ability and willingness to play politics in this sense, governing by interacting effectively with legitimate stakeholders and prospective supporters (Berg and Rao, 2005; Leach and Wilson, 2000). One would thus assume that experienced mayors have had ample time to develop and consolidate their leadership style, contemplating agendas and strategies, and proving their worth as agents of change (Mikalsen and Bjørnå 2015).

The three municipalities (and mayors) compared in this article were identified in a more comprehensive study of a larger group of mayors who had held office for a prolonged period (four election periods or more). They are located in what is usually characterized as the geographical periphery, one in each of Norway's three northernmost counties. Historically, northern Norway used to be considered a "backward" region dependent on government support for growth and development, anchored in comprehensive plans for preserving the country's decentralized settlement structure. A fine-grained structure of fairly small municipalities and small and medium-sized industrial enterprises have been important institutional underpinnings of this policy aim (Bjørnå and Aarsæther 2009). However, municipalities in the region do not necessarily face the same challenges. Some are experiencing population decrease, others have stable populations, while a few experience population growth. Economic conditions vary as do the size of the municipalities and the mayors' political affiliation. Taking such variations into account one would expect municipal policies and mayoral strategies to differ, especially those pertaining to growth and development, as the emphasis on political entrepreneurship will vary with the need to match problem structure and municipal policy. But is this really the case; do the development strategies of municipalities necessarily reflect local problem structures (context) or are these a reflection of the norms and expectations associated with local political leadership? Is there a logic of appropriateness involved here, a shared culture based on certain values and informal norms as to what makes a good and efficient mayor?

We start with a brief, theoretically informed discussion of how institutional structures, rules, and practices may affect agenda-setting and leadership strategies, arguing that certain institutional features of Norwegian local government and the mayors' limited formal powers provide both incentives and opportunities to expand this leadership role by adopting an entrepreneurial approach to politics and the setting of policy priorities. We then explain the study methodology before describing in greater detail the mayoral strategies pursued in our three cases. This is followed by making sense of our findings and some concluding remarks about the mayors' vital position as political entrepre-

neurs. The negatively delimited mandate of local government helps the mayors seize the opportunities for expanding the municipal realm and adopt agendas that go well beyond the formal powers of the office.

3. FORMAL POWERS AND INSTITUTIONAL INCENTIVES: MAYORS AS POLICY-ENTREPRENEURS

Given the strong position of the chief executive within council-manager systems, it has been suggested that mayors – considering their few *formal* powers – may not be able to bring about policy changes on their own (Wolman, Strate, and Melchior 1996). However, political institutions like those of local government, are not only control and command systems but driven, in part, by traditions, informal networks, and social norms that affect power relationships as well as the course and outcomes of decision-making processes. Informal relationships, unquestioned beliefs, and institutionalized practices may well be seen as akin to a corporate culture defining what is appropriate behaviour in particular situations (cf. March and Olsen 1989). Formal rules are bent or interpreted to match context, and power restrictions are exceeded in order to meet stakeholder expectations, creating a logic of appropriateness that may empower leaders whose formal authority is limited.

For Norwegian mayors, the combination of limited formal powers and the negatively defined domain of local government may in fact be an asset: there are few things they are *obliged* to do but many things they *can* do. Donald Searing's distinction between *position roles* and *preference roles* is pertinent here (Searing, 1991; 1994). *Position roles* require the performance of many specific duties and responsibilities, and are clearly defined and institutionally constrained. *Preference roles*, on the other hand, are associated with positions less constrained by formal rules or lack of formal powers and with few specific duties and responsibilities. These are, in other words, roles more easily shaped by the preferences and personal capabilities of the incumbent as well as by the expectations of constituents and other stakeholders.

The preferential character of the role of mayor, then, enables the incumbent to fill it in ways that match the local context as well as the norms and expectations of appropriate (mayoral) behaviour held by council members, constituents, and stakeholders. In addition, the negatively delimited mandate of local government means that municipalities are free to adopt policies and implement projects in order to generate community development and strengthen the local economy, which allows mayors to act as policy

entrepreneurs by expanding the municipal agenda. This boosts their role well beyond the formal powers of the office (Bjørnå and Aarsæther 2010). Given the amount of discretion offered by the preference role of Norwegian mayors – and the different challenges facing municipalities in generating growth and development – one would expect their priorities and strategies to differ.

On the other hand one would expect that a choice of similar strategies in the face of different challenges may boil down to experienced mayors having acquired a sense of what constitutes appropriate and effective conduct in this particular (and typically preference) role; a sense of what is expected of them by their constituents, and which strategies work when community development and growth are at the core of municipal politics. We are, after all, dealing with seasoned political operators who have had plenty of time to accumulate experience, to contemplate what works, and to acquire a keen sense of what is expected of them. There may, in other words, be a logic of appropriateness at work that channels attention and affects agendas and priorities. Similarities in agendas, strategies, and priorities may thus reflect a common understanding of what it takes to fill the office in ways that exploit the possibilities for (strategic) action associated with the preference character of the role itself and the negative delimitation of municipal functions.

4. METHODS

The three municipalities vary in size, with populations of 10,000; 2000; and 1000, respectively. Demographic trends also differ: the first (and the largest) is growing, the second has a fairly stable population, while the third (and smallest) is experiencing a downward trend. The state of their economies and budgets also varies; one has benefitted from the establishment of a major off-shore enterprise – with income and property taxes lining the municipal coffers – but is burdened with debt. The second has experienced a slightly downward spiral financially, while the third is breaking even. Their mayors represent different political parties but share a "tenured" career in that they have all been in office for four election periods or more. Their chief executive officers also count as veterans, having held their posts for a considerable period of time. Political and administrative continuity, in other words, are common characteristics of the three municipalities. Applying a "most different" case design (George and Bennett 2005), we have conducted a comparative, longitudinal case study of the municipalities that differ on relevant and important background variables, except one – mayoral experience – but display a roughly similar score on the dependent variable, in our case leadership strategies, priorities, and policies.

Our account is based on in-depth interviews conducted during 2013 with the politicians and administrators in the three municipalities: mayors, members of the opposition, and chief executive officers. The mayors are political veterans, having been in office for four election periods. They are between 50 and 60 years old. By interviewing their chief executives, members of the mayor's party, and representatives of the opposition, we hope to enrich our narrative by tapping into *their* views and perceptions of the mayor as leader. We conducted five interviews in each municipality, each lasting an hour or more. The empirical fieldwork was complemented by additional interviews; some by telephone, updating our information on the mayors' role as entrepreneurs and agents of local development as well as on recent economic and demographic trends in the municipalities. Information gathered from interviews was validated through document studies and corroborated against information in media reports and official statistics.

Further information was obtained by examining statements by council leaders in minutes of council meetings, as well as through reports and web pages pertaining to development policies, and the efforts and visions underpinning these. Statistics Norway provided data on population, migration, service provision, and municipal finances. This form of methodological triangulation was adopted in order to verify information obtained in the interviews. There is of course a serious limitation to such studies, as cases are complex and it is difficult to identify exactly which independent variables explain a common outcome, such as political priorities and leadership styles.

5. THE CASES: DEVELOPMENT AS A MAYORAL IMPERATIVE

The following section describes the municipal context, the leadership styles, and policies pursued by the three mayors and the ways in which they relate to the local community and to the broader political environment beyond the municipal realm.

5.1. Hammerfest municipality

Hammerfest is a mid-sized municipality, with around 10,000 inhabitants. Historically, fisheries have been the backbone of the local economy; a large, technologically advanced processing plant and its fleet of trawlers have been the major employer since the 1950s. The municipality lost some 1500 jobs during the 1990s, which was accompanied by a substantial out-migration, especially of young people unable to find work locally. In the words of the mayor: "Had you come here during the early 1990s, you would have seen a run-down town." The economic turning point came with the discovery (in 1984) of rich reserves of

natural gas some 140 km off the coast, crowned by the decision of Parliament in 2002 that the gas should be landed and processed locally before being shipped to international markets. The outcome has been an economic boom with an influx of people employed by the gas processing plant and a substantial strengthening of municipal finances, albeit accompanied by a higher rate of municipal borrowing. The latter has caused some concern, especially among the opposition in the council. Such concerns notwithstanding, the formerly "run-down" city centre has been renovated, with a new cultural and arts centre as a highly visible manifestation of a town (and municipality) in transition. The topography poses some problems, however, as there are few areas where the town can expand to provide for more housing and better infrastructure.

Given the solid majority his party commands – currently holding 19 out of the 29 council seats – the Hammerfest mayor is clearly a powerful figure, and one would perhaps expect that most issues are decided before they reach the executive committee or the council. This is not necessarily the case, however, as both the mayor and his party have changed their positions, even on salient issues, as a consequence of inputs from the opposition. According to the mayor, there is also considerable headroom within the party, and council members do not always have to toe the party line on issues where they beg to differ. The mayor's role as consensus-builder is also recognized, albeit reluctantly, by the opposition: the representative we interviewed admitted that the mayor is indeed a unifying force.

His leadership style, then, is perceived as consultative and consensus-oriented with an emphasis on reaching out to the opposition on issues deemed important to the local community. The mayor characterizes himself as a good listener, but "when a decision is made, I enforce it emphatically". On this point he has the solid and competent support of the municipal administration, as he enjoys an excellent working relationship with his CEO.

The context and framework for the exercise of political leadership is thus a municipality where managing growth currently seems to be a major challenge. An enviable position, most would say, strengthened by the mayor's abilities as lobbyist and "foreign minister". The latter has proved important, for growth – before it can be managed – must be initiated. On this point the mayor has clearly benefitted from an extensive network built during several stints in national politics as state secretary (junior minister) and deputy MP. He is also a member of the national

council of his party. He has, in his own words, acquired "some knowledge of how things work at higher levels of politics". This stood him in good stead in getting the government's ear and influence the Parliament's decision in 2002 to build the gas processing plant in his own municipality. According to his CEO, the mayor is an active and efficient lobbyist, with a strong and enduring interest in industrial growth – and is "extremely adept at the political". A more general, slightly intangible, spin-off from his time in national politics is an extensive network both nationally and regionally: "If you want to see somebody (important), that's no problem." According to a politician from the opposition, the mayor does a good job in representing the municipality to the outside world. He is frequently in the media and has – again in his own words – "created networks that has enabled me to pursue a broader policy agenda". The CEO says that the mayor often succeeds in talking directly to government ministers, the prime minister included. He could even have been a government minister himself, had his wife allowed. Surprisingly, though, he has never seriously contemplated a career in national politics.

Growth and development thus top the mayor's agenda, currently demonstrated by his attempts to stop the relocation of a large fisheries plant. Historically, fisheries have been a major employer in the municipality, and issues of fisheries policy are very close to his heart. He sees the fisheries as an important contributor to further growth and development, and has put up a fight against the relocation of "Hammerfest industries", the plant in which the municipality holds 40% of the shares. A private Norwegian fisheries magnate holds the rest (60%). The mayor is deputy leader of the board and has frequently aired his opposition against the major stakeholder's proposal to downscale and eventually relocate the company. This proposal generated vociferous opposition within the entire region during 2014 and 2015, spurring the mayor to deliver a formal complaint to the Ministry of Industry and Fisheries. He argued that the majority owner was overstepping his mandate – against the letter of the law and the contents of local agreements. The government rejected his claim in August 2014. The council, led by the mayor, is considering a civil lawsuit against the majority owner (*iFinnmark* newspaper, 24 March 2015).

Another issue close to the mayor is public health, which has been a priority throughout most of his political career, and one in which he has great credibility. He is currently engaged in a debate on the future hospital structure in the region, taking on a far larger and more fast- growing city in the region on the issue of the location of important hospital functions. The town hospital is old and in disrepair. It desperately needs upgrad-

ing, but this may not happen if the competitor wins the hospital battle. The contender insists that the regional healthcare plan should "adjust to today's realities" and relocate important functions to their city (*Altaposten* newspaper, 3 March 2015). While braced for battle, the mayor moves very carefully in this regional competition. "This is not an issue that I debate and confront explicitly in the media", he says, making it perfectly clear that while he is working hard to keep a well-equipped hospital in his municipality, he sees no need to escalate the conflict.

The mayor has a strong position in the region, speaking as he often does on behalf of neighbouring municipalities both in the media and vis-à-vis central government. "I want to help the neighbouring municipalities; one has to take the regional view when working for development", he says. He works closely with the local industrial association, and has been on a large number of boards in organizations within sectors such as health, sports, and higher education. Nowadays, however, he has less access to arenas of national decision-making as his party is no longer in government.

5.2. Salangen municipality

Salangen is a small coastal municipality with a population of around 2000 and with agriculture and fish plants as the backbone of the local economy. Salangen also hosts a facility for young refugees, which is run by the municipality and provides a certain amount of income. Municipal finances are shaky, and borrowing has been necessary in order to provide the services required. The municipality is debt-ridden as a consequence. A major challenge is keeping population numbers stable, which requires employment opportunities and development. Also, Salangen is located in a region with a poor record of industrial development. "We are however not severely challenged. The population numbers are fairly stable, but we must attract more people with resources", the mayor argues.

The mayor is part of what is perceived as a local political dynasty, following in the footsteps of his father as council representative and member of its executive before becoming mayor. His wife holds the position of deputy mayor. He is relatively young (under 50) and has been in office for nearly 16 years. His party has a strong local following, receiving 45% of the popular vote at the last election. The mayor himself is often described as "a strategist with diplomatic skills", as a member of the opposition put it, and as one who chairs council meetings in ways that facilitate cooperation and consensus. He has a keen sense of what works, and is very adept at mustering support among the opposition.

Growth and development looms large on the mayor's agenda. He is at least periodically an active lobbyist on behalf of local businesses, especially aquaculture, which is considered a growth industry. He has been instrumental in preserving local schools and in establishing the centre for young refugees. In his own words: "We integrate young refugees through the school and through sports, and we do think others may learn from us." Occasional visits from other municipalities and by government officials indicate that this may indeed be the case. The municipality has even won prizes and is often referred to as a model of successful integration of young refugees. At some point a special office to encourage in-migration was established in an attempt to attract new inhabitants, especially young families. For a period they even collaborated with a Dutch company in recruiting families from the Netherlands!

A more comprehensive and ambitious strategy for local development is embodied in the formation of a dedicated unit for this purpose. This is organized as a limited company and as a joint venture between the municipality and local businesses, where the former holds 60% and the latter 40% of the shares. The company is currently at the centre of the municipality's developmental efforts and the hub for inter-municipal cooperation in the region, with a mission of supporting and advising local businesses and encouraging new initiatives and prospective entrepreneurs. At the time of the interview, the mayor was chairman of the board which, beside himself, counted representatives from the local business community. Cooperating with – and coordinating – the tourist industry is an important part of the mayor's strategy, and inter-municipal collaboration has been organized to strengthen tourism in the region.

The mayor has thus been instrumental in changing and promoting the organization of local development work by replacing the previous arrangement with a municipal administrative official in charge of development strategies with a more businesslike organization – and consolidating his own position in the process. That the council has been more or less sidelined has attracted some attention. According to a council member, "…this leaves us with no influence on development strategies; the mayor is the only one in charge".

The mayor cultivates a high media profile, partly in order to publicize the good work being done by the municipality. He has been a member of the county council, and is currently on leave from his mayoral office to fill the role of "minister" for transport

and the environment in the county government. The mayor is a keen and able networker, chairing an association of neighbouring municipalities in the region as well as working closely with individuals and firms within the business community. Before becoming part of the county government machinery himself, he lobbied hard to save the municipal secondary schools threatened by closure. In this, he was part of a group that eventually brought down the county government, paving the way for a change in his own political career. Having been a member of the national (executive) board of his party, a representative on the board of the Association of Norwegian Municipalities (KS), part of a network that includes people in central government as well as members of parliament, the mayor is in a unique position to keep himself informed about relevant issues at an early stage, and perhaps put his stamp – however small – on policy decisions pertaining to the welfare of his region and local community.

5.3 Tjeldsund municipality

Tjeldsund, the smallest municipality in our sample, has a population of around 1000. The municipality does not have a "natural" centre but consists of four, maybe five villages or communities. The topography is a challenge, as the municipality is divided between an island (where the city hall is located) and the mainland. Serving as a link between them is only a small boat (that takes passengers but no cargo). The municipality's borders were set when boats were the main means of transportation. Today, going by car from one end of the municipality to the other means driving through three municipalities and two counties (Nordland and Troms). According to the CEO, municipal finances are in reasonably good shape; the municipality is a risk-averse polity known for its ability to balance its books. However, population numbers have decreased quite dramatically since the mid-1980s, which poses a major challenge. There are two main industries in the municipality: a naval base and an institution for the training of firefighters. Farming and fishing are also important sources of employment as is the municipality itself with its 150 employees or so. Although the mayor has spent considerable time and energy to encourage more investment in farming, local farmers are leaving the industry, selling their land when the children are reluctant to take over.

The mayor is relatively young, around 50, with a background in the private sector, where he ran his own business. He is chairman of the local branch of the Conservative Party, whose electoral support has grown over the three periods he has been in office. He does not, however, command a majority in the council and has to cooperate with other parties, typically the Labour Party. He entered the council in politically turbulent times, taking over as mayor when the then office holder gave up and left office on his

own accord. He managed to set things right and is known for sticking to formalities, keeping his hands firmly on the steering wheel. According to a representative of the opposition, he "is a likable person and a good 'broker'. He always makes sure that he has majority for the decisions he promotes in council meetings." There is not, we were told, much opposition to his policies; the council decisions tend to be unanimous. While full of ideas, the mayor is not always able to follow up on his plans or implement his ideas. That said, he certainly comes across as a hardworking and very engaged politician, and an able spokesman for his community, not least in the media.

The Tjeldsund mayor's developmental strategies are basically – at least in part – defensive. Keeping the two government-funded institutions in the municipality is a priority, and efforts to that effect have taken much of his time and energy. The naval base and the firefighters' college are, after all, backbones of the local economy, given their importance as sources of employment. Threats to move the firefighters' college elsewhere have been real, and there has been an almost constant battle over the years to retain it in Tjeldsund, as well as securing that a new bachelor-level programme be located in the municipality. "I have spent an enormous amount of time and effort to keep these institutions in the municipality", the mayor says, and he will certainly continue to do so, if necessary. On this, he has always had the backing of the council. The recent – and good – news is that his lobbying efforts have paid off: the new and expanded programme will be located in the municipality.

However, the mayor has little time for celebration. Government plans for restructuring the military organization in the northern region may also affect the naval base. The challenges posed by the increased presence of Russia in the Arctic requires structural changes currently being pondered in the Ministry of Defence. Any restructuring will have local effects if it implies reconsidering the present location of the smaller naval bases along the coast. Tjeldsund would perhaps be an obvious and sensible choice, as much of the necessary infrastructure is already in place. There are, however, alternative locations in other municipalities nearby, and there are fears – especially among representatives of the opposition – that this may lead to a competitive struggle for new employment opportunities in the region. The mayor is more optimistic and has worked out what he thinks is a sensible strategy: He has been in contact with his "neighbours", enquiring about their ideas and what they see as their comparative advantages. "We need to work together on this, stand shoulder to shoulder and coordinate our inputs to the new defence plan. Political cannibalism is a well-known phenomenon in northern Norway, and here we have to work together."

Overall, the mayor comes across as a master networker and as an eager (and probably quite an effective) lobbyist. He does not hold any prominent positions at other levels of government or in his party, but he seems to know "everyone". He communicates frequently with other mayors in the region, interacts with politicians at the county level, and does not hesitate to get in touch with members of parliament. He is also a frequent (and fearless) visitor to government offices in Oslo, lobbying on behalf of both his municipality and the region. By his own account he sometimes just finds a plausible excuse to get in touch, and readily picks up the phone when a new person joins the political-administrative apparatus. "I just need to know them", he says, aware that someone has to do the footwork.

6. DISCUSSION

The differences between the three municipalities essentially boil down to this: While one (the largest) has experienced a substantial growth in population thanks to its recent status as the gas capital of the north, the other two are struggling to combat depopulation. For two of them, topography poses a bottleneck for further growth either by limiting the supply of suitable areas for new businesses or by convoluted traffic routes that complicate travel and communication. Two have problems balancing their budgets, while the smallest one has budgetary control. The cornerstones of their economies vary and have clearly changed since the millennium. They all rely less on the fisheries than they used to, but apart from this, they have taken different routes with regard to growth and development. The larger one has benefitted from the discovery of vast offshore hydrocarbon resources and from the resultant investments. The medium-sized municipality has based its economy on a combination of agriculture and public sector employment in secondary education and a government-sponsored project of receiving and integrating young refugees, whereas the smallest relies increasingly on the employment opportunities offered by the naval base and the firefighters' college. Both institutions have been threatened – the former by new defence initiatives, the latter by the decision to elevate its educational programme to BA level and the discussions about its (future) location. Both institutions are still located in the municipality, partly as a result of the mayor's efforts.

In spite of these differences, the three mayors seem to rely on much the same strategies. As demonstrated in a previous study (Bjørnå and Aarsæther 2010), mayors in struggling municipalities tend to emphasize their role as political/policy entrepreneurs, engaging with the local business community as well as government institutions at the regional

and national level. Their restricted formal mandate, heavily tilted towards presiding and ceremonial functions (Mouritzen and Svara 2002), does not prevent them from choosing a far more expansive approach to their role, often in response to stakeholder expectations of strong leadership. They all come across as dedicated policy brokers (Sabatier (1988), skilful negotiators and consensus-builders tuned to keeping conflict levels to a minimum. All three are keen lobbyists, their lobbying efforts strengthened by their ability to build networks at both the national and regional level. They are also efficient communicators who know how to play the media. They are, in other words, what Kingdon (1995) and Polsby (1984) have labelled policy entrepreneurs.

The mayor of Hammerfest, for example, lobbied strongly for the exploitation of offshore gas recourses in the region, and succeeded in his efforts to have these landed, processed, and shipped from a small island a couple of stone throws away from the city. He now works to save a local fish-processing plant, combining the promotion of high-tech projects with attempts at preserving and strengthening a traditional and regionally important industry within a company structure. There are limits, however, to his regional orientation, because he is currently fighting to defend local institutions, the city hospital in particular, against attempts to move its basic functions to another part of the region. Well aware that this is a zero-sum game that could turn ugly, he weighs his words and arguments carefully in order not to split the region and weaken its collective voice in other matters.

The mayor of Salangen has pursued regional investments in secondary schools and in housing for young refugees, and has supported attempts at increasing local tourism and strengthening business development. In the latter case he has contributed actively to the establishment of a joint venture with the business community, which epitomizes the municipal strategy for growth and development. The mayor of Tjeldsund, on his part, has seized the opportunities provided by large public investments in schools. He thus comes across as one that sees development opportunities in government reforms, initiating new strategies and building coalitions to draw new investments to the municipality.

