20. Change, conformity and practices of resistance in the "cold world"

Gertrude Saxinger, Universität Wien, Österreich
Joachim Otto Habeck, Universität Hamburg
Verena Traeger, Universität Wien, Österreich
Tobias Holzlehner, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg

RG Zirkumpolargebiete und Sibirien

Keynote by Piers Vitebsky, University of Cambridge, UK


Transnational informal networks and paradiplomacy as a tool of community-based disaster risk reduction and response (DRR&R) in the face of Arctic disasters

Patrizia Isabelle Duda, University College London, UK

Arctic communities’ geographical and political isolation limits their DRR&R resources despite the significant environmental conditions and risks they are encountering. Yet realities on the ground and non-/academic literature increasingly point to the difficulties of governments and institutions to
adequately respond to disasters. This research analyses informal transnational/transboundary community networks to respond to disasters in the harsh Arctic climate, when governmental and institutional help might be limited or unavailable.

Complex interdependencies and the cascading nature of disasters (i.e. through infrastructure) emphasizes the need for community collaboration. Yet, despite the potential to work around the above-mentioned limitations and minimize disaster vulnerability and risks, bypassing government might also lead to unintended consequences.

Through qualitatively surveying paradiplomacy relations between Arctic communities in Western Russia, Norway and Finland we investigate its significance but also potential negative outcomes and reach initial, practical conclusions regarding the level and effectiveness of these alternative community tools for DRR/R.

**Postsocialist religious changes and ritual resistance in the Nenets Tundra**

*Tatiana Vagramenko, University College Cork/ Sociological Institute of the Russian Academy of Science, Ireland/ Russia*

The paper examines Evangelical movement among the Nenets in the Polar Ural tundra, North-Western Siberia. Postsocialist transformations made the Nenets sensitive to Evangelical missions. While the local intellectual elite promoted traditional Nenets beliefs and sacred sites, the rural Nenets often eagerly embraced Evangelical Christianity, challenging common-sense perspectives of the resilience of Nenets traditional culture.

On the emerging religious spectrum, many Nenets tried out multiple faiths, choosing in the end the fundamentalist Baptism. The paper elaborates on possible conditions that made Christian fundamentalism appealing in this part of the Arctic. The spread of a conservative religious movement in the tundra reveals Nenets complicated relation to modernity and determines the forms of resistant to the latter. Fundamentalist Baptist movement with its social and political expectations and anti-neoliberal attitudes reflected Nenets social experience. The paper discusses how religious conversion provided a platform for Nenets self-determination and developed Nenets ritual resistance to the global order and to the dominant system, a tacit resistance of a colonized periphery.
North business: changes of the Arctic economic prospect perceptions in the media-concept analysis

Anton Zhigunov, Omsk State University F.M. Dostoevsky, Russia

The eternal ice research, the scale of natural resource extracting, the militaristic power and business improvement and attraction of the regional market have become burning issues of contemporary geopolicy. All the mentioned topics are found in mass media.

Unlike the past time period, the structure of the media-concept ‘Arctic’ it’s not only ‘ice’, ‘snow’ or ‘polar explorers’ today. The Arctic is becoming interesting from the economic point of view; the region is usually connected with business and infrastructure construction (especially for mineral extraction). The development of the territories was really impossible and even unmentioned 30-40 years ago. Nowadays the Arctic is an exclusive area, the region of boosting economic activity of the Arctic and also non-Arctic situated countries. This issue is verified by media-texts analysis and the structure of the media-concept ‘Arctic’. Moreover, the Arctic is also understood as ‘home’ by the peoples, inhabiting the area. The article highlights the changes in the understanding of the motherland by natives. It is obvious that the extensive development of the regional economic conditions and infrastructure building influence the usual way of life of indigenous people.

Sustainable economic development of the Arctic makes media space full of information about the northern people reality. And This information has some unique features, unusual connotations and meanings, that were made as the results of the economic growth. That is the reason of the indigenous people stereotype transformation

Baikal-Amur Mainline: remembering socialist construction

Olga Povoroznyuk, Universität Wien, Österreich

This presentation focuses on memories of the BAM, the largest industrial project of the late socialism in Siberia. In the 1970-80s the railroad construction attracted labor force from across the Soviet republics. The former migrants, who made home in the North, now constitute the region’s majority population and identify themselves as bamovtsy (BAM builders). Their memories of the construction period don’t simply reiterate Soviet ideals of solidarity, patriotism and construction of the new life, but are charged with an array of emotions, performed differently in individual and collective settings.

While the phenomenon of communist construction sites had been addressed from post-socialist and memory studies perspectives, anthropology of emotions offers a new approach to studying people’s lived experiences and memories. Which factors played key roles in identity building during Soviet industrialization campaigns? How are individual and collective memories performed, translated
and actualized? What is the interplay between the state ideology, lived experiences and emotions in remembering the BAM?

**The only gay in the village? Queer intersections in Sápmi and Siberia**

*Stephan Dudeck, University of Lapland, Rovaniemi/European University, St. Petersburg*

*Joachim Otto Habeck, Universität Hamburg*

The paper aims at a comparison of policies regarding sexual orientation and gender identities in two arctic regions: Northern-Fennoscandia and Siberia. While in the former region, a liberal, identitarian and – as some argue – individualistic approach towards sexual orientation resonates with a relatively outspoken LGBTIQ movement, Russia’s policy emphasizes patriarchal patterns of gender divisions and heteronormative sexuality, leaving rather limited space for LGBTIQ initiatives. However, policies on state level intersect with other aspects of identity, and the focus of this paper is on regional and ethnic ones: indigenous background, urban and rural residency. We juxtapose the situation of queers in Novosibirsk, a Russian city of quite liberal ambience with the case of Sámi queers. Is intolerance towards gender “deviance” a general phenomenon in rural areas – not only, but particularly in Russia? This paper portrays and scrutinizes commonplace assumptions about liberal vs paternalist regimes of sexual identity politics; simultaneously, it discusses the concept of *intersectionality* with reference to sexual and ethnic identities in different parts of the circumpolar North.

**The FIFO and Mobile Workers Guide – introducing early career miners into the sector**

*Gertrude Saxinger, Susanna Gartler, Universität Wien/ APRI – Austrian Polar Research Institute, Österreich*

In today’s mining industry men and women travel back and forth between their homes and the camps nearby their work places. This way of life is essential to the contemporary system of labour force provision in the extractive industries that has left the model of mono-industrial towns largely behind and has shifted to long-distance commuting (LDC) and fly-in/fly-out (FIFO) models. Understanding this way of life is relevant for both, the indigenous and non-indigenous people alike who are involved into this industry. Besides existing hardships such as separation from the family and the confinement to a life in the workers’ camp, the majority of people lead a meaningful life beyond stereotype assumptions of deviance such as drugs, prostitutes and alcohol – as it is shown in TV series and as it is prevailing in the public opinion. This paper draws on examples from the Yukon gold and silver mining industry where local indigenous people as well as FIFO workers from all over Canada are employed. While
employing anthropological method, the authors have compiled a so called Mobile Workers Guide – FIFO and rotational shift work in mining. This booklet and website tell stories of experienced workers to the newcomers and try to support a sustainable work life under conditions of mobility. It also looks on how wage work in mining and subsistence activities of First Nations can be negotiated.