All three have a comprehensive network which, in part, is a spin-off from party connections and from their having served at higher levels of Norwegian politics (regional and national). The mayor of Tjeldsund, for example, has negotiated development packages with neighbouring municipalities, which makes it easier to obtain political support and government funding. The mayor of Salangen is highly visible at the county level, work-

ing his regional network in order to influence the county council and his own political party in his successful efforts to, inter alia, prevent the closing of a local secondary school. An experienced player in national politics, the mayor of Hammerfest certainly knows which buttons to press. His "upward" connections are plentiful – to parliament, government departments, and his own party apparatus at the national level – and he knows how to utilize them. Common to all three is that their agendas, working modes, and strategies extend well beyond the formal requirements of the office. Combining the role of efficient political executive with that of a dedicated "head of state", these mayors have adopted a leadership style befitting their twin mandate of "prime minister" and "president", made possible by their preference role and the negative delimitation of municipal self-governance. While context and challenges vary, the strategies and leadership styles of our mayors differ very little. This is remarkable given the freedom and discretion that they enjoy – at least in principle – in what is fundamentally a preference role. However, this does not seem to matter when it comes to development strategies and growth policies. The explanation for these fairly similar strategies, we suggest, leaning on the most different case design (George and Bennett 2005), is that these mayors are experienced in their office and have learned or acquired a sort of entrepreneurial logic of appropriateness. There is of course a serious limitation to such studies, as cases are complex and it is difficult to eliminate independent variables that explain a common outcome such as politics and leadership styles. An alternative explanation, however, is that the menu of relevant and useful strategies on offer is limited, with few "courses" to choose from. Given these limitations, there may be a possible relation between leadership experience and the choice of developmental policies.

7. CONCLUSION

Norwegian mayors have few formal powers, which may lead one to believe that they will be victims of path dependencies and adopt an incremental and cautious approach to growth and development, acting as guardians of traditional industries. However, both our cases and others (Bjørnå and Aarsæther 2009) show that there is room for a more expansive, entrepreneurial approach, due to the political space provided by the negative delimitation of municipal powers as well as the knowledge base and legitimacy provided by their leadership experience. Our three mayors are seasoned political operators with an eye for (new) opportunities and a willingness to adopt a more dynamic, expansive, and entrepreneurial leadership style than their formal role calls for. They take bold initiatives, playing the role of visionary and strategic policymakers, building and exploiting personal and political networks to see their initiatives materialized.

One is tempted to ask whether it is the close to "tenured" position of experienced mayors that gives them the self-confidence to go beyond the remit of their formal role in setting their agendas and policy strategies. Applying a "most different" case study approach, comparing three experienced mayors' strategies as leaders of different municipalities in the northern periphery, we found that their priorities, policies, and leadership styles differed little, if at all. Whether these similarities are due to leadership qualities acquired through long-term careers as a result of experience cannot be determined in full by a study such as the one reported here. To do so, we would need comparable data on the strategies and priorities of mayors with shorter careers and include a broader set of variables. What our study demonstrates is that mayors – in spite of the discretion offered by their ill-defined role and the negative delimitation of local government power and functions – opt for largely similar strategies in dealing with different challenges. This is puzzling, given that issues pertaining to development and growth tend to be rather open-ended with few standard solutions, with room for tailoring strategies and policies to local problems and challenges. What this may indicate is that the policy tools at the mayors' disposal are limited, and that there are certain fundamental norms and expectations – a logic of appropriateness – associated with the office that reduces the preferential element of this particular leadership role. In other words, while the preference character of the office allows for expansive, entrepreneurial strategies, the menu of such strategies may well be limited, constrained by considerations of what works and is considered politically appropriate.

REFERENCES

Arctic Human Development Report, 2004. Akureyri: Stefansson Arctic Institute.

Baldersheim, H., 1992. Aldermen into ministers: Oslo experiment with a city cabinet. *Local Government Studies*, 18, 1, pp. 18–30.

Bäck, H., Heinelt, H., and Magnier, A., 2006. *The European mayor: Political leaders in the changing context of local democracy.* Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialvissenschaften.

Bennett, R.J., ed., 1993. *Local government in the new Europe*. London: Belhaven Press.

Bjørnå, H. and Aarsæther, N., 2009. Combating depopulation in the northern periphery: Local leadership strategies in two Norwegian municipalities. *Local Government Studies*, 35, 2, pp. 213–233.

—, 2010. Networking for development in the North: Power, trust, and local democracy. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 28, 2, pp. 304–317.

George, A.L. and Bennett, A., 2005. *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Goldsmith, M., 1990. Local autonomy: Theory and practice. In: D.S. King and J. Pierre, eds., *Challenges to local government*. London: Sage, pp. 15–36.

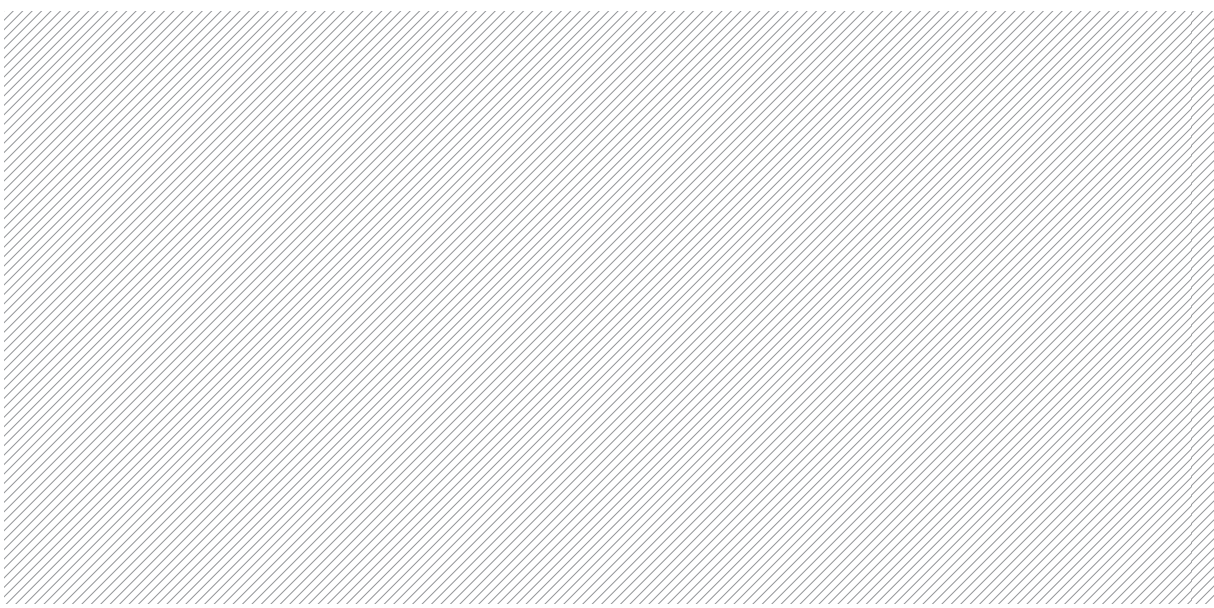
Goldsmith, M. and Larsen, H.O., 2004. Local political leadership: Nordic style. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 28, 1, pp. 121–133.

Hasanat, W., 2010. Cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic region in the light of international law. *The Yearbook of Polar Law*, 2, pp. 279–309.

Hønneland, G., 1998. Identity formation in the Barents Euro-Arctic region. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 33, 3, pp. 277–297.

Kjellberg, F., 1988. Local government and the welfare state: Reorganization in Scandinavia. In: B. Dente and F. Kjellberg, eds., *The dynamics of institutional change: Local government reorganization in western democracies*. London: Sage, pp. 39–69.

Leemans, A.F., 1970. *Changing patterns of local government*. The Hague: International Union of Local Authorities.



Lidström, A., 2003. *Kommunsystem i Europa*. Lund: Liber.

Mikalsen, K.H. and Bjørnå, H., 2015. Den norske ordføreren: begrenset myndighet, mye makt? In: Nils Aarsæther and Knut H. Mikalsen (eds.), *Lokalpolitisk lederskap i Norden.* Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk, pp. 169-195.

Mouritzen, P.E. and Svara, J.H., 2002. *Leadership at the apex: Politicians and administrators in western local governments*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Nagel, A.H., 1991. *Kommunenes rolle i utviklingen av velferdsstaten*. Bergen: Alma Mater Forlag.

Røiseland, A., Jenssen, S., and Aarsæther, N., 2008. Local governance and the challenges of global change. In: N. Aarsæther, A. Røiseland, and S. Jenssen (eds.), P*racticing local governance: Northern perspectives*. Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science Publishers, pp. 1–10.

Sabatier, P.A., 1988. An advocacy coalition framework of policy change and the role of policy-oriented learning therein. *Policy Sciences*, 21, 2–3, pp. 129–168.

Skagestad, O.G., 2010. *The "High North": An elastic concept in Norwegian Arctic policy*. Report 10/2010. Lysaker: Fridtjof Nansen Institute.

Sletnes, I., 2015. Ordførerrollen i Norden i rettslig perspektiv. In: N. Aarsæther and K.H. Mikalsen, eds., *Lokalpolitisk lederskap i Norden*. Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk, pp. 28–68.

Statistics Norway, 2013. Kommunedatabasen. Oslo: SSB.

Willumsen, T., 2012. Ordførerrollen: Lokalt politisk lederskap i praksis. In: *Kommuneloven 20 år.* Oslo: Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development.

Wolman, H., Strate, J., and Melchior, A., 1996. Does changing mayors matter? *The Journal of Politics,* 58, 1, pp. 201–223.

BARENTS STUDIES: *Peoples, Economies and Politics*
VOL. 3 | ISSUE 1 | 2016

Imagining Northern Norway Visual configurations of the North in the art of Kaare Espolin Johnson and Bjarne Holst

RUBEN MOI
Associate Professor, Department of Language and Culture,
UiT The Arctic University of Norway
Corresponding author: ruben.moi@uit.no

ABSTRACT

The formative processes of collective identity and belonging inspired Benedict Anderson to write his ground-breaking *Imagined Communities* (1983). His emphasis on imagination and sodality in these processes also resonates in contemporary artistic presentations of life in northern Norway. A rereading of Anderson's thesis in relation to the arts in northern Norway, in particular the visual arts, may offer some new insights, both into the blind spots of Anderson's analyses, and into the ways in which people of the North have recently imagined themselves. This article is the first to relate the art of Bjarne Holst (1944–1993) and Kaare Espolin Johnson (1907–1994) to Anderson's theories of imagined communities. These reflections are also among the very first to focus in depth on Holst's art, and to conduct a critical analysis of these artists' work. The two artists complement and contrast each other in subject matter and in their idiosyncratic stylistics of scraping to light from soot (Espolin) and colourful *anthropomorph-icing*.

Keywords: *North, art, imagined communities, Benedict Anderson, Kaare Espolin Johnson, Bjarne Holst, anthropomorph-icing*

IMAGININGS

The idea to this article emerged from an exhibition of two visionary artists from the North. Curated by Knut Ljøgodt, *To visjonære kunstnere fra nord. Kaare Espolin Johnson (1907–1994) og Bjarne Holst (1944–1993) (Two Visionary Artists from the North. Kaare Espolin Johnson (1907-1994) and Bjarne Holst (1944-1993)*) was displayed at Nordnorsk Kunstmuseum in Tromsø, Norway, in 2007. Nordnorsk Kunstmuseum's exhibition and acquisition of many of Holst's paintings, and Ljøgodt's (2003) exemplary book, *Trollfuglen: Bjarne Holst 1944–1993 (The Bird of Sorcery: Bjarne Holst 1944–1993)*, have helped to promote Holst's position as an important artist of northern Norway. Espolin Johnson's artistic position has long been well-established, and he has to some extent been included in the national canon. This essay focuses on the visual arts of these two artists who present complementary imaginaries of life in northern Norway throughout most of the twentieth century. They also offer two interesting case studies in relation to Anderson's ideas of imagined communities. Espolin Johnson's art in fact fills the hermeneutic vacuum in Anderson's thesis, both as a concrete case study of painting that Anderson's theoretical discussion is devoid of, and as a lucid example of the powers born of the cross-generic encounter of image and text in popular print. Holst, on the other hand, reveals obvious deficiencies in Anderson's theories of community, and delves into a new visual topography and imaginary of northern regions.

BORDERS OF BELONGING

"Do human beings need belonging?", Stråth (2008, 21) asks pertinently in his essay on belonging and European identity at a time of rapid change in small communities, major capitals, and transnational projects. For all its lucid argumentation on religion, neoliberalism, and multiculturalism, and for all its integrationist stance, this theoretical essay treads the conventional path of Eurocentrism. As the title suggests, belonging is predicated upon a dyadic relation to European centrality. The two aspects of the title are mutually interdependent, and belonging is unthinkable outside of the idea of the larger transnational project. The discussion, sensibly and convincingly, centres on the ideological discourses and social transformations of the European project. Stråth, like most of the essays in *Identity, Belonging and Migration* (Delanty, Wodak, and Jones 2008), subscribe to the principles that Anderson (2006, 141) had 30 years before already found "so common for progressive, cosmopolitan intellectuals (particularly in Europe?)". Many communities in northern Norway and elsewhere in and beyond Europe recognize Anderson's evaluation that "an unselfconscious provincialism had long skewed

and distorted theorizing on the subject [national communities]" and that European scholars are "accustomed to the conceit that everything important in the world originated in Europe" (2006, xiii). Eurocentricsm has not only excluded large parts of the world in European scholars' theories, but this ideologically proscribed vision has also ignored large fields of knowledge and creativity within its own parameters, not to mention all the marginal space delimited by its own definitions. That is to say, centrism, at its best, ignores the dialectical processes from which it rises, or, far more frequently, acts as its own "unselfconscious provincialism".

Several influential analyses gravitate towards an intellectual discourse which Anderson finds geopolitically lopsided, philistine, and myopic, including *Identity, Belonging and Migration* by Delanty, Wodak, and Jones (2008); *Europe: An Unfinished Adventure* by Bauman (2004); *Rethinking Europe* by Delanty and Rumford (2005); and *Postnationalist Ireland* by Kearney (1997). Anderson elaborates:

> *In an age when it is so common for progressive, cosmopolitan intellectuals (particularly in Europe?) to insist on the near-pathological character of nationalism, its roots in fear and hatred of the Other, and its affinities with racism, it is useful to remind ourselves that nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love. The cultural products of nationalism – poetry, prose fiction, music, plastic arts – show this love very clearly in thousands of different forms and styles. (Anderson 2006, 141)*

If Anderson, in the wake of Foucault and Said, delivers a critical corrective to Eurocentric discourses, he also introduces the importance of the imagination to the construction of political communities. The various discourses on collective belonging – be they historical, ideological, social, or linguistic – tend to sacrifice the significance of human imagination on the altar of instrumental reasoning. Anderson reminds us that human imagination, particularly as it manifests itself in writing, public installations, maps, and museums, contributes considerably to the constitution of communities. The conceptual construction of modern communities is based not only on academic discourses and the ideas of constant transgression of time and space, but also on the imagining of a place of emotions and belonging. Such a place, frequently imagined by the arts and by cultural activity, tends to go unnoticed by much of the analytic activity in the field.

REREADING ANDERSON'S *IMAGINED COMMUNITIES*

The reference to Anderson's classic book in this essay is not accidental. His critique of European-centred discourses and his emphasis on the imaginative still retain intellectual potential for the dynamic hermeneutics of the concept of community. A rereading of Anderson's thesis in relation to the arts in northern Norway, in particular the visual arts of Kaare Espolin Johnson and Bjarne Holst, may offer some new insights, both into the ways in which people of the North have recently imagined themselves, and into the blind spots of Anderson's illuminating analyses.

While Anderson discusses nationalism, focusing on Asia and writing his analysis as an immediate response to the armed conflicts in Indochina in 1978–1979, this groundbreaking book on the logics of constructing political communities also offers interesting perspectives on the creative and productive processes of collective identity and forms of belonging in the northern hemisphere. For this essay on the visual imaginings of northern Norway in the art of Kaare Espolin Johnson and Bjarne Holst, the thrust of Anderson's analysis, as the title of his book indicates, lies in the power of the imagination in the formation of communities. His analyses disclose the importance of artistic imaginings in the cognitive formations of communal identity – both the political discourses of definition, control, and containment, and the creative arts of the anomalous, the liberal, and the transgressive.

Anderson's imagined community is "an integrated political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (2006, 6). First of all, the national community is "imagined" because people who have never met consider themselves to have so much in common that they are willing to die for this shared idea of communality. Secondly, Anderson's imagined community is "limited" because it acknowledges other nations in its vicinity and beyond. Thirdly, it is "sovereign" because it assumes freedom and recognizes no superior authority. Furthermore, Anderson identifies military death and religion as two of the principal cultural roots of imagined communities (2006, 9–19), and his discussion draws on a Marxist approach (2006, 1–4).

Anderson's community is a national one. Clearly, northern Norway is not. Still, however much regionalism may be contrasted with nationalism, it subscribes to many of the same principles of imagination, limitation, and political authority. Sometimes, regionalism is the stepping stone to nationalism; most times, regionalism defines itself in geopolitical terms along a continuum from separatism and autonomy to decentralization and local authority. Within the imperial worldview that Anderson discusses, the

nation constitutes an entity in a larger network of political control, not unlike northern Norway functions within Norway, Russia–Nordic cooperation, and the EU. Anderson's concept of community is also based upon unity, whereas northern Norway today cultivates diversity. The region includes Sápmi and border relations with Russia, Finland, and Sweden as integral to the understanding of themselves. The Sami population, who are frequently controversial in many districts of northern Norway, and who sometimes have closer links with Sami in Sweden, Finland, and Russia than with their compatriots, were granted their own parliament in 1989. Since the liberation of northern Norway by the Soviet Union at the end of the Second World War, the sodality of spirit has in parts of the population been much closer to this neighbouring nation than to fellow Norwegians down south.

Northern Norway is a region rooted in diversity. The diversity straddles both the regional and the national community, and the fervour of self-determination in northern Norway does not reach the sacrificial standards of Anderson's nations; regionalism in northern Norway has entertained hardly any militant separatist impetus. Amid all these differences between Anderson's premises and the contemporary status of northern Norway, the great legacy of his theories for the imagining of these regions, in the future as much as in the past, is the enabling powers he grants the imagination in the construction of future communities. Also, in contrast to some of his fellow theorists around the same time, such as Nairn (1977), Gellner (1983), and Hobsbawm (1990), Anderson appreciates the utopian aspect of collective self-determination in local areas, nor does he regard the ideas of commonality and belonging obsolete in an increasingly globalizing world.[1]

If Anderson appears to be the last advocate of national consciousness, he equally much appears a pioneer in exploring the imaginative in the foundation of communities. Yet, it is disappointing how little he delves into imaginative artefacts. Music is never discussed and painting is given extremely short shrift.[2] His neglect of music and painting ensues from the preponderant Marxist leanings of the analysis. For Anderson, visual arts, even after the revolution of mechanical reproduction, hold but little radical potential for the masses compared to the revolution of the book. If art *per se*, with all its implications of capitalism and individual enjoyment, sits uneasily with any radical discourse in general, and most certainly in *Imagined Communities* in particular, its absence from Anderson's examination nevertheless leaves a hermeneutic space. Despite all the ideas and self-serving rhetoric of high art, art never belonged solely to the high and mighty. In addition to the might of the word, the powers of music and visual arts, not to men-

tion those of the stage, have time and time again engendered change and reform, and challenged aristocratic classifications and defining discourses of art. In the contexts of northern Norway, the visual imaginings ignored by Anderson offer a complementary and critical perspective to his theoretical thesis. A particular interesting imaginative site in this respect, one which Anderson disregards entirely, is the powerful combination of written and visual art in popular print.

ARTS IN THE NORTH

Communities of northern Norway depend upon their own imaginings. While Anderson's treatise has empowered the decentred and the unacknowledged, much of the theoretical discussions of belonging and the prevailing theories of visual arts have their few centres at a far distance from most communities. Kaare Espolin Johnson and Bjarne Holst are only two of the patriotic artists in northern Norway who have imagined this region with affection and complexity, and two of those who, in the words of Anderson, "show this love very clearly in thousands of different forms and styles" (2006, 141). Northern Norway has an age-old and abundant history of art, however much these local traditions have been excluded from the defining discourses of art and culture at the centres of aesthetic authority. From yoik to Mari Boine, Biosphere, Röyksopp, and the cacophony of contemporary music; from petroglyphs to the films of Knut Erik Jensen, the Kill Buljo group, and the plethora of current prize-winning directors; from runes to Peter Dass, Knut Hamsun, Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, Liv Lundberg, and the panorama of contemporary writers, northern Norway has fostered a diversity of arts that has to a large extent only entered the national and international stage fairly recently. This listing of arts in northern Norway is not meant to establish a rigid dichotomy of difference with other places, national or international, or to deny that arts in the North Cape have always developed within a circumpolar perspective as much as a Barents and southern one, or to eschew the debates of defining the North and the South in all their plurality. It is merely meant to illustrate something of the imaginative activity that can be amalgamated under a protean idea of North.[3]

THE ART OF KAARE ESPOLIN JOHNSON AND BJARNE HOLST

For all their thematic and stylistic differences, the art of Kaare Espolin Johnson (1907–1994) and Bjarne Holst (1944–1993) in many ways engages with Anderson's principles in being "imagined", "limited", and "sovereign". Their many paintings, lithographs, murals, and illustrations create in the people of the region a sense of sodality and com-

monality beyond the factual borders of geography, history, and language, or the statistical ones of census. Their imaginative inventions are limited in the way they present a distinct sense of the local, even if the diversity of the local differs in the two. Their art is sovereign, not only in the sense of aesthetic autonomy and individual creativity, but also in the manner the two different artists develop outside the most predominant central European ideas of art and community, as in Espolin Johnson's art, or in complex relations with them, as in Holst's art. Both artists attend to the life and the landscapes that characterize the overlapping regions of northern Norway, Sápmi and the Barents Region from around 1930 to 1994. In drawing upon the local and the regional, Espolin Johnson tends to develop his vision and techniques in close contact with a place beyond the ordinary centres of aesthetic themes and theories, while Holst rather combines the local sources of imagination with the continental currents of aesthetic development.

Many scenes in Espolin Johnson's art engage explicitly with the complex relations specific to the northern region – the many cultural encounters between different groups of people in small-knit communities on the margins of the Norwegian society, not to mention the European one. His wide range of motifs is almost always presented within a sense of collectivity, and the many images of hardship and distress evoke empathy, identification, and solidarity; – they suggest struggle and survivability. The many depictions of Russian culture across the borders, the portraits of Sami people, and the pictures of fishermen and life on the coast inhabit locality, and Espolin Johnson's development of idiosyncratic techniques and styles emphasizes this sense of indigeneity.

Holst's art is one of far more decontextualized scenes of individual subjects, in which he integrates the local with the alien, the uncanny, and the unknown. Winter, snow, darkness, and cold imply a northern climate in many of his paintings. These and other images frequently explore the dark and interior landscapes of the local community and the individual mind. The pictures incite wonder and shock, and they engender disintegration, death, and repulsion. They prise open macabre moods and individual interiors which have had no place in the traditional visual imagining of communities up north, nor in the art of Espolin Johnson. Consequently, Espolin Johnson and Holst frequently imagine contrary and complementary contours of the same communities.

Espolin Johnson's and Holst's art not only concur with the three major principles of Anderson's imagined communities, but their visual imaginations also interact with his other discursive positions. Religion is part of their cultural roots, however differently the two artists relate to this institutionalization of the metaphysical dimension. A reli-

gious spirit informs many of Espolin Johnson's images, whereas the visual universe of Holst acts in opposition to religious dogma, doctrines, and orthodoxy. Some of Espolin Johnson's visuals attend directly to Anderson's emphasis on military death; in Holst's imagination death only exists as an individual event. The art of both artists, however, can be interpreted in close relation to the ideas and spirit of Marx, which is also so important to the theories of Anderson. Despite this triangular hermeneutic relationship between the political theorist and the two painters, the art of Espolin Johnson and Holst, both in contents and form, appears worlds apart – a fact which emphasizes the plural form of Anderson's imagined communities.

Throughout his career, Espolin Johnson's striking motifs and personal technique evolved outside the centres of art-defining discourses, especially the strands of modernism. A popular painter and lithographer, Espolin Johnson was not unaware of the development in a wider world of art at the time. His early explorations of his own medium reveal artistic associations with Edward Munch, German expressionism, Marc Chagall, and possibly cubism.[4] Yet his highly original technique of distilling light and life from self-sooted canvasses through strenuous labour and meticulous scraping suits the shifts from winter darkness to summer light, and the spirit of many coastal communities in northern Norway throughout long periods of the previous century. The crude work to get hold of light in swarth and darkness retains an obvious existential and moral symbolism, and the strenuous search for light and vision also captures Espolin Johnson's Miltonic fate: he struggled with impaired eyesight all his life and grew gradually blind. Espolin Johnson's inimitable technique imbues his many motifs with a very actual sense of human hardship and strenuous life. Consequently, the imagined communities of northern Norway in the thematic concerns, the stylistic techniques, and the personal life of Espolin Johnson are developed in close contact with local life and culture, and his own fate.

Conversely, the far lesser known artist Holst complemented his background from northern Norway by living in Oslo (1966–1968), Vienna (1970–1973), Hamburg (1973–1978), and Nesteng in southeastern Norway (1978–1993). In the continental cities he encountered and engaged with the central artistic trends of his time; pop art, German critical art, and photorealism. All these stylistic characteristics can be traced in his art, but above all Holst immersed himself in surrealism, particularly the visual legacy of great painters such as Salvador Dalí, Rene Magritté, Paul Delvaux, and Yves Tanguy. His life and his themes and techniques thus evolved in exchange with a dominant strand of central European modernism. This reflection of mainstream

Europeanism may have alienated the general public in northern Norway, and is one likely reason for, until very recently, his largely unknown status. The disregard for his art may have been aggravated by his peregrinations, Bohemian lifestyle, and male partnership. Surrealism's uneasy balancing on the borders of the real and the unreal, its complex introversion and frequent exhibition of the sexual and the morbid, and its emergence from the urban, experimental, and intellectual centres of Europe challenged the prevailing spirit and self-identification of many communities in the north, and the images of these communities in the art of Espolin Johnson. In its focus on psychology and interiority, Holst's art also discloses the suppressed and excluded in Anderson's thesis. Espolin Johnson's imagined communities, what Jørgensen calls "visualisations of rural Norway" and "the quiet symbolism of deprived conditions" (2007, 85), are always based upon unity and implicit labour class collectivity, an obvious legacy of Marx. The socialist sympathies underlying Espolin Johnson's art are buttressed by his twenty-year engagement with *Arbeidermagasinet (The Worker)*, a hugely popular journal among workers and the unemployed. These are communities, both in Anderson's academic treatise and Espolin Johnson's visual work, which leave little room for the imagination of individual human complexity, or for issues of gender, sexuality, and age. In Anderson in particular, but also in Espolin Johnson to some extent, singularity is elided into a collective based on a higher unity: "Finally, it is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship." (Anderson 2006, 7)

While Holst populates his universe with individuality and private issues as opposed to social solidarity and public concerns, his art vibrates with other imperatives in the legacy of Marx. Derrida's *hauntology* in *Spectres of Marx* (1994) articulates precisely how the spirits of responsibility, radical critique, and emancipatory promise in Marx's areligious internationalist communism eclipse the spectres of historical materialism, class struggle, and revolution. The former spirits in Marx's legacy inspire Holst's art. Additionally, the uneasy synthesis of Marxist radicalism and Freudian psychoanalysis formed the intellectual basis of continental surrealism from the very beginning (Nadau 1989; Alexandrian 1970; Waldberg 1965), and Holst's art also stalks the artistic climate of his time with radical critique of suppressive social conventions and emancipatory promise of an areligious international community for the individual. Not least do his visions overlap with Marx in his socio-critical exposition of bourgeois decadence. In their themes, techniques, and lives, then, Espolin Johnson and Holst offer dissimilar visions of life in the North, which run parallel and contrary to Anderson's imagined communities, but which also enable a diversity of people in different places and different times to identify with each other

and to establish a conceptual sense of belonging – imagined communities of northern Norway. The imagination of both artists, and its importance, require closer analysis.

THE ART OF ESPOLIN JOHNSON

"The result was an imaginary, psychedelic, shamanistic, romantic fatherland, a crypto-Norway, which is not exactly a country or a nation, but much more an Arctic Dreamcircle", Mendes (2007, 16) writes of Espolin's art, in words that reverberate with the ideas of Anderson.[5] Mendes also argues for the much wider significance of this "Arctic Dreamcircle", Espolin Johnson's imagined community of the north: "The Nordic as the legendary inhabitation of the Norwegian nation. Or its narcissistic, moral reserve" (2007, 19). Mendes's article functions as a useful reminder of the importance of the region which has historically been ignored by the "unselfconscious provincialism" (Anderson 2006, xiii) of the centres of power. Shipping and fishing have historically created national pride and iconography, both promoted by the capital, which for long periods appeared oblivious of where the tradition of sea-faring was still alive and where the vast quantities of fish were and are actually caught. Espolin Johnson's enduring images presented in art the life up north to the northerners themselves. In an article in the daily newspaper *Nordlys* (2012, 3) the retired legendary editor and writer Ivan Kristoffersen declares the indelible impact of Espolin Johnson's art: "like the pictures of Kåre Espolin Johnson are still imprinted on the mind of all northerners". The phenomenal power of Espolin Johnson's art testifies to the significance of visual arts in the processes of imagi(ni)ng communities, and to the mind-blowing effects of its combination with printed text, two of the aspects to which Anderson gives very short shrift.

Espolin Johnson's artistic achievement appears tantamount to a revolution of the mind to people up north. Arntzen (Espolin Johnson and Arntzen 1994) attributes the coming of visual art per se in northern Norway to Espolin Johnson's accomplishment. His introduction to *Og langsomt kom lyset (And slowly came the light)* pays tribute to Espolin Johnson not only as a great artist, but also as the herald of art itself in the north. Before him, art, theories of art, and aesthetic discourse belonged to the "unselfconscious provincialism" (Anderson 2007, xiii) and those accustomed to the conceit that everything important stems from the capitals and centres of power. Arntzen explains:

> *For most northerners, the word "art" was almost foreign for centuries. While the newspapers in the capital in the last century wrote long articles and hefty debates about art, we up north still had little*

> *to say about this side of human existence.*
> *Behold, "your man Espolin" emerged. He came from Jarfjorn in Finnmark. Nothing special about that, but the peculiar thing was that he was a visual artist. Or whatever they call it.*
> *They talked in big words about him down south, whereas we in the north met him first and foremost through* ***Arbeidermagasinet*** *and* ***Vett og Uvett [Sense and Nonsense]****. And were proud of him. (Espolin Johnson and Arntzen 1994, 4)*

In northern Norway art arrives as a concept independently of defining discourses, and only in concurrence with Espolin Johnson's images, particularly in the magazine *Arbeidermagasinet* and the popular collection of humorous folk tales from northern Norway, *Vett og Uvett (Sense and Nonsense)*.[6] Bye (2000, 10) agrees and regards Espolin Johnson's art as one of self-assured local integrity in a nation of "people unsure of their own culture, uncritically aping any impulse from abroad, a country staggering under the immense pressure from an increasingly globalized world". As a concept and as an imaginative practice, art emerges from Espolin Johnson and an increasingly self-conscious region. "Thank God you do not need to be an 'art expert' to take Kaare's works to heart", Bye (2010, 8) confesses. However much the popular power of Espolin Johnson's art ensued from his wide range of thematic concerns, stylistic peculiarity, biographical facts, historical events, and cultural changes, Arntzen's emphasis on the publication of Espolin Johnson's art in *Arbeidermagasinet* and *Vett og Uvett* relates directly to Anderson's point of print-capitalism "which made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways" (Anderson 2006, 36).

Anderson (2006, 37–46) rehearses the established fact that the printing revolution changed the appearance, state, and our imaginings of the world, but his print capitalism bases itself on books, and text-based books only. He pays no attention to the wider plethora of print products such as journals, magazines, periodicals, fanzines, and broadsheets, which often present a more immediately subversive impact given their interest-driven and low-cost mode of production. Neither does he consider the potential power of illustrated texts. In terms of imagining northern Norway, Espolin Johnson offered his artistic visions in a large number of books, Christmas magazines, exhibitions, murals, and journals.[7] "We in the north met him first and foremost through *Arbeidermagasinet*", Arntzen (1994, 4) explains, and Espolin Johnson's enduring engagement with the popular magazine is indeed a special case.

Espolin Johnson became an important and popular illustrator in *Arbeidermagasinet* early on, contributing with 496 illustrations and 45 covers from 1932 to 1952, and with 71 illustrations in 28 issues in 1933 and 6 covers and 47 illustrations in 33 issues in 1940, which were his peak years of participation (Pedersen 2000, 343–346). The weekly magazine held strong socialist, even communist, leanings and gained increasing popularity throughout the 1930s.[8] During the recessions of the 1930s northern Norway suffered an even higher rate of unemployment than most other places, and the vast majority of the few available jobs were all in primary industries. National resources gravitated towards Oslo and central Norway, whereas people up north oriented themselves in circumpolar directions, towards Sápmi, the neighbouring Nordic countries, and the Soviet Union. The Russian connection grew ever stronger during the Second World War and the liberation of Finnmark by the Russians. Finnmark, Troms, and Nordland, the three northernmost counties, were known as the red region until the 1980s. Espolin Johnson's thematic concerns and stylistic techniques provided the diverse population of northern Norway, who might never meet, with acutely recognizable visions of their own situation.

"You cannot only watch, you also need to listen to his pictures, to hear his voice", Bye (2000, 9) says of Espolin Johnson's images. His visuals speak the idiom of the *Arbeidermagasinet* and are attentive to the many language varieties of the authors with whom he cooperated closely, Zappfe and Arntzen in particular. In this respect, his illustrations have what Anderson (2006, 39) calls the "revolutionary vernacularizing thrust". The publication in books and periodicals of a written and a visual language that was instantly recognized and enjoyed by different people in different places up north, and which was sometimes, especially in the case of *Vett og Uvett*, barely understood elsewhere in Norway, was radically empowering to a region ignored by the centres of language, arts, and power. "And what does not this voice tell us?" Bye (2000, 9) asks and continues:

> *of people, landscape, events and ideas that have filled him with awe and joy, with tears and laughter, and with anger – the latter in the gripping picture of Russian prisoners of war used as donkeys during the withdrawal of the German army from Finnmark in 1944 … Of human greatness, will to live and ability to survive … Of life at sea.*

Bye explains with inimitable insight the achievement of Espolin Johnson's art, and with great empathy the power of imagined communities. Bye was born in Brooklyn, worked some years in England, and lived most of his life near Oslo, and yet he appears to be both a subject and co-creator of Espolin Johnson's imagined northern

Norway. Bye's meditations could be read as a hermeneutic index to Espolin Johnson's wide-ranging catalogue. Almost all of his images include people, integrated into the northern topography of inclement nature, and into the history of the region. With great compassion and solidarity, Espolin Johnson portrays the people of the north in their hardships and joys. A very limited selection of his large production will have to represent the imagined communities his art portrays.

Some of the artist's own words about his art articulate many of Anderson's ideas in another idiom:

> *My heart remains in northern Norway. That is where I spent my childhood and youth. You never get done with childhood. The memories and impressions have stayed with me all my life. They are now part of my pictures. Nature, wild life, and the common people up north. Poverty and struggle for the daily bread. The faith and hope among the people I got to know and love so much. The enormous forces of nature, the drama, the greatness, the beauty, and the mystery were my breathing ground. (Espolin Johnson and Arntzen 1994, 2)*

Religion, probably the largest of any imagined communities, at least before the arrival of the internet community that Anderson's book predates, constitutes the primary cultural root of Anderson's imagined communities. "The great merit of traditional religious world-views … has been their concern with man-in-the-cosmos, man as species being, and the contingency of life", Anderson contends (2006, 10). In such a world-view, Espolin Johnson's art is religious. Again, his own words parallel those of Anderson: "The simple and the rough of the nature and the people have nonetheless concerned me the most. You do not know where man ends and nature starts. To me, they are woven together in a *holy* union" (Espolin Johnson and Arntzen 1994, 2, emphasis mine). Arntzen also testifies to the religious dimension in Espolin Johnson's art: "He let the light of the Almighty fall upon the pallid faces in the dark night. He painted hope in hopelessness" (Espolin Johnson and Arntzen 1994, 4). Many of his motifs accentuate a religious dimension, others exude the sacredness of human life in cosmos. The grieving couple among the crosses in *Kirkegården ved havet (The Churchyard by the Sea*, 1949) and the kneeling fisherman amidst the mountains in *Bønn* (*Prayer*, 1972) point directly to the religious dimension of man's life on earth and sea (Espolin Johnson and Arntzen 1994, 89, 91). Several images also integrate a spiritual realm beyond life. The brightly-lit boys in *Fylgje* (*Guardian Angel*, 1949) could be a guardian angel as much as a friend. In the spectral chiaroscuro of *Enken* (*The Widow*,

Kaare Espolin Johnson, Fylgje (Guardian Angel), 1949, lithograph, 39 x 53 cm, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo, Norway

1979) and *Lysbroen* (*The Light Bridge*, 1986), the dead at sea haunt the seascapes and the bereaved (Espolin Johnson and Arntzen 1994, 7, 23, 55). Religious leaders and sacred buildings are presented in the many portraits of Petter Dass and in the many motifs of the Boris Gleb community (G. Espolin Johnson 1997, 25–29, 140–141). Furthermore, several images place man in a random universe. Life is fragile, and the imbalance between human frailty and the sheer force of the elements is so immense that this disproportion produces metaphysical awe. Man is constantly overpowered, frequently to the point of death and beyond, by powers that appear mightier than their obvious physical force.

In Espolin Johnson's cosmos the elements and the panoramic dimensions also put the existence of man into a metaphysical perspective. Several scenes depict encounters with the unfathomable. The dilemma of man and metaphysics is a universal one, although these images include north Norwegian characteristics in landscape and historical refer-

BARENTS STUDIES: *Peoples, Economies and Politics*
VOL. 3 | ISSUE 1 | 2016

ence. The doubt and the turning away from light and scripture in *Den gamle prest* (*The Old Priest*, 1949) reveals clearly that traditional religion, such as Christianity, may not account for all speculations on human existence (Espolin Johnson and Arntzen 1994, 11). However, the sea dominates as omnipotence in the human condition of Espolin Johnson's imaginative universe. Many of the scenes from the sea, such as most of the illustrations to Bojer's *Den siste viking* (*The Last Viking*, 1972), reveal the capacity of man to master the sea,[9] but several also pit man against its formidable powers. The praying youngster alone in the small boat in storm in *I havsnød* (*Distress at Sea*', 1967) portrays mortal danger, as does *På hvelvet* (*On the Keel*, 1980) (Espolin Johnson and Arntzen 1994, 83; and G. Espolin Johnson 1997, 103, 136). Many of Espolin Johnson's pictures are religious in their sheer focus on the limits of human existence, in "their concern with man-in-the-cosmos, man as species being, and the contingency of life", as Anderson argues in another context (2006, 10).

Man's grave is the cradle of gods. Espolin Johnson's art often portrays the contingencies of human existence in a vast cosmos, the situations of life and death. *Himmelskipet* (*The Skyship*, 1982) offers an iconic illustration of man's relations to the metaphysical powers (Espolin Johnson and Arntzen 1994, 47; G. Espolin Johnson 1997, 116). In this image the ship sails in suspension between this world and the next. The six oarsmen in the Nordland hooker row strenuously against the waves and the winds. The composition does not reveal whether this is just another ordinary workday or a moment of deep distress – frequently the same situation, as life at sea could turn dangerous in a matter of minutes, even seconds, at any time of any day. The oarsmen row on unperturbed in their battle with the sea. Inured by a lifetime and previous generations' combat with the sea and the weather, the sturdy fishermen tackle the cosmic powers with quotidian poise and pathos. The title – *Himmelskipet* (*The Skyship*) – adds a metaphysical dimension to the picture. The fishermen are possibly already heading for higher realms, from death by drowning at sea to a spiritual haven for their souls. A metaphysical dimension

Kaare Espolin Jonson, Himmelskipet (The Skyship). Lithograph, 1982, 65 cm x 45 cm.
National Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo, Norway

appears imbricated from the beginning in their daily work as the prow takes the shape of a cross. The heavenly dimension is enhanced by a "God's eye" perspective: the boat is seen from above. The metaphysical importance of the cross is striking, however much this religious symbol belongs to the enabling wave-cutting design of the boat itself. An illuminated halo of salty froth or heavenly light surrounds the prow cross in order to stress the journey between the sea and the sky, between the worldly and the spiritual, between man's daily cross and the unknown of the cosmos. Espolin Johnson drew inspiration from Harry Martinson's poetic space epic *Aniara* (1956), and explains: "in this work the human beings have made a spaceship in order to escape from a ruined Mother Earth. I thought of our future and made a picture where we are all in the same boat" (Espolin Johnson and Arntzen 1994, 48). A myriad of possible allusions in the picture to parables of fishing and wonders at sea in the Bible, to interior church architecture, and to journeys of life symbolism in all arts augment the metaphysical dimension of this mundane sea scene in Espolin Johnson's cosmic universe.

Hardly anybody in northern Norway, especially in the coastal communities, has remained untouched by the immense powers of the sea. In the shape of the Nordland hooker, *Himmelskipet* is instantly recognizable to people of northern Norway, as is the image's metaphysical awe. Life along the coast and at sea looms large in the history, identity, and contemporary conceptualizations of Norway. The conditions of fragile human existence upon the crux of the mundane and the divine dimension, Anderson's "man-in-the-cosmos" (2006, 10), create a universal perspective. Rooted in the culture of religion, Espolin Johnson's *Himmelskipet* imagines a northern Norwegian community which appeals far beyond its own borders.[10]

Anderson (2006, 9–10) claims that the importance of military action is one of the cultural roots for patriotism. The population in northern Norway took the brunt of the German occupation in Norway and suffered mass evacuation, executions, and large-scale destruction. "The war is physical, palpably omnipresent in the collective memory up north", Mendes (2007, 39) argues in his analysis of the historical backdrop for Espolin's visual imagination. Anderson stresses in particular the significance of cenotaphs and tombs of unknown soldiers. This emphasis on war memorials strikes a raw nerve in Espolin Johnson's illustration to Gunnar Reiss-Andersen's poem *'Ukjente Soldater'* (*Unknown Soldiers*) in *Arbeidermagasinet* (8, 1934).[11] In a black, white, and red triangular-shaped print centrally placed in Reiss-Andersen's stanzas, a rising or setting sun and clusters of ramshackle crosses reign over deformed bodies – which look spectacularly alive despite their obvious deceased state – scattered across a diverse

landscape of hills and rail tracks. A body being racked on Ixion's wheel occupies a central place, a graphic symbol of torture and eternity. The conspicuous absence of military paraphernalia, the socialist realism of the picture, and the contents of the poem reveal that the unknown soldiers also include all workers who have given their lives in the hard labour of society-building. Yet any traditional type of monumental presentation of heroic bodies in social realism has been broken, and a seminal type of cubistic decomposition undermines order and decorum – a stylistic crossroads that charges physical strength with deterioration, and marks historical transitions on a stylistic level. Forcefully, the image exudes antiheroic heroism. The tragic heroism of war and labour lies with the countless anonymous dead. Nevertheless, the agile spirit of the picture adds life to the deceased; a veneration and commemoration of all the men who gave their lives for the protection and development of their community. In war and work, the dead heroes outcount the living, and they entomb the survivors in grief. Espolin Johnson's vigorous and vigilant lithographic cenotaph appears as much a prophetic vision of the wars and horrors to come as an artistic document of those past.

In a wider context the image also comments on the totalitarian marches in contemporary Europe. This harrowing illustration captures imaginatively the grief for fallen heroes of war and work, the worries for the political drama of contemporary Europe, and the armies of the anonymous dead on the front and in labour camps during the 1930s up to 1945. *Ukjente soldater* constitutes one of Anderson's "arresting emblems" (2006, 9), a graphic version of the cenotaphs of all those who died for community and cause that Anderson deems a primary root for his imagined communities.

As a vision of war, work, and the march of ideologies at the time, and of an imminent world war, Espolin Johnson's harrowing image of the unknown soldiers connects closely with *Fangetog* (*Train of Prisoners*', 1969; Espolin Johnson and Arntzen 1994, 27; appendix 4). In this depiction of Russian prisoners of war on Norwegian soil, historical specificity, geographical locality, and communal solidarity complement the anonymity and universality of *Ukjente soldater*. In one of his few images of war Espolin Johnson foregrounds the fate of Russian prisoners in Finnmark in 1944.[12] Two thirds of the 100,000 Russian war prisoners in Norway were encamped in the North, and the region holds several mass graves of unknown soldiers.[13] Espolin Johnson's lithography also includes apposite artistic reference to the great Russian realist painter and sculptor Ilya Repin's large oil on canvas, the *Barge Haulers on the Volga* (1873). These works converge in their portrayal of solidarity labour in a local community. *Fangetog* (*Train of Prisoners*, 1969) is also one of the images Bye singles out for specific attention, conveying as it does

Kaare Espolin Johnson, Fangetog (Train of Prisoners), 1969, lithograph, 48 x 56 cm,
Private, Galleri Espolin, Nyvågar, (BONO), Norway

the people, landscape, history, and anger that large parts of the population in northern Norway suffered during the last convulsions of the Second World War in Finnmark. In this illustration to Hølmebakk's *Fimbulvinter* (*Hard Winter*), the exhausted Russian prisoners are driven like donkeys to facilitate the scorched earth tactics of the German withdrawal: they are exploited and dehumanized in the war machinery. The almost black and white imagery emphasizes the clear-cut opposition of good and evil, soldiers and prisoners, Germans and Russians, war and peace. Individual suffering and the clash of oppositional powers are integrated in the combat of indifferent elements that add cosmic scale to the scene.[14] The human convoy treads the earth under the dark sky, while the flames from destruction of war trail the train, and the ferocious sea appears to threaten them all. It is significant that Espolin Johnson focuses on Soviet prisoners in his images of war. This haunting commemoration also testifies to the humble compas-

sion people in northern Norway hold for the long-standing Russian fellow northerners in the midst of the crisis and suffering in Finnmark, "the palpably omnipresent in the collective memory up north" (Mendes 2007, 39). The suffering and death of Russian soldiers in northern Norway during the war in Espolin Johnson's *Fangetog* unites the war generation all over the region and preserves the spirit of commemoration and neighbourly solidarity for future generations. Together with his religious images, Espolin Johnson's images of war and death draw upon the two cultural bases Anderson finds underpinning so many imaginative communities.

As an immediate response to the armed conflicts in Indochina in 1978–1979, Anderson's treatise naturally retains a conflict-ridden history and geography as a point of departure. In this respect, he excludes many other significant roots for the imaging of communities. Peaceful coexistence is as important a cultural base as religion and war in the imagining of northern Norway, and *Grenselandet* (*The Borderland*' 1964, 1980, 1990; G. Espolin Johnson 1997, 26–28) assumes an iconic position in the presentation of imagined communities in Espolin Johnson's art.[15] The title predicts a specific contested zone, as the definite article implies. With a view to Espolin Johnson's childhood, the themes and styles of the image, as well as its cultural, historical, and political context, the geographical borderland is bound to be that between Russia and Norway.[16] Yet the image counteracts the title's standard expectations of binary opposition, national borders, and geographical demarcations. In its boundless perspective and comprehensive integrationism, it also counteracts topographical divisions, the more generic ones of spatial separation and temporal differentiation, and even those of aesthetic categorization.

In Espolin Johnson's borderland, multinational communities defy conventional divisions in a boundless place of distilled infinity. The image presents constellations of four groups of people. At the forefront three old men rest piously in front of an onion-domed church, while to the left a couple of children stick together. To the right a mother watches over a baby in her cradle, and below another mother plays with a child on her shoulders. These four groups exist next to each other in peaceful harmony, transcending any expected divisions. The three old men are likely to be Russian parishioners or clergy, possibly travellers, in front of the Boris Gleb church. They are easily recognizable from a previous image, *De tre hellige gamle men* (*The Three Old Holy Men*'), which was first made as an illustration to an eponymous story by Leo Tolstoy in a Christmas magazine in 1950 (G. Espolin Johnson 1997, 25). As well as reinforcing the link to Russian culture, this fact also reveals the creative inspiration Espolin Johnson receives

from the sister arts. The church, in front of which the three men are placed, manifests a couple of border crossings itself; first and foremost as a religious institution during the Marxist secularization after 1917, and secondly, as being a Russian enclave on the Norwegian side of the Pasvik river that otherwise demarcates the border between the two nations. The two children in the painting, judged by their clothing, appear to be Norwegian. The Sami cradle of the child on the far right indicates the background of this mother and child. The mother with the child on her shoulders appears less identifiable. Are they Finnish, Swedish, Russian, Sami, Norwegian, or travellers? Or possibly Kven people, another group of Finno-Swedish-Norwegian people in northern Scandinavia, who were granted minority status in Norway in 1996 and whose language was recognized as a minority language in 2005.

In a bigger picture, these four groups of people in the painting point to the four geographical directions and to a global dimension. All the traditional four ages of man – childhood, adolescence, maturity, old age – are included; the four groups complete the circle of life. They also balance on the borders of established families. The old men could be family, but also members of a homo-gendered community, religious or secular. The two children could be family – Espolin Johnson and his sister? – or friends, even from different communities. The women may be widows or single mothers as much as wives with absent husbands. In the indeterminate civil status of all the people, the image embraces the established and the estranged. The people are placed on the moors, a landscape that is generic to many nations in the Northern Cape. In the background the moon and the rainbow indicate both day and night in order to compress all time into the same scene, in the same manner as the scene compresses global dimensions. A sense of peace and harmony, accentuated by the many smiling faces, the restful postures, and the subtle blend of colours, reigns over the people.

The integrationist stance and conciliatory spirit of these encounters of people, nations, religions, cultures, and ethnicities are empowered by the painting's stylistics. The mixed techniques of traditional scrapes and the unusual addition of colouration present on a formal level the motif's integrationist stance. Similarly, the supplementation of colours adds a rare optimistic, idyllic, and Romantic touch to the characteristic black-and-white harshness. The stylistics of the painting also cross boundaries in its obvious homage to Marc Chagall. The, for Espolin Jonson, unusual application of bright colours and the dreamlike pleasantness consolidate the theme of amicable coexistence in its reverential reference to the great modernist from Vitebsk. This tribute to the Russian-French artist also reinforces the sympathy for Russian people in *Fangetog*.

Kaare Espolin Johnson, Grenselandet (The Borderland), 1980, lithograph, 59 x 73 cm, Private, Galleri Espolin, Nyvågar, (BONO), Norway

In its title and theme, *Grenselandet* (*The Borderland*) also presents itself as an icon of Espolin Johnson's border-breaking position in the central discourses of Norwegian art history. Danbolt (2007) demonstrates in his brilliant essay how Espolin Johnson's idiosyncratic art defied and endured the aesthetic principles of classical composition and traditional conventions of the twentieth century's central discourses of Greenberg's modernism and Adorno's aesthetic autonomy, as well as the calls for political commitment in the late 1960s and 1970s. *Grenselandet* epitomizes how Espolin Johnson's art eschews the aesthetic imperatives from the centres of art and theory, just like the painting opposes the political directives of its own time. In its undefinability, it makes its own borders of aesthetic autonomy and political commitment.

However idyllic and Romantic *Grenselandet* appears, its themes and techniques are political within the borders the image sets for itself. This imagined community is based

on human compassion and the peaceful coexistence of a plurality of different people beyond the traditional factors of identity and belonging: nation, religion, territory, ethnicity, gender, age. These people coexist in opposition to all the defining discourses, often from the centres of power which categorize and compartmentalize people. To visualize a community of diversity beyond the conventional criteria of social structures is by far not an apolitical act. Moreover, Espolin Johnson made the first version of this motif in 1964, at a time of the Cold War, when northern Norway constituted one of the fronts. The companionship in the picture across the many Russian borders challenges the contemporary stigmatizations of "the red scare" and the official policies of the central political powers of NATO-associated Oslo and Europe. *Grenselandet* was first painted as a mural in Kirkenes police station. Thus, the image has always worked as a daily reminder of coexistence across the many boundaries in one of the central institutions for controlling the operations of so many of the borders which the image transcends. Espolin Johnson's motif of integration must also have offered the many visitors of all types to the police station from different nations, cultures, and categories a warm welcome.

Both in subject matter and context, *Grenselandet* envisions a community where borders are drawn differently, in line with human compassion, care, and integration. Peaceful coexistence, which often receives little attention in Anderson's thesis, exists as one of the cultural bases for imagining communities in northern Norway. In 1964 this imagined community challenged the official policies concerning the Cold War, the Sami population, migratory cultures, and conventional family constellations. When Espolin Johnson rereleased new versions of the motif in 1980 and 1990, the image preceded and coincided with Mikhail Gorbachev's glasnost and perestroika in 1985–1991. Espolin Johnson's vision anticipated the reforms that were to come in Norwegian policies and the Barents cooperation, the new Sami Parliament, and family reforms. His powerful vision still has a bearing on today's discourses on multiculturalism.

Espolin Johnson's art, of which *Himmelskipet* (*The Skyship*), *Ukjente soldater (Unknown Soldiers*), *Fangetog* (*Train of Prisoners*), and *Grenselandet* (*The Borderland*) are prime examples, demonstrates in the visual realm many of Anderson's ideas. His art imagines a collective sense of belonging and identity to numerous people who have never met and will perhaps never meet, but still conceive of themselves as members of a "deep, horizontal comradeship". His art is both "sovereign" and "limited" (Anderson 2006, 7) as its spirit and subject matter defy the official discourse from the many centres of power. Most of the members of this community are aware of their position in the

cosmos and of the greater powers that might be. They are harrowed by war and united by their unprivileged situation and hard work. As Espolin Johnson's works open our eyes to the significance of visual arts in the processes of imagining communities, his art, *Grenselandet* in particular, also depicts a community of multicultural coexistence, which obviously belongs to the North.

THE ART OF BJARNE HOLST

Holst and Espolin Johnson's art has much in common. Both are figurative and largely narrative and markedly northern. Their universe is basically masculine. Many of their images also overlap in portraying man's combat with overwhelming forces. Despite these similarities, the two differ distinctly in styles, themes, and moods. Holst's use of striking colours, the loneliness, madness, and death of his many detached individuals, and the *animus* of shock, repulsion, and rebellion distinguish drastically his imaginings of northern Norway from those of Espolin Johnson. Whereas critics discuss Espolin Johnson's art as entirely idiosyncratic (Danbolt 2007), realistic and magic (Jørgensen 2007), multistylistic (Vaa 2007), ingenious in its details (Mathisen 2007), popular (Gulowsen 2007), and universal (Lie 2006), all critics tend to corroborate Ljøgodt's definition of Holst as a "surrealist from the North" (Ljøgodt 2003, 67) – a term never attributed to Espolin Johnson's art. The art of both relates, however differently, to Anderson's ideas of imagined communities, but Holst's alternative visions present stark versions of otherworldly landscapes and dark regions of interior psychology as opposed to Espolin Johnson's integrated communities of unanimous spirit. Holst's art offers an imagined community for all the people up North who are not easily integrated or who resist integration; all the people who feel and think differently from their immediate environment. Consequently, Holst's visions are not much concerned with religion or heroic militarism, two of the dominant characteristics of many northern locations and Espolin Johnson's images. When they do occur in Holst's oeuvre, as in *Barndåp* (*Baptism*, 1970) as a scathing attack on clergy, church rituals, and established religion, or in *Krigsfugl* (*Bird of War,* 1976) as a play on birds of war (hawks and eagles) and as a humorous disclosure of military order and affectation, they present entirely different modes from Espolin Johnson's treatment of the same themes (Ljøgodt 2003, 21, 36).

The moods of both Espolin Johnson and Holst relate to the traditional and the Derridean legacy of Marx's ideas. Holst's art rallies for radical critique of moral and social structures of suppression and retains an emancipatory promise for social equality for the many outcasts and dissenters, where Espolin Johnson's is more defined by ordinary

social struggles. In a Marx-like spirit, Holst's art often derides the double standards and decadence of the well-to-do and the established order, while Espolin Johnson sides with the poor and the deprived. Holst's surrealism offers an alternative imagined community to the many individuals who identify themselves by unusual thinking and unconventional emotions, and who place their sense of belonging elsewhere than their immediate community and outside its dominant collective concerns.

"Surrealism never came to Norway, it only existed as life itself without so many noticing", Jensen argues (2003, 16). As a well-known international film director from the North, Jensen understands better than most people the *unheimlich* and uncanny universe of Holst's imagination, and his enigmatic comment speaks to the quality of surrealism. Jensen's quip primarily refers to surrealism as a particular type of aesthetic modernism that developed on the continent in the 1920s and 1930s, and to the many absurdities that sometimes afflict human life. Surrealism – the encounter of Marxist radicalism and Freudian psychology in the aesthetic realm – constitutes Holst's imaginary: his stylistic choices, alogicalities, and emotional ambivalences of life and a landscape a place apart complement Espolin Johnson's visions. Holst's art presents an imagined community that includes the psychological interior of many individuals in northern Norway and the paraphysical qualities of the landscape in which they live.

As an arctic surrealist, Holst's landscapes are generally circumpolar. Yet many viewers will recognize in the contours, climate, and perspectives of his art the specifics of Magerøya, the northernmost island in Norway with the North Cape plateau. "My Magerøy landscape I can conjure up at any time", Holst said (Ljøgodt 2003, 42). Surrealism is the true nature, often literally, of Holst's images. *Hvitt land* (*Whiteland,* 1988; Ljøgodt 2003, 15) designates the colours and delineates the sculptural contours of the snowscapes that appear unreal to many people who have not experienced the optical tricks of nature in northern Norway. This is where the northern lights and the chiaroscuro of blue in winter, the midnight sun and the palette of glow in summer, the blindness of whiteouts and the sublimity of panoramic landscape imbue daily existence with an aura of magic and almost palpable metaphysicality.

The metaphysicality in Holst's art is coupled with an idiosyncratic artistic vision that we might call *anthropomorh-icing*. The anthropomorphic nature of the arctic and the polar topography that unfold within the metaphysical dimension reflect the temperament of the human mind as much as the cold and wintry environment. This *anthropomorh-icing* runs as a characteristic throughout much of Holst's art. Holst's haunting anthro-

pomorficing marks his visions with individual peculiarity in the manner that scraping to light from soot characterizes the art of Espolin Johnson.

The *anthropomorphicing* in Holst's art imagines icy soulscapes for all those in northern Norway who feel estranged from the brutal elements of nature, frozen out from their community, or alienated from themselves. The haunting face in the deep dark below the snow and sky in the image in *Untitled* from 1993 (Ljøgodt 2003, 48) illustrates vividly that the surreal landscapes that exist in so many of Holst's images also reflect an interior psychological and emotional landscape. *Vinterhave* (*Winter Garden*, 1980; Ljøgodt 2003, 43), in its depopulated and petrified atmosphere, belongs to the same surrealist topography, but as far as Holst's images are concerned, with an unusual warm human temperature. The insulated trees in the garden illustrate cultivation, care, and wintering out – typical human moods of survival in arctic climates, of both the physical and the psychological type.

This anthropomorphicing, the bizarre confluence of the natural and the human in Holst's arctic climate, reaches an apogee in *Mann med slips* (*Man with Tie,* 1975; Ljøgodt 2003, 31). In what could be described as a polarmorphic human being or anthropomorphic iceberg, a Nordic landscape of night, ice, snow, and sea makes up a phallic human figure. The human and the natural conflate to suggest an otherworldly state of shock, sterility, frigidity, and death. The apprehensive image possibly represents *pibloktoq*, the contested psychological diagnosis of social withdrawal, excitement, convulsion, and recovery frequently associated with people (mostly women) in Inuit communities, an arctic version of Freud's *hysteria* that some scholars attribute to indigenous personality and culture, and others to the penetration into this culture by foreigners. Most certainly, the icy image presents psychological states of emotional paralysis, masculine anxiety, homoerotic fear, and autoerotic abjection. Furthermore, the image envisions the dark and the cold of the human mind as much as the austerity and the barrenness of the artic land. While personifying aspects of the arctic, the psycho-topographical vision *Mann med slips* explores human psychology – the hidden realm in Espolin Johnson's imaginings of northern Norway, and the dimension absent in Anderson's theories of imagined communities.

Død linerle (*Dead Wagtail*, 1972; Ljøgodt 2003, 27) illustrates Holst's idiosyncratic feature most vividly and corresponds with Espolin's art and Anderson's theories. In this image the exterior landscape crashes into the room of a double-imaged man. Elements of nature – water, snow, stone, and ice – which precipitate into the elegant room, are

symbolic of the disruptive forces of the mind which take control of the man holding the dead wagtail in his hands, and which upset the atmosphere of the affluent home. The lifeless wagtail, a dead summer bird in a winter landscape, is an obvious *memento mori*. Probably, the bird also symbolizes the death of emotions, soul, and art. The wide-staring eyes of the man exude shock and horror. He is terrified by the elements and the dead bird. Perhaps he has killed the bird himself and is shocked by his own cruelty. Perhaps the bird embodies a number of deaths in his own life, of innocence and of expectations, and of accepted emotions and ordinary life, as well as relationships, more than the passing away of family and friends. That the man is portrayed twice, the one at the back crying on his own shoulder, imbues the painting with psychomachia and schizophrenia. The whiteness that brings the man, the bird, the elegant room, and the landscape crashing in, and which posits an anthropomorphicing symbol of purity and innocence as much as frigidity and death, unites uncontrollable human and natural forces in a paranormal state.

Holst's *Død linerle* (*Dead Wagtail*) supplements Espolin Jonson's motif of man versus nature with man versus himself. Whether the man's deportation from himself results from incongeniality with the harsh natural conditions, some narcissistic obsession of bourgeois decadence, or personal psychological disturbances, or all three, the image contrasts strongly with those of Espolin Jonson's of team spirit and indomitable survival. *Død linerle* offers an image of identification to the many dispersed individuals in northern Norway and the arctic region who feel alienated from the location into which they were born, and from themselves. These anthtropomorphicing states imagine some of the subcultural groups that are suppressed, or even excluded, by the predominance of collectivity, religion, and war in Anderson's imagined communities.

Most of Holst's paintings include mixed landscapes of environment and emotions where arctic nature assumes human features, and where desolate landscapes, frost, and barrenness parallel individual loneliness, mental climate, and human frigidity. All the scenes in the longer series *Trollfuglen i Gwais Kun's by* (*The Bird of Sorcery in Gwais Kun's City*, 1977; Ljøgodt 2007, 38–39), which present fantastical contours of bizarre sexuality, reliefs of grotesqueries, and strands of derangement and death, reveal the *ultima thule* of this anthropomorphicing. Like this series, many of Holst's anthropomorphicing paintings extend from individual introspection to human relationships, and *Gestillte Sehnsucht*. Ella og Johannes Brahms ('*Gestilte Sehnsucht. Ella and Johannes Brahms*', 1974; Ljøgodt 2003, 24) could serve as an example of all the anthropomorphicing of relationships that also occurs in *Eight Hot Sisters*' (1972; Ljøgodt 2003, 34);

Trollfuglen i Gwais Kuns by (The Bird of Sorcery in Gwais Kun's City), 1977, acrylic painting, 24 x 32 cm, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo, Norway

Parlek (*Coupled Games*, 1990–1991; Ljøgodt 2003, 34); *Vintersang* (*Winter Song*, 1980; Ljøgodt 2003, 44); *Fløy en liten blåfugl* (*At Flight Little Bluebird*, 1973; Ljøgodt 2003, 56); and *I sykeværelset II* (*In the Sick Room II,* 1975; Ljøgodt 2003, 57). These images and many others connect the anthropomorphicing aspects of Holst's art to emotional states between two people; often the personally unacknowledged socially suppressed, and morally forbidden passions and fantasies between them: the frozen forces of mind and self.

In *Gestillte Sehnsuch*t a glaring sunlight and a littoral landscape invade a prosperous living room of an elderly couple. The lady in the white dress up front, bathed in sunlight, reads a letter, whereas the man in a black suit at the back playing the grand piano is integrated into the black pebbles that invade his corner. The scene exudes jealousy and impotence, but most of all the married couple are placed in entirely opposite emotional states. The binary distinction of light and landscape in the scene indicates divorce, the

Bjarne Holst, Kjærlighet til en snemann (Love for a Snowman), 1988, acrylic painting, 60 x 80 cm, Private, Nordnorsk Kunstmuseum

duality of physical desire and spiritual interests, the gender battle of woman and man, the power struggle between wife and husband, the oppositions of nature and culture. A superimposition upon the couple's situation – husband and wife? – of the arctic nature creates an emotional topography beyond the physical and corporeal.

Holst's painting charts the deterioration from love, marital passion, and companionship to cold division and divorce. Perhaps the scene presents one or two homosexuals confined in a conventional marriage. While the title refers to Ella Adayevskaya and Johannes Brahms, Holst's painting obviously plays on emotional relations between the German composer and the Russian pianist. The manner in which the moods and divisions of Holst's *Gestillte Sehnsucht* enacts the counterpoint technique, the complex and highly disciplined type of music for which the great German composer and musician of the Romantic period is so well known, is also significant. In a hermeneutic

possibility liberated from the title, the man at the piano, by his looks and appearance, could also be Marx. In this context, the binary structures in Holst's painting enact the Hegelian dynamics of Marx's philosophy. Holst's image also replays the enigmatic combination of Marxist politics and Freudian psychology at the heart of traditional surrealism, and possibly questions whether Marxist ideas were in or out of tune at the time of the painting, in 1974. The anthropomorphicing surrealism in *Gestillte Sehnsucht* incorporates aesthetic dimensions and political reorientations as well as individual soulscapes and emotional states between people. On top of, underneath, and in the shadows of Espolin Johnson's imagination, Holst's radical art attends to a wide range of unexpected and unacknowledged aspects of communities in northern Norway, and in those of Anderson's treatise.

Kjærligheten til en snemann (*The Love for a Snowman*, 1985; Ljøgodt 2003, 45; appendix 7) proposes the most chilling anthropomorphicing relationship in Holst's oeuvre. *Endymion* (1984; Ljøgodt 2003, 44) and *Leda med svanen* (*Leda and the Swan*, 1984; Ljøgodt 2003, 45), with their classical reference to mythical legends of unconventional love and their icy geographical and psychological topography belong to the same category. These three chillers can also be seen as visual meditations upon the neo-Freudian term *pibloktoq*. *The Love for a Snowman* also alludes to classical myth, i.e. the enigmatic story of Galatea known from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* where the sculptor Pygmalion falls in love with his own statue Galatea who then comes alive, as well as the numerous reconfigurations of this myth in the shape of Salvador Dalí's muse and wife Gala in the Catalan artist's surrealist oeuvre. Holst's snowman, a paragon of the arctic anthropomorphicy figure in both visuality and language, appears here as a disfigured lump of human-shaped snow. The lover, most likely a man, appears like an apparition out of ice, with a white, snowy face and back skull under a red cap, and with a black hole for an eye and a tongue dispassionately caressing the snowman's neck. The lover is unable to lift his arms to embrace the snowman, and the snowman stands with his back to the lover. Their proximity includes no intimacy nor reciprocity, no warm feelings nor passion; they are utterly alone next to each other, frozen stiff in a black and white, arctic landscape. Both figures are cast as torsos, which adds classical posture and pathos to the painting, but also excludes the sexual part of the body, to add a strong sense of incompletion and sterility to the situation.

In all its lifeless atmosphere, *Kjærligheten til en snemann* exudes desperate love, flawed love, emotional thwartedness, frigidity, sterility, failure, death. This para-polaric topography, which is excluded from Espolin Johnson's paintings, captures forcefully the range

Bjarne Holst: Endymion, 1984, acrylic painting, 80 x 100 cm, Nordkappmuseet, Honningsvåg, Norway

of human emotions that ploughed their way into the imagining of northern Norway with Holst's remarkable achievement. Furthermore, the painting charts the icy climate for homosexuality and same-sex marriages at the time.[17] As the title suggests, the image also portrays the determinate love for any man of snow – the image implies obsession, fetish, and fixation. In all these respects, the haunting anthropomorphicing power of the painting imagines the many other communities in northern Norway, the soulscapes of all individuals who were not emotionally and legally included in the prevailing fabric of their immediate location, or their nation's. As such, Holst's visual art imagines the singular identities and belongings within community, a focus on the individual that Anderson's theories lacks, and Espolin Johnoson's art often ignores.

"Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity / genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined", Anderson argues (2007, 6). Espolin Johnson, in

idiosyncratic scraping to light and life from sooth and darkness, and Holst, in his anthropomorphicing topography and states, imagined the lives in northern Norway in the 20th century. In their striking visual arts, and in their many illustrations to books, magazines, Christmas calendars, and public arenas, both painters testify to the power visual arts, which add to Anderson's print capitalism in the process of imagining communities. How the communities in northern Norway will be imagined in the future, not least in relations to the state, the neighbouring nations, and the EU during this period of great transformations under the national Nordområdepolitikken (Northern regional policies), remains to be seen. Anderson's theories, particularly their focus on imagination, are likely to retain some relevance for future processes, and new artists need to evolve from the visions of Espolin Johnson and Holst in the discourses and imaginings of future communities in northern Norway, the North and the Arctic world.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alexandrine, S., 1970. *Surrealist Art*. London: Thames and Hudson.

Anderson, B., 2006. *Imagined Communities.* London: Verso.

Bye, E., 2000. Velkommen av havet (Welcome of the Sea). In: B.T. Pedersen, ed., *Lengselens billeddikter* (*The Picture Poet of Yearning*). Oslo: Pax Press, pp. 7–11.

Danbolt, G., 2007. Å ordne kunstner og kunstverk: Min lange vei til Espolin Johnsons kunst (To Order Artist and Art: My Long Road to Espolin Johnson's Art). In: A. Vaa, ed., *Å låne øyne å se med: Kaare Espolin Johnsons kunstnerskap*. Trondheim: Tapir Akademisk Forlag, pp. 276–300.

Delanty, G. and Rumford, C., 2005. *Rethinking Europe*. London: Routledge.

Delanty, G., Wodak, R., and Jones, P., 2008. *Identity, Belonging and Migration.* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Derrida, J. 1994. *Spectres of Marx*. New York: Routledge.

Espolin Johnson, K. and Arntzen, A., 1994. *Og langsomt kom lyset* (*And Slowly Came the Light*). Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget.

Espolin Johnson, G. 1997. *Kaare Espolin Johnson: Grafikk* (*Kaare Espolin Johnson: Graphic Art*). Bergen: John Grieg Forlag.

Gulowsen, K., 2007. Intuitiv symbolism: Forsøk på en begrepsfesting (*Intuitive Symbolism: Attempts to Define Terms*). In: A. Vaa, ed., *Å låne øyne å se med*: Kaare Espoliun Johnsons kunstnerskap. Trondheim: Tapir Akademisk Forlag, pp. 246–276.

Jaklin, A., 2012. Utsultede fanger drevet til kannibalisme (Famished Prisoners Driven to Cannibalism). *Nordlys*, 14 April, pp. 44–48.

Jensen, K.E., 2003. Fiolplukkeren (The Violet Picker). In: K. Ljøgodt, ed., *Trollfuglen: Bjarne Holst 1944–1993* (*The Bird of Sorcery: Bjarne Holst 1944–1993*). Tromsø: Nord-Norsk Kunstmuseum, pp. 9–19.

Jørgensen, U.A., 2007. Realisme og magi: Kaare Espolin Johnson og *Arbeidermagasinet* (Realism and Magic: Kaare Espolin Johnson and *Arbeidermagasinet*). Trondheim: Tapir Akademisk Forlag, pp. 62–88.

Holm, G.T., 2007. Å lytte til konkylier (Listening to Conches). In: A. Vaa, ed., *Å låne øyne å se med* Trondheim: Tapir Akademisk Forlag, pp. 238–246.

Knutsen, N.M., 2005. Et lite pekk tesies: Litt om språket i *Vett og Uvett* (A Wee Tad Aside: A Bit about the Language in *Sense and Nonsense*). Nordlit, 25, pp. 71–79.

Kristoffersen, I., 2013. Vinden blåser varme ord (The Wind Blows Warm Words). *Nordlys*, 26 March 2013, p. 3.

Lie, S., 2006. En universell kunstner (A Universal Artist). In: W.T. Nilsen, ed., *Vær hilset* (*Salute*). Bergen: Kolofon Forlag, pp. 191–193.

Ljøgodt, K., 2003. *Trollfuglen: Bjarne Holst 1944–1993* (*The Bird of Sorcery: Bjarne Holst 1944–1993*). Tromsø: Nord-Norsk Kunstmuseum..

Mathisen, E., 2007. De små grep (The Little Touches). In: A. Vaa, ed., *Å låne øyne å se med: Kaare Espolins kunstnerskap*. Trondheim: Tapir Akademisk Forlag, pp. 52–62.

Mendes, P.R., 2007. Nordnetthinne (Northern Retina). In: A. Vaa, ed., *Å låne øyne å se med: Kaare Espolin Johnsons kunstnerskap.* Trondheim: Tapir Akademisk Forlag, pp. 13–52.

Nadau, Maurice., 1989. *The History of Surrealism*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Nairn, T., 1977. *The Break-up of Britain*. London: New Left Books.

Niemi, E., 2007. North Norway – An Invention?'. *Journal of Northern Studies*, 1–2, pp. 81–95.

Nilsen, W.T., 2002. *Skisser og forelskelser* (*Sketches and Infautuations*). Andersen and Butenschøn.

–––. 2006. *Vær hilset* (*Salute*). Bergen: Kolofon Forlag.

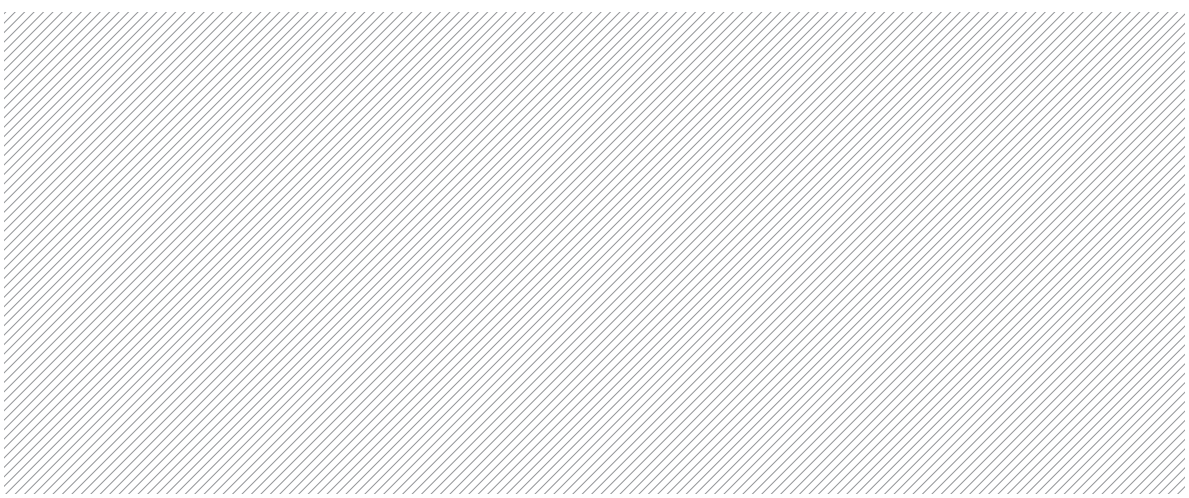
Norderval, Ø., 2007. Utlevert til Livet: Espolin Johnson i et teologisk perspektiv. (Delivered to Life: Espolin Johnson's Art in a Theological Perspective) In: A. Vaa, ed., *Å låne øyne å se med: Kaare Espolin Johnons kunstnerskap.* Trondheim: Tapir Akademisk Forlag, pp. 128–150.

Pedersen, B.T., 2000. *Lengselens billeddikter* (*The Picture Poet of Yearning*). Oslo: Pax Press.

Solheim, M.N., 2011. Sovjetiske krigsfanger i Norge ('Soviet Prisoners of War in Norway') Senter for studier av Holocaust og livssynsminoriteter (Centre for Studies of Holocaust and Minorities): http://www.hlsenteret.no/kunnskapsbasen/folkemord/folkemord-under-nazismen/andre-grupper/sovjetiske-krigsfanger-i-norge

Vaa, A. (ed). 2007. *Å låne øyne å se med: Kaare Espolin Johnsons kunstnerskap* (*To Borrow Eyes to See: Kaare Espolin Johnson's Art*). Trondheim: Tapir Akademisk Forlag.

Waldberg, P., 1997. *Surrealism*. London: Thames and Hudson.



FOOTNOTES

[1] Nairn (1977, 359) writes: "'Nationalism' is the pathology of modern developmental history, as inescapable as 'neurosis' in the individual, with much the same essential ambiguity attaching to it, a similar built-in capacity for descent into dementia, rooted in the dilemmas of helplessness thrust upon most of the world (the equivalent of infantilism for societies) and largely incurable."

[2] Anderson refers to "God Save the Queen" in a footnote, but only to the text of the anthem (2006, 142). Painting is only referred to once, when he writes off the ecclesiastic and high society paintings of the Renaissance as examples of homogenous empty time (22–23).

[3] For recent and multiple approaches to the concept of the North, see Niemi 2007 and Kuiper, 2, 2011.

[4] See for example Sorg (Sorrow, 1932), Oppover (Upwards, 1933),
and Lørdagskveld Romedal (Saturday Night Romedal, 1937) for relations with Munch; and Straussvalsen (The Strauss Waltz, 1933) and Prosessen (The Trial, 1933) for engagement with German expressionism. The colours and oneiric quality of such works as Eventyr (Adventure, 1949), Vår i Telemark (Spring in Telemark, 1951), and Grenselandet (The Borderland, 1964, 1980, 1990) are strongly reminiscent of Chagall's visions. Ukjente soldater (Unknown Soldiers, 1934) suggests potential cubism. See Pedersen (2000), 76, 77, 69, 82, 98, 100 and 134; Vaa (2007), 74–75.

[5] All translations from Norwegian to English in this article are by the author.

[6] Knutsen (2005, 76) explains the nature and position of this collection, which Espolin Johnson's illustrations fit like salt in sea: "In its format, Vett og Uvett is quite a small little book, but it towers as a great work in northern Norwegian literature. And it holds a position in people's lifves and the north Norwegian consciousness that no other secular book has had – perhaps apart from Nordlands trompet (The Trumpet of Nordland). Its material size is pretty modest, but it is a cultural landmark that northerners can depart from in several directions. It is not something any science or university or custodian or culture vulture has decided, but something we northerners have decided ourselves, and we have so decided by using the book, by cultivating it, by quoting from it, by allowing it to enter our imagination, and by letting it entertain us and lift us when things look dark."

[7] Espolin Johnson provided covers and illustrations to many books, such as Kafka's Prosessen (The Trial, 1934), Zappfe and Aas' Vett og Uvett (Sense and Nonsense, 1942, Regine Norman's Ringelihorn og andre eventyr (Ringelihorn and Other Tales, 1967), Sigbjørn Hølmebakk's Fimbulvinter (Hard Winter, 1969), and Johan Bojer's Den siste viking (The Last Viking, 1972), to mention some of the best-known titles. He contributed to 62 exhibitions in 1932–1995 and decorated public arenas, among them Hurtigruten (The Coastal Express), the police station in Kirkenes, and schools. The National Gallery in Oslo has collected 46 individual visual works, and Gallery Espolin was established in Nyvågar in Lofoten in 1992 (Pedersen 2000, 341–349). For personal testimonies on the importance of Espolin Johnson's illustrations and public art, see Nilsen (2002 and 2006) and Holm (2007).

[8] The magazine ran from 1927 to 1970, with 40,000 subscribers in 1931 and as many as 100,000 in 1935, but its circulation was much, much wider. A reader's letter indicates the popularity and position of the magazine: "First the whole lot of our family reads it, then we lend it to three of my siblings who are all out of work, and finally it ends up at my mother's to be read by my youngest son and his brother. My husband is out of work too, he has some odd jobs to barely manage the rent, coal, and shoes – food we need to get on the dole. We can never indulge in having a good time, but we just need Arbeidermagasinet, both of us." (Pedersen 2000, 79). In his review of Arbeidermagasinet, the author Tor Johnson singles out only one name of all the contributors to the journal: Espolin Johnson. (Pedersen 2000, 81.)

[9] Many of these 29 images are reproduced in Espolin Johnson and Arntzen (1994), G. Espolin Johnson (1997), and Pedersen (2000).

[10] For a longer discussion of Espolin Johnson's art in a theological perspective, see Nordeval (2007).

[11] For a more accessible reproduction of the print, see Vaa (2007, 74–75).

[12] Images of war are at the core of Espolin Johnson's illustrations to Hølmebakk's Fimbulvinter (Hard Winter). In Russefanger (Russian Prisoners, 1969), accessible in reproduction, the cowed – and dead? – prisoners on the ground are huddled together in the shape of a simplified Russian cross. G. Espolin Johnson,1997, 75.

[13] For recent reports on the living memory of the tragic fate of so many Russian prisoners of war in northern Norway, see Jaklin (2012) and Solheim (2011).

[14] Another existent hand-coloured version underscores the drama and nightmarish quality of the scene. See G. Espolin Johnson 1997, 70–71.

[15] This motif in Espolin Johnson's art was so significant that at least four different versions exist: a mural at the police station in Kirkenes from 1964, two lithographs from 1980 and one from 1990.

[16] Espolin Johnson lived in Vadsø from the age of two to eight (1909–1917). It is even more important that he spent long periods and vacations in Jarfjord, east of Kirkenes, and enjoyed a childhood kingdom on both sides of the Russian-Norwegian border.

[17] Homosexuality was illegal in Norway until 1972 and was regarded as a mental disease until 1977. Same-sex marriages were legalized in 2009.

Assessment of the firm–region coupling in the Arctic: Local content and innovative institutional regulations

TROND NILSEN
Ph.D., Senior Researcher,
Norut (Northern Research Institute) Norway
Corresponding author: Trond.Nilsen@norut.no

HJALTI JÒHANNESSON
Researcher, MA,
University of Akureyri Research Centre, Iceland

ABSTRACT

This paper elaborates on the firm–region coupling to analyse how Global Production Networks (GPN) anchor in peripheral regions through economic activities and how the encounter between GPN and regions impacts on new regional path development. In order to assess the GPN anchoring within regions, we lean on the framework set out by MacKinnon and on the concept of strategic coupling. Drawing on energy cases in Finnmark in Norway and in eastern Iceland, we outline two possible regional paths of GPN encounters with new territories. On the first path, the industry follows its own logic and builds an enclave within new areas of operation. On the second path, the industry is embedded, transformed, and sends ripple effects within the area of operation. Our analysis demonstrates that exogenous institutional regulations – as economic government-level policies in non-core regions – influence the degree of material outcomes such as value creation, shifting power relations, and the extent of GPN anchoring in regions. Consequently, we argue that adding a more refined concept of geographical scale and the role of national policies to the model of "strategic coupling" may enrich the application of the model. Our findings will influence theories of exogenous path development, and the results will help policy actors maximize the spill-over effects and material output of GPNs entering new regions.

Keywords: *Global production networks, strategic couplings, socio-economic impacts, local content policies*

BARENTS STUDIES: *Peoples, Economies and Politics*
VOL. 3 | ISSUE 1 | 2016

1. INTRODUCTION

The question of renewing regional industrial structures and consolidating already strong industries is at the core of the debate on regions' competitiveness and the need to enhance knowledge as a response to economic globalization. Issues of new regional path development have also received increased attention in the field of economic geography. Forces of endogenous sources of innovation and learning inside condensed, "thick", and diversified regions are well-developed (Cook 1997; Asheim and Gertler 2005). The literature on regional innovation systems (RIS) and endogenous capacity within regions explores how new ideas and knowledge are transformed and connected to new growth and innovation (Asheim and Isaksen 2002; Asheim et al. 2013; Neffke and Hening 2013). A large body of literature indicates that "thick" regions are well-positioned to absorb enhanced growth and innovation.

There is nevertheless a lack of understanding on how northern regions in the context of key economic geography theories develop within, alongside, or outside questions of economic globalization. Also, theories of evolutionary economic geography to a large degree ignore exogenous sources of and linkages between new regional path development (MacKinnon 2011; Trippl et al. 2015). Non-core regions often face challenges of achieving renewal by means of endogenous resources due to weak development of infrastructure, knowledge, low innovation ability, and small firms (Isaksen and Trippl 2014). The potential role of extra-regional sources of new industrial growth paths, represented by the entry of multinational corporations (MNCs) into new areas, is a growing interest of economic geography (Asheim et al. 2015), but extra-regional knowledge and how it is exploited and transformed into new path development is still poorly understood (Trippl et al. 2015). In this paper, we address this concern by studying circumpolar regions as a site of Global Production Networks (GPN) entering and developing new areas of operation.

The limited possibilities for regional development offered by extractive industries often serve as examples of regional dependency of Global Production Networks and of the lack of knowledge spillovers between local firms and GPNs (Bridge 2008). We suggest two possible regional paths for GPN encounters with new territories. On the first, the industry follows its own logic and builds an enclave within new areas of operation. What modest couplings there are between GPNs and regions take place in areas that extend the regional pathways of development. On the second path, the industry is embedded, transformed, and sends ripple effects in the area of operation. New paths arise and spillovers occur.

We seek to explore this relationship in a High North context. The increased industrial activities in a number of north European regions are significant. In the Barents Sea area close to northern Norway, multinational corporations have recently discovered mining resources and are now developing oil and gas extraction. Accordingly, resources from hydropower plants are utilized to provide electricity to aluminium plants and other energy-intensive industry in Iceland, and MNCs have increased mining in Greenland. Enhanced economic activity in peripheral regions has led to an increasing interest from policymakers, who are eager to obtain benefits and returns in the host economies of natural resource extraction (Tordo et al. 2013; Ovadia et al. 2014). To increase the maximum benefit from extractive industries, regional regulations are adapted to profit the regional economy under pressure from economic globalization. An example are the policies of local content, understood as the extent to which the output of the extractive industry generates further benefits to the economy beyond the direct contribution of its value-adding (op. cit.). Serving as a linkage between GPNs and regional assets, local content can help knowledge flows and learning between production systems and local capacities (Eikeland and Nilsen 2016).

In this paper, we approach two oil and gas developments in Finnmark in northern Norway and one aluminium construction in eastern Iceland through the lens of Global Production Networks. We discuss to what degree concepts of value creation, power, and embeddedness provided in the GPN literature help to illustrate differences or similarities in two different contexts. In particular, how can the entry of GPNs in peripheral geographical regions in northern Europe be stimulated through exogenous policy regulations to secure benefits in the host economies of natural resource extraction?

We start out with a theoretical section on the evolutionary economic geography approach. The recent contribution of GPN within this field is followed by the introduction of the data sources. In section four, we introduce the data and results from three different case studies. Section five analyses the concepts of strategic coupling in order to evaluate the anchoring of GPN in the Arctic. We discuss the limits of "strategic coupling" in a circumpolar context, and suggest adding a more refined geographical concept into the model. The discussion leads us to concluding remarks.

2. GLOBAL PRODUCTION NETWORKS AND NEW PATH DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Evolutionary economic geography and path-dependent development

Economic geographers have started to pay increasing attention to an evolutionary approach (Grabher 2009). This turn broadly implies that experienced competencies developed over time by entities in certain localities regulate present formations as well as future paths (Kogler 2015). Path-dependent regional development focuses both on the negative lock-in effects and the positive ones leading a technology, an industry, and a regional economy along one path rather than another (Narula 2002). Regional industries may thus enter into path extension through mainly incremental product process innovations in existing industries and technological paths. When there is growth in the regional economy, the local and regional firms increase their market positions, provide more jobs, and contribute to development through continuity in a regional economy. In such situations, regional industries may eventually experience stagnation and gradual decline due to a lack of renewal (Hassink 2010). They may face a risk of path exhaustion, when their innovation potential is reduced. Typically, external events or developments are overlooked or recognized too late, and firms become uncompetitive and may decline. Path renewal occurs when local businesses shift into different activities, which may still be related. The content – including the knowledge base – of regional firms shapes to some extent the type of renewal that occurs. Path renewal often takes place, when a regional industry transforms and broadens the industrial structure into new or related areas of expertise (Boschma and Frenken 2011), whereas path creation represents a more radical change in a regional economy. This involves the formation of new firms and new sectors, or the businesses have different products, apply new techniques, or organize anew (Martin and Sunley 2006).

2.2 Global Production Network

Reflecting the neglect of external relations in studies of growth and innovation in the 1990s, the Global Production Network (GPN) approach signals renewed attention to extra-regional interests (MacKinnon 2012). A key contribution of GPN research has centred on "globalizing" regional development, approaching the region as a "porous territorial formation whose national boundaries are transcended by a broad range of network connections" (Coe et al. 2004, 469). As peripheral regions characteristically differ from core areas when it comes to development of knowledge bases, one should apply the same explanatory models with caution if they are to help us understand innovation and growth processes in such different regions (Isaksen and Trippl 2014). Core areas draw on a combination of synthetic and analytical knowledge bases while

new industrial paths in less-favoured regions often seem to be influenced by exogenous development impulses such as arrival of innovative firms from outside and other forms of inflow of external knowledge (Leibowitz 2004; Rees 2005; Isaksen and Trippl 2014; Eikeland and Nilsen 2015).

Consequently, the GPN approach investigates the organization and governance of global industries (Henderson et al. 2002). A Global Production Network is defined as a "globally organized nexus of interconnected functions and operations by firms and non-firm institutions through which goods and services are produced and distributed" (Coe 2004, 471). The use of a network allows a more open and fluid conceptualization of production, encompassing all relevant actors and relationships (Henderson et al. 2002). The GPN approach highlights three important elements in its theorization. First, there is value, which refers to economic return, rent generated by the production of commodities for sale, and involves the conversion of labour power into an actual labour process. The second conceptual category is power, defined primarily as the source of power within the "GPNs and the way in which it is exercised is decisive for value enhancement and capture and thus for the prospect for development and prosperity" (op.cit., 450). Three types of power are relevant in this respect. First, corporate power refers to the way in which the lead firm in the GPN has the capacity to influence decisions and resource allocations within the network. Second, we have institutional power exercised by national and local states, international inter-state agencies, the IMF or the World Bank, UN agencies, and international credit rating agencies. According to Henderson et al. (2002), "the capacity to exercise power to influence the investment and other decisions of lead companies and other firms integrated into GPNs is inevitably asymmetric and varies both within and between these five categories." Third, collective power refers to collective actors, trade unions, and employers' organizations. This translates to actions of collective agents who seek to influence companies at particular locations in GPNs, their respective governments, and sometimes-international agencies.

The GPN approach stresses institutions at various spatial scales that have power to change the geographical distribution of economic activities and moderate network couplings. At the core of the GPN, the concept of bargaining power (Hess and Yeung 2006) explores the dynamic between global and local actors. As Coe argues, "the relative power of actors within a network depends, in large part, on the extent to which each possesses assets sought by the other party and the extent to which access to such assets can be controlled" (Coe et al. 2008, 276). The GPN approach leans on a relational understanding of power (Allen 2003): mechanisms other than possession of assets determine the bargaining power within a production network. The concept of "interac-

tive effects" (Coe et al. 2004) is more or less similar in that learning and upgrading may be enhanced through connections with and/or participation in a trans-local production network. Institutional structures of varying scales (such as states) affect strategic coupling processes through processes of regulation and governance, and are crucial in enabling interaction and reciprocity between local companies and a GPN (op. cit.).

The third key element in GPN is embeddedness on a societal, network, and territorial level. GPNs can become territorially embedded – anchored in different places – because of the lead firm's historical ties to particular locations. From such a perspective regional development *is a product of the strategic coupling* between GPNs and such regional assets (MacKinnon 2011, 230). As Yeung (2009) maintains, strategic coupling refers to "the dynamic processes through which actors in cities or regions coordinate and mediate strategic interest between local actors and their counterparts in the global economy". In this, it is the role of regional institutions to ensure that such strategic coupling occurs by shaping and moulding regional assets to fit the lead firm needs in GPN.

Coe et al. (2004) argue that this depends on the creation, capture, and enhancement of value. Value creation involves the creation of supporting conditions for growth by regional institutions through training, education programmes, promotion of start-ups, and the provision of venture capital through private-sector investors. Enhancement of value refers to knowledge and technological transfer, industrial upgrading, the provision of more advanced infrastructure, and the development of specialized skills (op. cit.). Finally, value capture involves the extent to which key firms are embedded in the regional economy, or how strongly the anchoring to the territory itself is developed.

2.3 Extractive industries in peripheral contexts

To contextualize our study, we shall next present an analysis of relevant studies examining a peripheral context. According to Amin and Thrift (1992), regional development strategies that depend on specialized production systems are bound to fail in geographical areas lacking such assets as knowledge and capital. Steen and Underthun (2011) also advocate this argument in their study of the Snøhvit (Snow White) natural gas field complex. However, Eikeland (2014) discusses regional ripple effects from the Snøhvit complex on the basis of first-hand company data and presents a comprehensive analysis of local and regional effects for industries, the municipality, the population, and local businesses. Nilsen (2016) identifies the dynamics of regional path development in that the industry creates job opportunities and economic ripple effects, both of which are considered essential to a community's survival. He also analyses specif-

ics in Arctic governance and politics. Loe and Kelman (2016) apply an approach of corporate social responsibility in oil development in the Finnmark region, and also discuss the perceived effects of petroleum developments. Environmental concerns and opposition to oil and gas are largely ascribed to external forces and feature less in the locals' perceptions. Opposing a development perspective on natural resource expansion in the case of mining, Fløysand et al. (2016) demonstrate how the development of the mining industry in Kirkenes in northern Norway leads to path exhaustion, even though the industry employs about 400 people. The study claims that the community of Sør-Varanger faces dependency on a capital-dominated industry with decisions made elsewhere. As the mining industry is analysed from a perspective where the benefits have escaped the region, the paper demonstrates how foreign direct investments mostly become visible through economic capital and do not extend local knowledge and network between local actors and GPN. One central point is that the industry in Norway lacks regulative regimes unlike the petroleum sector, where local content policies guide the sector's emergence. The introduction of foreign direct investments has not contributed towards much innovation or regional development (Fløysand et al. 2016), and in 2016 the minerals sector struggled with environmental challenges and negative economic returns (op. cit.).

Data on how extractive industries have (or have not) generated local and regional effects in Finland is mostly lacking (Haley et al. 2011). However, mining overall appears to be more integrated in the economy than in northern Norway. As an example, the city of Oulu in the Arctic region hosts the third largest stainless steel plant in the world (Outokumpu Chrome), supplied by a Lapland chromite mine (Haley et al. 2011). As Haley et al. state (2011, 43), Finland has a historic mining legacy, and the northern economy is well-integrated into the larger national economy. A great share of the minerals extracted in this region is processed locally, but old mining deposits in Finland face an uncertain future, as old mines yield fewer discoveries. This creates a challenging perspective for mining-dependent communities. Another study from this region explores how narratives on mining and the sector's ability to develop new structures in the regional surroundings are embedded in documents (Suopajärvi 2015). The study applies a discourse analysis to demonstrate three history lines from the social impact analysis of mining in northern Finland. Suopajärvi concludes that "Lappish" people and authorities of small rural municipalities have struggled with economic problems, and mining appeals to communities that for decades have suffered from unemployment and out-migration of young people. New employment opportunities and tax revenues thus become the most valued aspect of a mining project (Suopajärvi 2015).

Examples of extractive industries from Canada, Alaska, and Greenland represent industrial activity in a totally different context compared to Sweden, Norway, and Finland. As mining values, prospects, and recent high exploration development increase year by year, Canada, Alaska, and Greenland have become mining hotspots. However, most of the mining regions in northern America and Greenland lack infrastructure to handle operations, and significant environmental challenges are obstacles for these frontier-mining regions (Haley et al. 2011). The nature of being a frontier region adds to the challenges of creating a positive impact on the regional development in general, with few potential areas to retain added value regarding local employment and local economic development. Examples from Alaska are particularly interesting here: in a prototypical frontier economy, most of the mining products, along with their value, are exported to other geographical locations. The physical infrastructure and climate conditions add to this complex relationship in the encounter between local actors and GPN. Remote, roadless regions and frozen shipping lanes make construction, transportation, and exploration both demanding and expensive (op. cit.).

Several studies on the extractive industries and regional development discuss the social disruption that occurs in the period of industrial activity (O'Faircheallaigh 1991; Gibson and Klink 2005; Brubacher and Associates 2002; North Slave Metis Alliance 2002). Economic benefits tend to leak out of the region, and the advantages of being located in geographical proximity to the production site are perceived as very limited. Technology and labour need to be imported from other regions and royalties may be sent to central governments. Consequently, regional development occurs in mature regions outside the region hosting the production, and firms outside the region grow as a result of new industrial activity in peripheral regions. Such uneven development has led to regulations and policy development in order to increase local benefit for communities. Emerging and new institutional practices have been implemented to balance the power structures, to apply MacKinnon's terms (2011). This has happened in Canada, for example, where agreements between mining companies, aboriginals, and local communities have been signed to benefit the local communities and regional development (Haley 2011, 57). Examples include the Socio-Economic Agreements of the Northwest Territories and the Yukon Territory. Other examples are Joint Venture Agreements between communities and mining companies that address employment, training, and profit sharing. Impact and Benefit Agreements (IBA) have also become particularly important to companies in Canada with regard to funding, training, employment preferences for local residents, revenue sharing, and environmental concerns.

2.4 Strategic coupling between Global Production Networks and regional assets

In order to assess in depth how GPNs embed within regions from a socio-economic perspective, we have leant on the framework set out by MacKinnon (2011, 240). He has identified ten key dimensions to capture the linkages between GPN and regions, elaborating on certain dimensions as analytical tools on coupling, recoupling, and decoupling processes. These are the mode of entry of lead firms in GPN, status of TNC affiliates in the parent company, regional assets, and degree of coupling. Further, we have analysed if couplings refer to the power relations between GPN and regional assets on the symmetric/asymmetric axis.

DIMENSION	SCENARIOS
Mode of entry	Greenfield–Repeat investment–Merger
Status of TNC affiliates	Autonomous–Dependent
Type of region	Source–Host
Regional assets	Distinctive–Generic
Type of coupling	Organic–Strategic–Structural
Degree of coupling	Full–None
Depth / Layering of recoupling	Deep–Shallow
Power relations	Symmetric–Asymmetric
Regional development outcomes	Development–Dependency
Exposure to decoupling	Low–High

Table 1. Dimensions of coupling between GPNs and regions (MacKinnon 2011, 240)

3. DATA AND METHODS

Our study draws on quantitative and qualitative data from three long-term monitoring research projects in Norway and Iceland. Launched in 2003, the first research project monitored socio-economic effects of the Snøhvit gas field2. The database of contracts included 4899 subcontracts, allocated to 2033 suppliers, of which 1633 were Norwegian. In total, 60 of the Norwegian enterprises were interviewed in depth. In addition, data on labour, employment, firm strategies, and housing prices were collected in 2002. The second research project was launched in 2004, a year after contracts were signed on the largest construction project in Icelandic history on the Kárahnjúkar hydropower plant to provide electricity for Alcoa's Inc. aluminium plant, built simultaneously in eastern Iceland. The parliament passed a resolution on monitoring the socio-economic impacts of the project as a whole. Primary data consisted of three large postal surveys among individuals and two surveys among companies, interviews with around 20 individuals in four rounds and with experts, and data on labour force from the contractors and project owners. The third research project was launched in northern Norway in 2010. The background was the approval of the Norwegian Parliament in 2008 to develop the Goliat oil field in the Barents Sea. We analysed 15 main contracts and 200 subcontracts to map regional firms in the supply chain, conducted 36 interviews with oil service firms and seven interviews with the oil company Eni Norge. Around 70% of the interviews were recorded on tape and transcribed; we noted key points during the rest of the interviews. Interviews were carried out with industry representatives, contractors, regional, and central governments in Norway and Iceland in 2003–2015.

4. VALUE CREATION AND POWER RELATIONS IN GPN IN EASTERN ICELAND AND NORTHERN NORWAY

4.1 Cases in the study

Two of the cases in this paper, the development of the oil field Goliat and the gas field Snøhvit, are drawn from Finnmark and northern Norway. The region of Finnmark, Troms, and Nordland is thinly populated and has traditionally been seen as an economically peripheral and disadvantaged area (Nilsen 2016). Finnmark is the largest and least populous of the northern counties in Norway, containing 74,000 inhabitants spread out across 46,000 km2. The long and narrow shape of this northern Norwegian region creates great internal distances and related climatic, economic, and cultural differences (Fitjar 2013). When it comes to economic development, Finnmark in particular is among Norway's poorest regions and has been a regional policy target area. Accordingly, the state has applied a range of mechanisms – as government policies – to attract capital and

skilled labour to the region. Until 2000, the region experienced a substantial decline in population as an effect of a declining demand for labour in the fisheries sector (Fløysand et al. 2016), and young people would leave the area in search of better education and job opportunities. The introduction of the petroleum sector in Finnmark, 35 years after the first Norwegian oil field came on stream, was expected to improve the situation (Arbo and Hersoug 2011). Another contextual factor was that after 40 years of production from the North Sea and the Norwegian Sea, these mature areas of the Norwegian Continental Shelf were perceived as soon to be depleted resource bases.

Reflecting on the economic role of petroleum development for Norway, which has brought a tremendous amount of capital to the Norwegian state, the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy together with the oil companies started to search for new and prospective areas. Consequently, the Barents Sea became the new hot spot for this activity. However, the lack of necessary infrastructure in the region, the low education levels locally, and the geographical distances to clusters in the petroleum sector were seen as hampering a positive societal impact from new petroleum developments.

Our third case is located in eastern Iceland and concerns the construction of the hydroelectric project Kárahnjúkar, and the Alcoa Fjarðaál aluminium plant. The hydroelectric station is located in the eastern part of the highland and consists of large dams, reservoirs, diversion of rivers, water tunnels, and a powerhouse. Alcoa Fjarðaál is located near a small town Reyðarfjörður with 625 inhabitants in 2002, the year before the megaproject started. The statistical region of eastern Iceland had 11,800 inhabitants in 2002, and 13,060 lived in the same area in 1992. The population is divided between a number of small towns and rural areas. Basic industries are traditionally fishing and agriculture but jobs have declined in both industries due to rationalization and quotas. Quotas can be "sold away" from local fishing communities, which then lose access to the fishing resource, leading to job losses. As a result of out-migration, younger people and females have been underrepresented in the region (Jóhannesson et al. 2010). Reykjavík and neighbouring municipalities in the southwest part of the country have been growing rapidly and are the main destination for migrants from other regions. Eastern Iceland is furthest away from Reykjavík, and access to the capital region is costly and time-consuming. The region is characterized by many fjords surrounded with high mountains, which makes road transportation challenging.

Since the early 1980s, plans have been underway to harness the glacial rivers in the region to provide energy for large-scale manufacturing, which would diversify the

economy and reverse the development. Contracts between the Icelandic government, Alcoa, and the main contractors were signed in 2003, and the project was launched. According to surveys and interviews, the majority of inhabitants in eastern Iceland were satisfied with the advent of the megaproject (Jóhannesson et al. 2010) but others, especially in the capital area and abroad (De Muth 2003), heavily criticized it. Aluminium now represents an increasing share of Iceland's exports: by 2010 it had become an equally important export commodity as fish, each with just over 39% of the export value (Jóhannesson, 2011).

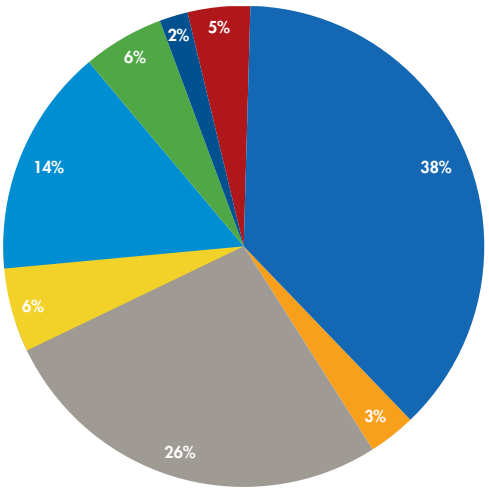
As the coupling between GPN and regions can take many dimensions, we need to narrow the scope and define specific coupling areas to answer the research question. Here, we have been inspired by the literature on GPNs' attention to value creation and on the encounter between GPN and regions in the periphery. The following section seeks to present the findings from three case studies through GPN terminology and the MacKinnon model.

4.2 Local value creation and local labour market: Finnmark and Snøhvit

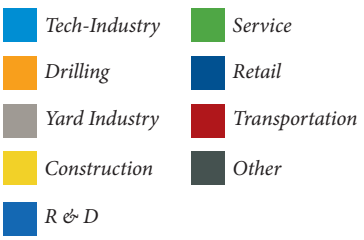
The development of the Snøhvit field was mainly based on the use of employees willing to commute. A major reason for the need for commuters was the lack of available labour locally and regionally. The mayor of Hammerfest was looking forward to the construction of Snøhvit: "It will be interesting to see the development in the local labour stock during Snøhvit construction. We certainly hope for a lot of involvement of local labour. (Interview, Mayor, Hammerfest 2001) In the end, a total of 22,783 persons from 1,454 firms worked on the Snøhvit plant. Of these, 18,105 lived in Norway at the time, and 4,170 of those had foreign citizenship. As of the end of 2002, registered employment in Hammerfest Municipality increased by 1,300 employees.

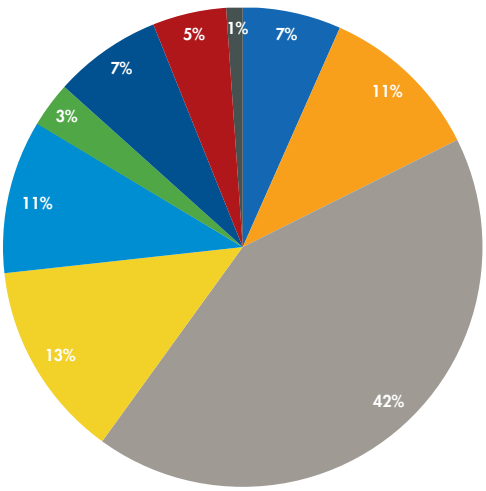
Another measure of how GPN is embedded within the region is the share of subcontracting in the Snøhvit project. This is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

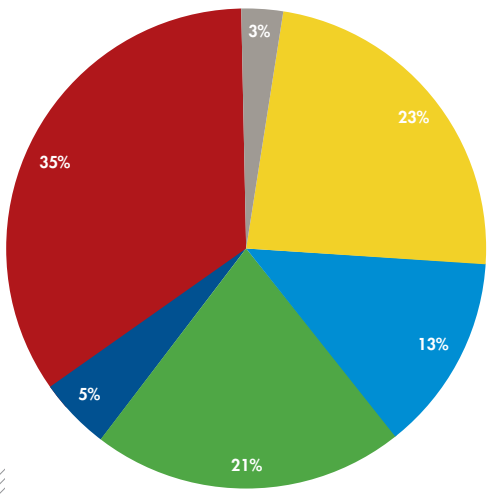


GLOBAL PRODUCTION NETWORK





NORWEGIAN CONTENT NOK 30,5 MIA



LOCAL CONTENT

The contracts totalled NOK 47.6 billion (USD 8 billion). In Figure 1, the left-hand pie chart shows the foreign share of the deliveries to Snøhvit, broken down into sectors for 2003–2008. The middle pie chart shows the share of deliveries for Norway as a whole, and the right-hand pie chart shows the share of deliveries for northern Norway. Only 60 of the enterprises were based in northern Norway. Analysis of data from Statoil's subcontract database revealed that the total value of goods and services supplied from northern Norway amounted to USD 480 million, which represented 6% of the total deliveries and 9% of the national deliveries (Eikeland 2014).

That only 60 enterprises based in northern Norway acquired contracts for the field development demonstrates that the boom bypassed the majority of the regional companies. The regional firms belonged to three groups in the value chain. Firstly, local businesses with a weak connection to the petroleum industry used their geographical proximity to the development site as a strategy to encounter the Snow White project. Buildings were being erected, and there was a need for power supply, transportation of staff, provisioning, cleaning services, security, waste management, vehicle repairs, etc. "It was enough work for many small companies and the workload just grew. We did the same as we do in other markets, just more of it." (Interview, local electricity firm)

Secondly, the high demand for skilled workers led to several recruitment agencies in the region concentrating on the hiring of labour to the major suppliers. The third group of companies had few contracts on Melkøya, but benefitted from the public development and other expansion brought by the Snow White project. The host municipality initiated comprehensive building activity in the upgrading of schools, the construction of a new cultural centre, and a total upgrade of the roads. For several of the local companies, this became a more important market than the development at Melkøya, which they made a decision not to become too heavily involved in (Eikeland et al. 2010).

4.3 Labour and company connections to the GPN in the megaproject in eastern Iceland

The development in eastern Iceland from 2004 and further was, as in Finnmark, made possible through fly-in and fly-out strategies with a high frequency of commuting. There was a significant mismatch between the main contractors requesting certain labour competences and capacity and in the regions' ability to answer this demand. Mostly multinational corporations were involved as main contractors and subcontractors. The companies established temporary branch offices on site during the construction period, and the connection to headquarters was project-related as the branches had a delimited assignment in building an infrastructure on behalf of the company. The degree to which

foreign workers were needed was more than previously experienced in Iceland. An interview with an employee of the aluminium plant in 2009 sheds light on this:

> *Concerning the foreigners, then there was of course a huge number of them that we needed here, we needed much support while starting up the plant and they were living together in their own camp... The Polish kept to themselves, it was temporary work and they knew it and were of course starting to look out for a new project to work on… But the Canadians who came here to help out and some of them came with their families and they were very pleased. It was well planned, they were part of the Alcoa staff.*

During the planning phase of the project and in its environmental impact assessment, more participation of locals was expected. After the main contractor for Kárahnjúkar had been selected, the make-up of the labour force was addressed by the director of the national power company Landsvirkjun and owner of the plant in its annual meeting in 2003:

> *It is of course not possible at this moment to state how contractors will hire people but it is likely that they will find an equilibrium in hiring foreign and domestic staff. As an example of this one can mention that the Italian contractor Impregilo, which will build for around 50% of the construction cost of Kárahnjúkar hydropower plant, expects that around 60–70% of its staff will come from abroad. Taking this into account I consider it likely that the share of foreign staff building this huge project will be significantly more than was anticipated (Johannesson et al. 2010, 49).*

The data of the socio-economic effects underlines the fact of a branch-plant economy. Few locally owned firms participated in the construction phase of the aluminium plant. The main and subcontractors employed 2344 people, of whom 1616 were Polish (about 70%), 392 Icelandic (about 17%), 3.7% Canadians, 3.2% came from the United States, and 1% were English or Australian (Johannesson et al. 2010). There was a clear division between the site workers and the local community, as most of the workers lived in a temporary work camp adjacent to the town of Reyðarfjörður, where the aluminium plant is located. In 2002, the town had a population of 625 (Statistics Iceland 2014), but during the busiest time of construction in 2007, around 1700 workers lived in the work camp (Kristiansen 2007). In 2016, the town had just under 1200 inhabitants.

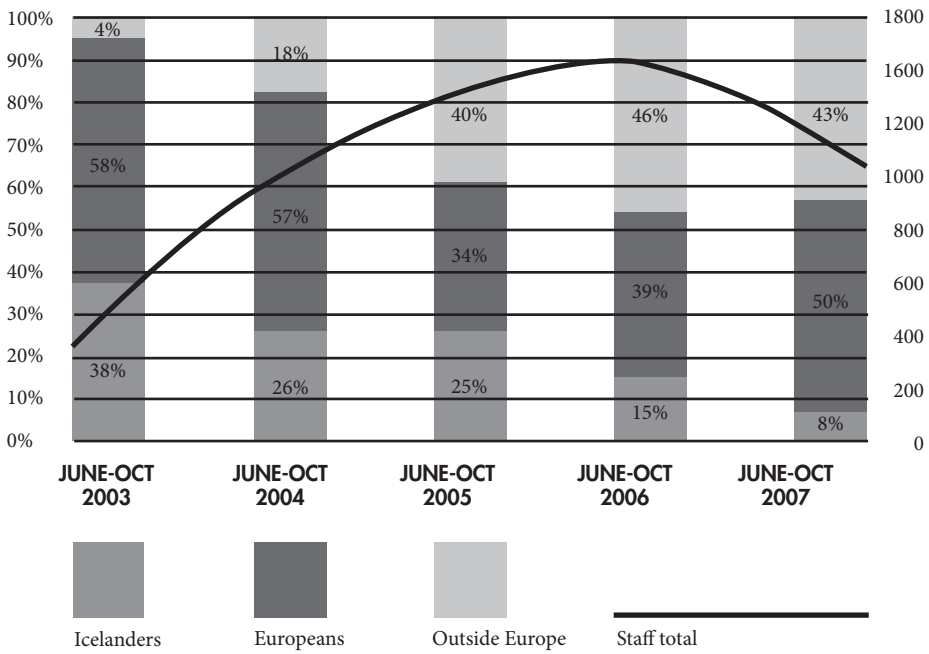


Figure 2

The geographical scope of impact was relatively narrow; the development in the region was not embedded in the society as a whole. As the number of foreign workers played a very important role in the development, the megaproject increased the number of foreign citizens in central eastern Iceland so that they represented about one-third of the population during the busiest time. During the initial phases of the Kárahnjúkar project, European employees were the most numerous, especially the Portuguese and the Italians, because of the main contractors' networks. Later, they were outnumbered by Chinese workers, who were engaged in building dams and drilling tunnels. Such an influx of foreign workers was not anticipated nor was the society prepared for their arrival (Johannesson et al. 2010).

According to a survey among the companies in eastern Iceland in 2008, about 20% of them either sold goods or services to the megaproject or were subcontractors. Participating companies were most prominent in the central impact area (within two hours' driving distance from the main project sites), where they accounted for more than one-third of all companies. Ten per cent of the companies in the more distant northern and southern impact areas had connections with the megaproject. Alcoa set requirements for a re-

sponse time for service provisions, and companies delivering these services needed to be located close to the Alcoa Fjarðaál aluminium plant (Petursdottir 2005).

In some cases smaller companies joined efforts to be better prepared to take on tasks for the aluminium plant as subcontractors. An employee of the aluminium plant described this in an interview in February 2009:

> *…There are also smaller firms in the area that have joined forces to establish a large company… instead of being one and one in each corner and competing for the small pieces, they have merged into one company to establish a one-stop shop… This concerns different services; mechanics' services, import, management of equipment, management of supplies…*

About one-third of the companies were involved in providing accommodation and food services, and many companies offered various support services. Examples of participation in certain work packages of the megaproject as a whole were only found among construction companies

4.4 Value creation and capture: Goliat

The development of the *Goliat* oil field was planned, manufactured, and coordinated in Eastern Asia, Germany and the UK, so few local firms were integrated into the production chain in building the platform installation (Nilsen 2016). Still, local firms won contracts to build the facilities of the operational office of the oil company in Hammerfest, and firms were integrated in the value chain of Goliat in relation to serving a supply base, a helicopter base, and delivering equipment and services to the local fleet of oil spill contingency (Nilsen et al. 2013). A recent study demonstrates that 460 local people worked on development of the Goliat on site in the region of Finnmark, supplying services and goods to mostly drilling operations, construction, service, and installation of offshore equipment (Nilsen and Karlstad 2016).

> *As the manager of the supply base in Hammerfest, [I can say that] Goliat is the best thing that could happen to the town. It brings in a lot of new competence and connects the town of Hammerfest even tighter to become a one-stop shop for the petroleum activity in the Barents region. And in relation, Eni Norway do a lot of societal improvement work as well (Interview, Manager, Polarbase)*

Compared to the two other industrial projects presented in this paper, Eni Norge took a more active role in building regional support systems, capacity in firms, and enhanced competences in the region. Most of these initiatives were initiated in 2009 and are still ongoing as they are embedded in policy documents of the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum in Norway (2010–2011). As importantly for local and regional employment, Eni Norge has decided to establish a regional district office in Hammerfest for their operations in the Barents Sea, involving 150 employees. Also, the requirement that main contractors be present means that Goliat itself as an isolated offshore oil field creates jobs for about 150–200 employees. Other examples of company initiatives are that they claim the presence of main contractors in the period of operations (35 years) nearby the area of production. As a result of the relatively strict requirements laid out in the Plan for Development and Operation (PDO) by the government and the parliament, the company has supported infrastructure by building ports and developing local emergency equipment outside the centre of Hammerfest, in the municipalities of Hasvik and Loppa. Following MacKinnon's (2011) model of strategic coupling, then, "Greenfield investments" seems an apt description here. Beyond hard infrastructure, the company has invested in modern soft infrastructure and has facilitated a distance learning project – "Digital Classrooms" – in Harvik.

In 2009, both Eni Norway and Statoil renewed their regional strategies as a response to expectations and government policies to create ripple effects of oil and gas development in the High North. The companies have invested in human capital in supporting and building competences in science in local high schools. An important step is a cooperative agreement between Hammerfest High School and Statoil: the company sets the site of operation, including the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) facility, available for students to observe and investigate. In addition, the company offers from time to time such resources as teaching and other staff from the LNG facility. They have also supported technologically and financially the construction of a semi-model of the LNG facility at the high school to promote understanding of the production process.

That main suppliers be present during modification and maintenance contracts in the operational phase is another local content initiative (Eikeland and Nilsen 2016). Oil companies require main contractors to be present in proximity to the area of operation in the operational phase. This implies hiring local people, investing in local offices, and building up capacity and infrastructure to serve the client on their needs in the future. In the most employment-intensive main contracts in the operational phase, the client requires that 70% of the overall engineering and administrative capacity be conducted

in Finnmark. According to interview data, firms report that the requirement of presence in the region is the most significant factor of localization, followed by access to new assignments. The number of firms and new jobs in Hammerfest has increased thanks to the Goliat operation, involving global firms such as TESS, ABB, Aibel, Bilfinger Industries, Haliburton, Schenker, and Kuhne-Nagel. Employment within the petroleum sector increased from the year 2000 when no none worked in the sector to over 700 employees in 2015 (Statistics Norway 2015). From a situation where the couplings between regional assets and GPNs can be referred to as minimal and dependent on MNCs, the policies of local content have increased the depth and width of couplings from "none" to "full" between Finnmark and the GPN.

5. DISCUSSION

As we have documented so far, two of the three industrial projects in this study – Snøhvit in Finnmark and Alcoa in eastern Iceland – had very limited local linkages through the process of field development, or construction phase, and partly in phases of operation. The third industrial project treated in this paper, the Goliat oil development in Finnmark, demonstrated comprehensive linkages to the host region compared with the two others. We shall next analyse these processes through the theoretical concepts presented in section two of this paper.

5.1 The role of innovative institutional regulations

MacKinnon (2011, 240) developed a framework for analysing couplings between GPNs and the host region, highlighting the existing power relations. The asymmetrical power relation between GPN and regional assets points to a considerable degree of path dependence, and existing patterns of behaviour of GPN firms have been copied into new areas. In the first section of this paper, we suggested two possible regional paths where GPN encounters new territories. In the first case, the industry follows its own logic and builds an enclave within new areas of operation. Both the example of Snøhvit in Finnmark and Alcoa in eastern Iceland appear to follow the enclave formation through the entering of new economic activity within existing activity, and mismatching regional industrial structures. As MacKinnon (2011) would say, the layering of the existing couplings was rather shallow. The firms' practices were not embedded within the regions, and the regulative assets that had the potential to alter the formations did not influence the power relations within the GPNs. Even though some couplings occurred between regional firms and GPNs, these were typically low-tech connections and involved a relatively low degree of new economic activities for firms

in the regions. While the value creation for the firms involved was significant, the companies did little new as a result of their connection with the plant activity. Rather, they extended their competencies in such familiar areas as construction, transportation, catering, and alike. In accordance with the theoretical framework of Naruala (2002), the processes demonstrated here seem to have stimulated path extension for firms involved on a regional level.

In a global competition, regional firms in Snøhvit and the Alcoa plant were to a limited degree able to penetrate the more technically sophisticated parts of the industry due to the long-established relations between lead firms within the Global Production Network. After 2009, changed institutional regulations on the policies to integrate suppliers of main systems within the phase of operations have created new areas of cooperation and learning for local firms. During the early phases of the Snøhvit complex, local companies encountered rather inflexible GNP regulations, whereas policies of local content required GPN lead firms to establish branch offices at a location nearby the plants and to integrate local labour into their contracts if possible. The situation changed, when the contractual structure was adjusted and broken down in smaller units in order to serve regional firms after it was established they could not mobilize capacity and volume as requested (Eikeland and Nilsen 2016). This has resulted in two main processes: First, local labour is integrated into GPNs lead firms and is recruited in new positions and new sectors. This has increased employment, learning, and the anchoring of the GPN in the region. Second, interview data indicates that firms cooperate intensively within the agglomeration of 45 oil service firms in Hammerfest, and that the geographical proximity to a large degree facilitates the cooperation between firms located there. In addition, firms have gained new market shares. We thus identified patterns of *new regional path creation*; prior to 2002, the region had no connection to the petroleum industry. To phrase it in MacKinnon (2011) terms, the entry of Global Production Networks accompanied by place-based exogenous policies have made the coupling between GPN and regional assets more strategic, as the coupling is linked to competence development and upgrading of firms in a global economy (Eikeland and Nilsen 2016). Because of these policies, data indicates that firms are concentrated within new areas of operations, they renew their markets, and upgrade their competencies. As the population increases and new firms open, the prospects for the region appear good. This is underlined by the fact that the local municipality receives property tax from Statoil totalling EUR 25 million annually during the operational phase from 2007 until 2050, for a total of 43 years.

As we have seen, the exogenous policy regulations differ between our three cases. Consequently, as the Goliat development and Eni Norway met strict government regulations, the oil company had to develop sophisticated initiatives in cooperation with regional Finnmark bodies – such as supplier organizations – that connected GPN to regional assets. The GPN of Barents Sea oil became subject to a shift in the political and industrial philosophy of local content during 2009–2010. This resulted in enhanced attention to the notion of increased advantage of firms in geographical proximity to plants. The initial aim of the shifting policy was to make it possible to develop an industrial environment nearby the location of supply bases, helicopter bases, and the maintenance contractors. The state reasoned that a policy of local content would help to secure business activity in a region close to the Russian border; the geographical distance from the Barents Sea to existing clusters of the Norwegian oil economy is 2000 kilometres. The emergence of a new petroleum agglomeration in Finnmark was envisaged to have economic, logistical, and security dimensions which would improve the overall future sustainability approach of Barents Sea oil development. Much of the unexploited petroleum resources is expected to be located in the Barents Sea area of the Norwegian Continental Shelf, so it was regarded as a national concern to invest in the emergence of a new petroleum province in the High North. Such concerns did not apply in the first phase of the Snøhvit plant, which was considered to be an individual investment when it was planned in the late 1990s. The promotion of a local-grown supplier industry was deemed illogical, as the boom was supposed to be followed by an economic decline. Similar logics applied to the Alcoa plant in eastern Iceland, but the construction was also too large and complex for most regional or even national companies. In addition, the economic benefits for regional actors in aluminium production are quite modest especially during the operation phase compared to oil and gas. There was thus little political reasoning on the regional effects of building up a local and regional industry able to serve a specific industry over a short time span.

5.2 The role of policies and geographic scale in strategic coupling

In the second section of this paper, we set out the model on strategic coupling developed by MacKinnon (2011). As the analysis has illustrated so far, the model has been helpful in analysing the differences in GPN value creation, power relations, and the degree of anchoring in circumpolar regions. Consequently, the model adds new insights into the way that lead firms in GPN adapt to regions in a strategic matter. We argue that the role of exogenous policy regulations and their shaping and re-shaping is crucial to adjusting the power balance within a GPN, which reflects the relationship between symmetric and asymmetric relations between regions and GPN lead firms. This refers to the geo-

graphic scale and the dynamic versus non-dynamic regions as differences between core regions and Old Industrial Regions (OIR), as the latter lead to path dependency and lock-in processes, while the former create the process of co-evolution between GPN and regional assets. We argue that this dichotomy lacks the refinement of a multi-level geographic dimension and power relationships within the nexus between OIR and dynamic regions and especially when natural resources are scarce. As the GPN travels further north and enters areas of the Arctic, there are no defined rules of regulation of business activity in strategically important regions of Arctic waters. While some Arctic states, including Norway and Russia, claim full sovereignty over the sea and the continental shelf in this area, these claims are disputed by other states. The potential of petroleum development in Arctic areas and the changing climate have made the High North a top priority in several Arctic states. A knowledge-based and well-functioning business sector in the northern regions is of significant interest and is a strategic asset in ensuring a state's presence in the area. This is especially the case in the southeastern part of the Barents Sea, and in areas around Jan Mayen and Svalbard. By refining such an argument of geographic scale connected to GPN strategic behaviour, regions which have strategic national interests and resources, and border other countries, are more likely to be supported by state policies in promoting regional industrial development than are regions that do not share a border with other nations. Consequently, national policies are likely to influence the emergence of power relations within GPNs, as these networks enter new peripheral and border regions. We therefore argue for adding a refined geographical dimension to the model, where the entering of a GPN into new regions is influenced by whether the entry takes place in sparsely populated areas of strategic national interest compared to core regions within a nation surrounded by corresponding interests. GPNs will probably need to invest more resources and assets in a location of strategic national interests – where a nation state claims sovereignty in a border region – compared to a region with clear borders. It is reasonable to expect more sophisticated policy regulations, a larger degree of in-depth couplings, and higher autonomy in the branch offices in the former context compared to the latter.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this paper, we have explored the nexus between regions and Global Production Networks in the circumpolar North. We started out by introducing the research question of how the entering of GPNs in peripheral geographical regions in northern Europe can be stimulated through exogenous policy regulations to secure benefits in the host economies of natural resource extraction. We have demonstrated that theories

of economic geography and especially the evolutionary approach are oriented towards endogenous sources of learning, innovation, and growth. Within the field of new regional path development, the exogenous sources of learning within non-core regions have been poorly developed. In addition, the literature on exogenous capacities for learning and innovation have been inadequately linked to new regional path development (Trippl et al. 2015). Thus, the contribution of this paper is twofold: First, we have shown that focusing on exogenous sources such as a global production network can strengthen the understanding of the nexus between host regions and GPN, and how it is connected to new path development. Second, knowledge from peripheral regions helps to shape theories of path development through an analysis of the role of such exogenous and innovative policy regulations as local content and the connection to and implications for coupling between GPN and regions.

In the Icelandic example and during the first phase of Snøhvit, the Global Production Network largely followed its own logic and built an enclave within new areas of operation. The degree of coupling to regional firms was low and the status of MNC affiliates was dependent rather than autonomous. It was difficult for local inexperienced firms to penetrate technological and capital-intensive global economic production networks and thus influence megaprojects. The development projects in the extractive industry were characterized by a "mismatch" between development size and the population structure of the respective countries. Learning new working methods and involvement in technology networks were prevented by external systems of commuting, and this may have hampered a long-term learning basis and innovation possibilities locally. This is affiliated with regional path extension with the risk of regional lock-in into traditional path development. The regional development outcomes following such paths could be characterized as dependent rather than as development.

Regional path creation is often policy-initiated and demands proactive policy actions (Asheim et al. 2013). Changing regulations and institutional approaches to govern GPNs in northern Norway in 2008–2009 highlight differences between the three cases studied here. The exogenous state policies of local content have contributed to shifting power relations within the GPN, and the MNC efforts of taking on a broader social role and responsibility have created arenas of learning for local firms. This has evolved into a new industry and has led to a population rise, new jobs, and in particular increased job opportunities for young people in the most affected municipalities (Eikeland et al. 2009; Nilsen et al. 2013). As such, the entering of the oil and gas industry in Finnmark stimulates new regional *path creation* in the region. As this paper has documented,

external regulations on GPN behaviour facilitate regional development, and the policy implications of these finding should be useful to a number of public entities.

We have shown how different links between GPN and new theories of regional path development evolve, and more precisely, how different policy regulations stimulate new regional paths in the periphery and add to the model of strategic coupling. Consequently, the geographical context that GPNs encounter in regions is important. In the case of populated regions of strategic national interests with rich resources and less developed infrastructure, this will influence the outcome of the strategic coupling. National interests encourage more in-depth couplings. This new dimension applied in different geographical contexts has the potential to add value to the understanding of the strategic coupling of GPN and regional assets.

NOTES

1. The monitoring of the Snøhvit gas field project was conducted by Norut Alta in 2003–2008, financed by the Norwegian state-owned oil company Statoil, the municipality of Hammerfest, and Finnmark County. In Iceland, monitoring of the Kárahnjúkar hydropower plant and Alcoa Fjarðaál aluminium plant was carried out in 2004–2010 by members of the University of Akureyri Research Centre, according to a parliamentary resolution in 2003, and financed by the Icelandic state. The research area in eastern Iceland was larger than the statistical region of east Iceland used by Statistics Iceland.

2. The development included a subsea production system on the offshore field, construction of the biggest factory in Europe to date for the processing and export of liquefied natural gas (LNG), and connecting the subsea installations and the factory close to the small Norwegian city of Hammerfest by a 143-kilometre pipeline. In the most intensive phase, the construction period required the presence of 3100 workers at the construction site at the same time. The total investments were USD 6 billion.

3. The development included offshore oil offloading and transportation of oil to markets by ships. The total investments when the field was approved by the Parliament was USD 4 billion.

4. The megaproject consisted of the Kárahnjúkar hydropower plant, which is owned and operated by the national power company Landsvirkjun and started operations in November 2007, and the Alcoa-Fjarðaál aluminium plant, owned by Alcoa Inc. and reaching full capacity in April 2008.

REFERENCES

Allen, J., 2003. *Lost geographies of power.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Amin, A. and Thrift, N., 1992. Neo-Marshallian nodes in global networks. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 16, 4, pp. 571–587.

Asheim, B.T., Grillistch, M., and Trippl, M., 2015. *Regional innovation systems: Past – presence – future*. Papers in Innovation Studies. Paper no. 2015/36. Centre for Innovation, Research and Competence in a Learning Economy (CIRCLE), Lund University.

Asheim, B.T. and Isaksen, A., 2002. Regional innovation systems: The integration of local "sticky" and global "ubiquitous" knowledge. *Journal of Technology Transfer*, 27, pp. 77–86.

Asheim, B. and Gertler, M.S., 2005. The geography of innovation: Regional innovation systems. In: J. Fagerberg, D.C. Mowey, and R.R. Nelson, *The Oxford handbook of innovation.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 291–317.

Asheim, B.T, Bugge, M., Coenen, L., and Herstad, S., 2013. *What does evolutionary economic geography bring to the policy table? Reconceptualizing regional innovation systems.* Working Paper no. 2013/5. Circle, Lund University.

Boschma, R. and Frenken, K., 2011. Technological relatedness and regional branching. In: H. Bathelt, M.P. Feldman, and D.F. Kogler. *Beyond territory. Dynamic geographies of knowledge creation, diffusion and innovation.* London and New York: Routledge, pp. 64–81.

Bridge, G., 2008. Global production networks and the extractive sector: Governing resource-based development. *Journal of Economic Geography*, 8, pp. 389–419.

Brubacher and Associates, 2002. *The Nanissivik legacy in Arctic Bay.* Ottawa, ON: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Coe N., Hess M., Yeung H., Dicken, P., and Henderson, J., 2004. "Globalizing" regional development: A global production networks perspective. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers,* 29, 4, pp. 468–484.

Coe, N., Dicken, P., and & Hess, M., 2008. Global production networks: Realizing the potential. *Journal of Economic Geography*, 8, pp. 271–295.

Cooke, P., Uranga, M.G., and Etxebarria, G., 1997. Regional innovation systems: Institutional and organizational dimensions. *Research Policy,* 26, 4–5, pp. 475–491.

Eikeland, S., 2014. Building a High North growth pole: The northern Norwegian city of Hammerfest in the wake of developing the "Snow White" Barents Sea gas field. *Journal of Rural and Community Development,* 9, 1, pp. 57–71.

Eikeland, S. and Nilsen, T., 2016. Local content in emerging growth poles: Local effects of multinational corporations' use of contract strategies. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift–Norwegian Journal of Geography,* Vol. 70, Issue 1 http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00291951.2015.1108361

Fløysand, A., Njøs, R., Nilsen, T., and Nygaard, V., 2016. Foreign direct investment and renewal of industries: Framing the reciprocity between materiality and discourse. *European Planning Studies.* Volume 25, Issue 3, pp 462-480 http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2016.1226785

Gibson, G. and Klink, J., 2005. Canada's resilient North: the impact of mining on aboriginal communities. *Pimatisiwin: A Journal of Aboriginal and Indigenous Community Health*, 3, pp. 116–140.

Grabher, G., 2009. Yet another turn? The evolutionary project in economic geography. *Economic Geography,* 85, pp. 119–127. DOI: 10.1111/j.1944-8287.2009.01016x

Haley, S., Klick, M., Szymoniak, N., and Crow, A., 2011. Observing trends and assessing data for Arctic mining. *Polar Geography,* 34, 1–2, pp. 37–61. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/108893 7X.2011.584449

Henderson, J., Dicken, P., Hess, M., Coe, N., and Yeung, H., 2002. Global production networks and analysis of economic development. *Review of International Political Economy, 9,* pp. 436–464..

Hess, M. and Yeung H.W-C., 2006. Whither global production networks in economic geography? Past, present and future. *Environment and Planning A*, 38, pp. 1193–1204.

Hassink, R., 2010. Regional resilience: A promising concept to explain differences in regional economic adaptability? *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 3, pp. 45–58.

Isaksen, A. and Trippl, M., 2014. *New path development in the periphery*. Papers in Innovation Studies, Paper no. 2014/31, CIRCLE, Centre for Innovation, Research and Competence in the Learning Economy, Lund University.

Johannesson, H. and Ingason, T.G., 2007. *Rannsókn á samfélagsáhrifum álvers- og virkjunarframkvæmda á Austurlandi: Rannsóknarrit nr. 4: Úrtakskönnun meðal almennings vorið 2007*. Akureyri: Byggðarannsóknastofnun.

Johannesson, H., Johannsson, E., Heidarsson, J.T., Olafsson, K., Joelsdottir, S.S., and Sigurbjarnarson, V., 2010. *Rannsókn á samfélagsáhrifum álvers- og virkjunarframkvæmda á Austurlandi. Rannsóknarrit nr. 9. Lokaskýrsla: Stöðulýsing í árslok 2008 og samantekt yfir helstu áhrif 2002–2008.* Akureyri: Byggðarannsóknastofnun.

Koegler, D., 2015. Editorial: Evolutionary economic geography – theoretical and empirical progress. *Regional Studies,* 49, 5, pp. 705–711.

Landsvirkjun, 2003. *Skýrsla forstjóra* Samráðsfundur Landsvirkjunar 2003. Landsvirkjun, gagnasafn.

Leibovitz, J., 2004. "Embryonic" knowledge-based clusters and cities: The case of biotechnology in Scotland. *Urban Studies*, 41, 5–6, pp. 1133–1155.

Ministry of Petroleum and Energy. A business for the future – the petroleum industry. White Paper from Ministry of Petroleum and Energy (2011).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2006. The Norwegian Government's High North Strategy. https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/UD/Vedlegg/strategien.pdf, accessed June 2015.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2009. The Norwegian Government's High North Strategy. New Building Blocks in the North. https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/Ud/Vedlegg/strategien.pdf, accessed June 2015.

MacKinnon, D., 2011. Beyond strategic coupling: Reassessing the firm–region nexus in global production networks. *Journal of Economic Geography*, 12, pp. 227–245.

Martin, R. and Sunley, P., 2006. Path dependence and regional economic evolution. *Journal of Economic Geography*, 64, 4, pp. 395–437.

Narula, R., 2002. Innovation systems and "inertia" in R&D location: Norwegian firms and the role of systemic lock-in. *Research Policy*, 31, 795–816.

Neffke, F., Henning, M., and Boschma, R., 2011. How do regions diversify over time? Industry relatedness and the development of new growth paths in regions. *Economic Geography*, 87, 3, pp. 237–265.

Nilsen, T., 2016. Why Arctic policies matter: The role of exogenous actions in oil and gas industry development in the Norwegian North. *Energy Research and Social Science*, 16, pp. 45–53. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2016.03.010

Nilsen, T., Nilssen, I.B., and Karlstad, S., 2013. *Norsk leverandørindustri sin konkurranseevne i en global offshorenæring: Leveranser til Goliatprosjektet i Barentshavet.* Norut Alta-rapport 2013:11. Alta: Northern Research Institute Alta.

Nilsen, T. and Karlstad, S., 2016. *Regionale ringvirkninger av Goliatprosjektet og Eni Norges virksomhet i Nord-Norge. Leveranser og sysselsetting i Nord-Norge i utbyggingsfasen av Goliat.* Norut-rapport 4/2016.

North Slave Metis Alliance, 2002. Can't live without work: Environmental, social, economic and cultural concerns. Yellowknife, NWT: North Slave Metis Alliance.

O'Faircheallaigh, C., 1991. *Resource exploitation and indigenous people: Towards a general analytical framework*. Northern Territory, Australia: Australian National University.

Ovadia, J.S., 2014. Local content and natural resource governance: The cases of Angola and Nigeria. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, 1, pp. 137–146.

Petursdottir, H., 2005. *Alcoa Fjarðaál skapar tæki færi fyrir framsækin iðn- og þjónustufyrirtæki.* Available at: http://www.mbl.is/greinasafn/grein/1015462/ .

Rees, K., 2005. Collaboration, innovation and regional networks: Evidence from the medical biotechnology industry of Greater Vancouver. In: A. Lagendijk and P. Onias (eds.), *Proximity distance and diversity. Issues on economic interaction and local development.* Aldershot: Ashgate, pp. 191–215.

Suopajärvi, L. 2015 The right to mine? Discourse analysis of social impact assessments of mining projects in Finnish Lapland in the 2000s. Barents Studies. People, Economies and Politics. Vol. 1, Issue 3, 2015.

Statistics Iceland, 2014. *Population in urban nuclei by sex and age 1 December 1997–2008*. Available at: http://www.statice.is/Statistics/Population/Urban-nuclei-and-zip-codes.

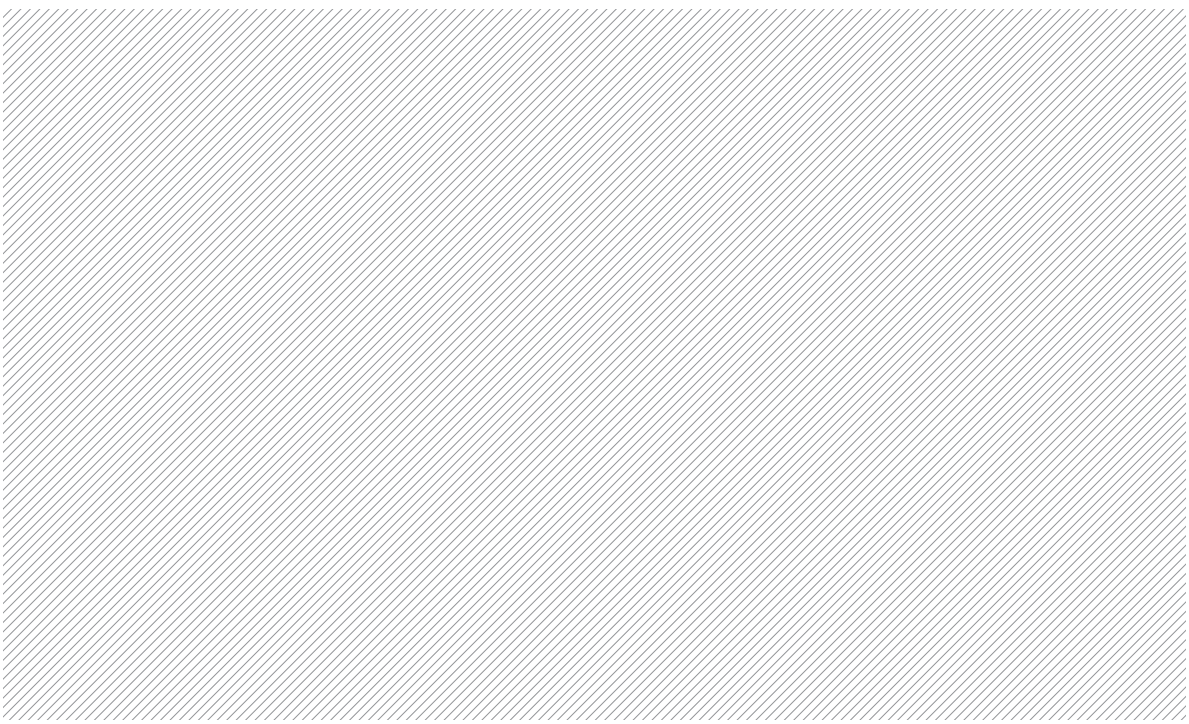
Steen, M. and Underthun, A., 2011. Upgrading the "Petropolis" of the North? Resource-peripheries, global production networks, and local access to the Snøhvit natural gas complex. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift–Norwegian Journal of Geography*, 65, 4, 212–225.

Tordo, S., Warner, M., Manzano, O., and Anouti, Y., 2013. *Local content policies in the oil and gas sector*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Trippl, M., Grillitsch, M., and Isaksen, A., 2015. *External "energy" for regional industrial change: Attraction and anchoring of non-local knowledge for new path development.* Papers in Innovation Studies. Paper no. 2015/47. CIRCLE, Lund University.

Tödtling, F. and Trippl, M., 2005. One size fits all? Towards a differentiated regional innovation policy approach. *Research Policy*, 34, pp. 1203–1219.

Statistisk sentralbyrå [SSB], 2015. *Folkemengde og befolkningsendringer.* https://www.ssb.no/statistikkbanken/selecttable/hovedtabellHjem.asp?KortNavnWeb=folkendrkv&CMSSubjectArea=befolkning&checked=true [path: Tabell no. 06913, Kommune no. 2004] (accessed October 2015).



BARENTS STUDIES: *Peoples, Economies and Politics*
VOL. 3 | ISSUE 1 | 2016

YOUNG RESEARCHERS OF THE BARENTS REGION

"My research interests were formed through growing up right by a fjord surrounded by fishers and farmers, and upon attending university where I discovered that there was much more than Sami history that had remained unknown about the environment I had grown up in."

Camilla Brattland

Post-doctoral researcher
Centre for Sami Studies
UiT – The Arctic University of Norway
Tromsø, Norway

"Arctic governmentalities: Indigenous peoples and knowledge production in environmental governance" is the title of my current post-doctoral project under the umbrella of research on Arctic Governance and Indigenous Innovation at the Centre for Sami Studies, UiT – The Arctic University of Norway. The project builds on my PhD research project "Making Sami Seascapes Matter" where I delved into traditional and scientific knowledge production on coastal Sami use of the northern Norwegian seascape, both historically, and in contemporary marine resource and spatial governance. My background is perhaps typical for many Sami of my generation – from knowing

next to nothing about the Sami history of my rural, fisher-farmer dominated, northern Norwegian home community Kåfjord, to witnessing its transformation during the 1990s into a Sami "place", with the Riddu Riđđu festival as a centre of resistance among Sami youth, in what became Gáivuotna-Kåfjord. My research interests were formed through growing up right by a fjord surrounded by fishers and farmers, and upon attending university where I discovered that there was much more than Sami history

that had remained unknown about the environment I had grown up in. As part of the first batch of Indigenous Studies master students at the University of Tromsø, I graduated in 2005 with a master thesis in indigenous studies on coastal Sami fishing rights discourses. I spent a few years working in Gáivuotna-Kåfjord at the Riddu Riđđu festival and as an advisor at the Norwegian Sami Parliament before I decided to pursue my research interests further.

My PhD research focused on making coastal Sami traditional knowledge and use of seascapes visible, and on investigating the scientific knowledge production already going on in the fields of marine science, fisheries research, and marine policy and governance at the University of Tromsø and elsewhere. The project was connected to the "Fávllis" Sami fisheries network for local ecological knowledge (LEK) research, funded by the Norwegian Research Council and led by Dr. Else Grete Broderstad at the Centre for Sami Studies (UiT) in collaboration with Einar Eythórsson at NIKU (the Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research). During the course of the work with the thesis and the Fávllis project, I had the opportunity to work together with Svanhild Andersen and Sigvald Persen at the Coastal Sami Resouce Centre in Porsanger, Finnmark, which broadened my perspective on coastal Sami history and culture, which resulted in important publications directed at local audiences (Andersen and Persen 2011). One of the results was a paper with a comparative study of Sami and Norwegian marine toponyms in Porsanger fjord, which I did together with Sami linguist Steinar Nilsen (Brattland and Nilsen 2011). The "Fávllis" project also had a promising collaboration with the Institute of Marine Research, but with varying results, which I and Einar Eythórsson have reflected upon in a book chapter called "New challenges to LEK research" (Eythórsson and Brattland 2012). My supervisor Dr. Svein Jentoft put me into contact with an international network of LEK and fisheries researchers, which led me to spend time with Dr. Barbara Neis at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I also became familiar with the controversies surrounding First Nations and Norwegian fish farms in Canada and British Columbia during a research stay funded by the Centre for Sami Studies in 2010. Upon realizing that there was still a lot to learn about interactions between salmon farming, wild salmon fisheries and the environment, I put that research interest off until a later stage. The year after, I however organized a workshop together with Dr. Dorothee Schreiber at the Rachel Carson Centre in Munich which gathered both First Nations and Sami salmon fishers along with representatives from the aquaculture industry, which further broadened my understanding of the complexities of indigenous fishing rights, traditional knowledge production and sustainable seascape use in interaction with the aquaculture industry.

During the course of my PhD project, I started employing GIS (geographical information systems) and critical cartography for my research, which I found immensely useful as a framework and tool for investigating both traditional and scientific knowledge production on indigenous land and seascape use in both Canada and Norway. The methods developed by Terry Tobias and others on mapping of traditional land and seascape use in Canada shaped my approach to the study of coastal

Sami seascape use, and has always been a source of inspiration and assistance in formulating research questions and solutions for my research on traditional and also commercial and contemporary seascape use by Sami communities. Turning to mapping of contemporary governance and spatial conflicts between indigenous small-scale fisheries and the aquaculture industry, I followed a case from my own home area in the Lyngen fjord where LEK became central in controversy on cod farming. The resulting PhD thesis (Brattland 2012) focused on methods for mapping and do research on LEK and traditional and contemporary seascape use, thus making a contribution to identification of coastal Sami seascape use, as well as identifying contemporary legal and governance processes whereby coastal Sami seascapes have the potential to be made increasingly visible in contemporary spatial and marine resource management.

For my current post-doctoral project, the focus is on the role of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) in Arctic environmental governance, this time focusing on the area of wild Atlantic salmon governance as well as interactions with aquaculture, including other environmental management contexts where lay knowledge is mobilized, such as goose management, in both Arctic and non-Arctic contexts. The hypothesis for this project is that the rise of TEK and formation of ecological identities in the Arctic are supported by larger social processes that are not limited to the influence of an "indigenous co-management governmentality" only. It must rather be based on a rationality where the association of indigenous and ecological identities with the environment is seen as useful and wanted by larger groups of people, because it holds the power to influence the conduct of environmental governance. The project draws on results from two NINA/Fram Centre projects for Atlantic salmon (by Dr. Martin Svenning) and pink-footed goose (by Dr. Ingunn Tombre) research, and is currently connected to the TriArc project on indigenous-industry governance interactions in the Arctic, led by Dr. Else Grete Broderstad, where I lead a subtheme on indigenous-aquaculture interactions. Part of the work is to compare indigenous-industry relations and best practices for TEK inclusion in governance between First Nations in British Columbia, coastal Sami communities in Norway, and the global aquaculture industry. This allows me to pick up on some loose threads and to uncover what is still unknown about the complexities of traditional and scientific knowledge production in the area of contemporary water and seascape usage in the Arctic context in general.

BARENTS STUDIES: *Peoples, Economies and Politics*
VOL. 3 | ISSUE 1 | 2016

"Given the increasingly interconnected world, various local specificities should be well mapped and engaged to build community resilience to transpiring changes and to nurture knowledge commons."

Morgan Ip

Ph.D. Candidate
Institute of Urbanism and Landscape, Oslo School of Architecture and Design (AHO) &
Barents Institute, The Arctic University of Norway (UiT)
morgan.alexander.ip@aho.no
Postboks 6768 St. Olavs plass
0130 Oslo, Norway

My doctoral work takes place within the Future North project, a collaboration between the UiT Barents Institute and the Institutes of Design, and Urbanism and Landscape at the Oslo School of Architecture and Design. Our group of architects, literary scholars, designers, social scientists, and artists is funded by the SAMKUL programme (Cultural conditions underlying social change) of The Research Council of Norway. Together, we are mapping the cultural landscapes of the circumpolar North, in all its myriad descriptions and delimitations and in the face of climatic, technological, and social changes. I'm looking in particular at the Arctic borderlands between Norway and Russia, from my residency in the Barents Institute in Kirkenes, on the Norwegian side. Here, differentiations can be seen even in architectural typologies, with predominant Soviet blocks in neighbouring Nikel standing in contrast to Scandinavian wood-frame buildings in Kirkenes. It is a regional neighbourhood that has seen incredible transformation in the short time since I moved here in 2014, with a sudden migration influx from Russia to Norway because of turbulence in faraway nations, a global routing of resource stocks, and the resulting closure or downturn of local mining operations on either side of the border, and imperilled plans for further resource development in the area, to name a few.

I'm privileged to be no stranger to the Arctic, having spent the last decade peering at the north through a variety of lenses. I received a Master of Architecture from Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada, with a thesis centred on participatory co-design of a cultural centre in Cape Dorset, Nunavut, Canada. Here, environmental and cultural relevance in the Arctic were given equal measure. I also worked as a research assistant on two interdisciplinary International Polar Year university and government projects, one using plant herbaria and community photo collections compared over time to instigate discussion on arctic changes, and the other a study on environmental contaminants and local food choices in Southern Baffin Island. I then worked at Lateral Office, a renowned Toronto firm with extensive experience tackling architectural and cultural design challenges of the Arctic. In all cases, engaging local people in the project was crucial in ensuring research was relevant to on-the-ground concerns and responses to change. During this time

I was also an active member of the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS), and was able to see a wealth of knowledge emerge in the natural and social sciences on Arctic affairs at various conferences. These plural lenses capture a few of the many layers that can be deciphered when engaging the peoples who live in the North. For me, the Canadian context provides a springboard from one Arctic region to another, but also from architecture to larger material and social spatial systems and practices.

My research takes advantage of the team's interdisciplinary influences, bringing ethnography to urbanism and landscape research with the aim to understand and communicate cultural landscapes of this Norwegian-Russian border. As research methods adapt in keeping pace with social and technological evolution, I incorporate locative social media to reveal and situate the human voices of Kirkenes and Vardø, Norway, and Nikel, Russia. One main tool to gather these disparate voices is mybarents.com, an offshoot of mycity.io, which is an online platform and forum for plotting ideas of civic improvement on a map. Who uses this sort of platform, and why? Does this digital dialogue contribute to place making, and how so or not? What are the ideas brought forth, and how do they reflect local narratives? Such accessible interfaces may reflect the character of a location, and its challenges and opportunities heading into the future, as voiced by the people that live here. These understandings can be deepened when used with other classic ethnographic methods such as participatory observation and semi-structured interviews. The challenges and opportunities that come with change are conceived in manifold ways. The perspectives of the miner, the politician, or the artist all converge in co-creating ever-shifting everyday realities and futures. Capturing the cultural landscape of the Norwegian and Russian border area is thus also a fluid and living process of speculation.

I'm thrilled to be a part of the Future North research team in working in what may previously have been considered a mysterious or exotic periphery to all but the relative few who have consistently lived here. Given the increasingly interconnected world, various local specificities should be well mapped and engaged to build community resilience to transpiring changes and to nurture knowledge commons.

Maria Lvova

PhD Candidate
Department of Sociology, Political Science and Community Planning
UiT The Arctic University of Norway

My name is Maria Lvova and I am a PhD candidate at UiT- The Arctic University of Norway, at the Department of Sociology, Political science and Community Planning. My current research interest is related to the issues of security, identity, gender, and methodology. My research project is part of big international project financed by International Polar Year (IPY) entitled, "The impacts of oil and gas activity on peoples of the Arctic using a multiple securities perspective" (GAPS) with particular focus on three Arctic states: Canada, Norway and Russia. This framework provided me with an opportunity to use my experience of living in the Arctic. Originally, I am from the Arkhangelsk region in Russia and graduated the Northern (Arctic) Federal University with a MA in education and humanities and Licentiate in social philosophy. If I look back, I can say that I obtained various opportunities in the sphere of research and education due the development of the Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation. While getting my education in Russia, I had the opportunity to study in Finland (University of Oulu and

"My current research interest is related to the issues of security, identity, gender, and methodology."

University of Rovaniemi) and Norway (UiT-The Arctic University of Norway). I also obtained a Master degree in Peace and Conflict Transformation from UiT-The Arctic University of Norway.

Energy security and the Arctic are claimed to be of special focus of Russian security policy. For my PhD project, I selected the Murmansk region as the focus of my research. It borders Norway and Finland and is viewed by the Russian state as a geostrategically important area. Because of the ice-free sea, a large nuclear fleet, including icebreakers and submarines, is located in the ports of the Murmansk region. At the same time the Murmansk region hosts one of the biggest gas deposits – the Shtokman gas and condensate field, which is located on the shelf of the Barents Sea, approximately 550 km away from the shore. Therefore, the Murmansk region is a territory where new trends – oil and gas development in the Arctic – meet traditional military-strategic requirements. Historically, the field of security is strongly dominated by the concept of state security and little is known about the connection between the state and the individual within the Russian security paradigm and ability of people to cope with insecurities. By 2007, when I started to work on my project, the Shtokman gas field was a hot topic actively discussed in the media and at the conferences such as Arctic Frontiers. The extraction from the Shtokman gas field was expected to start in late 2014-2015. The Murmansk region was promised a brilliant future related to oil and gas extraction: a new Russian oil bonanza. In 2017, it is well-known that the Shtokman project is frozen and the expected date of production remains unclear. By focusing on the years of 2007-2012, I examine the transformations related to the development of the Shtokman project as well as analysing whether a change in security thinking took place in relation to oil and gas development in the country.

In addition to my PhD project, I worked for several years at the Research Office of the University of the Arctic. This position gave me valuable experience in research, management and international educational cooperation. I had an opportunity to work in an international environment and to contribute to the development of international educational programmes such as the winter school "Model Arctic Council" (2014) and "Russian studies" (2012-2013). I was also involved in hosting the 7th UArctic Rectors Forum in 2013 in Arkhangelsk, the theme of which was "The Northern Sea Route Logistics, Transportation and Infrastructure". Being involved in these projects, I was able to learn the mechanisms of cross-border cooperation in the Arctic and fortunate to observe the development of international educational cooperation in the region.

BARENTS STUDIES: *Peoples, Economies and Politics*
VOL. 3 | ISSUE 1 | 2016

Gerald Zojer

PhD candidate
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Lapland
Rovaniemi, Finland

As a doctoral student at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Lapland, in Rovaniemi, Finland, I study the politics of nature and society in the Arctic context. While my major is in the Political Sciences, I approach my research from a transdisciplinary angle, which also reflects my past.

I started out as a mechanical engineer before moving on to an oil and gas extraction company, where I worked in the project management group. During my engineering work I had already realized that technological progress has impacts on socio-economic realities. This pushed my interest increasingly towards the dichotomy of technology and human development. It also led me to give up my full-time employment as technician and to study International Development at the University of Vienna, where I graduated as "Magister" in 2014. Taking advantage of my diverse background, I focused my studies on the dynamics and interplays of energy politics and socio-economic developments. In 2010, a student exchange brought me to the University of Lapland, where I attended the Arctic Studies Programme and added an Arctic regional focus to my research interests.

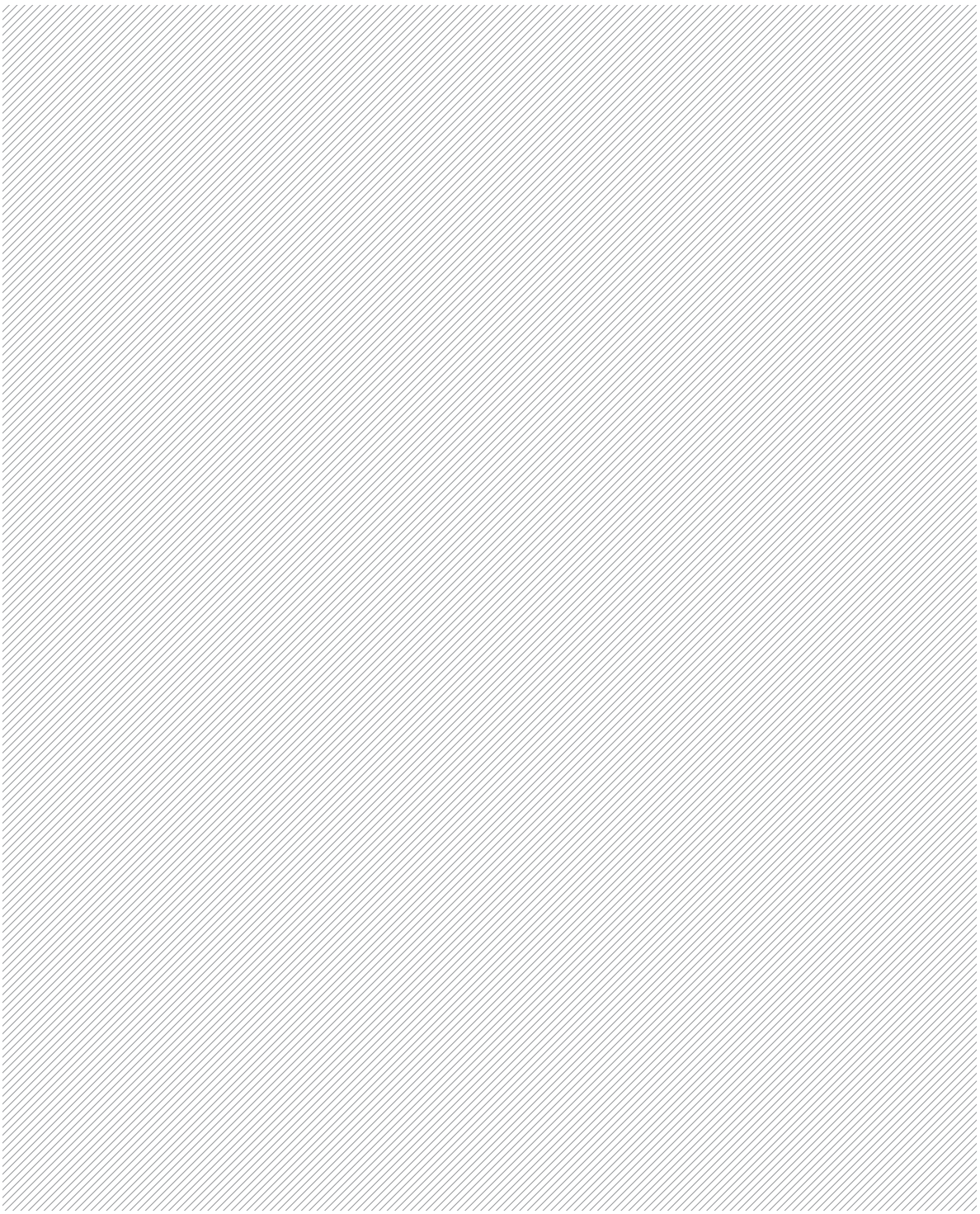
I fell in love with the North, so much so that a few years ago a small village in northern Finland, in the middle of Lapland, became my new home. This has allowed me to experience an Arctic lifestyle and Arctic challenges first hand, which brings additional motivation and insights to my research.

My current research interests are in the fields of political ecology, hegemony theories, energy politics, environmental politics, and sociology of technology studies. These are brought together by a regional focus on the Arctic. My dissertation examines how the prevailing economic development paradigm materializes in environmental governance in the Arctic and how this challenges human security in the region. In particular, I explore how the drivers and motives for mass-scale natural resource extraction are reflected in the transforming political discourses of Arctic environmental govern-

"My research seeks to elaborate how different societal relationships with nature, both regionally and globally, struggle for generalization in Arctic governance."

ance. The hypothesis is that the dominant agendas in Arctic governance increasingly favour the interests of the global elites rather than those of the Arctic population or the environment.

Because all forms of politics have an environmental dimension and environmental politics also simultaneously incorporates socio-economic interests, politics can be seen as an issue of the relation between society and nature. The interests of different groups or actors incorporate different societal relationships with nature. These relationships compete with each other for generalization in political discourses, in order to materialize a group's interests into a political regime. My research seeks to elaborate how different societal relationships with nature, both regionally and globally, struggle for generalization within Arctic governance. My research should help to better understand the dynamics between global and local interests in the Arctic and consequently contribute to finding ways and strategies for developing an ecologically democratic and sustainable future for the Arctic region.



EDITORIAL

ARTICLES

YOUNG RESEARCHERS OF THE BARENTS REGION

Barents Studies: Peoples, Economies and Politics, Vol. 3 / Issue 1 / 2016

More information about the journal available at www.barentsinfo.org/barentsstudies.

ISSN 2324-0652