The Barents and the Baltic Sea region: contacts, influences and social change

Symposium at the University of Oulu, 10–11 December 2015

From a global viewpoint, the Barents Sea and the Baltic Sea – which are separated by the relatively narrow Fennoscandian peninsula – belong to the same Nordic sea region. The shortest distance by land from the Gulf of Bothnia to the White Sea is less than 400 kilometres. Northern Europe gradually becomes an Arctic area as one moves from the shores of the Baltic Sea to the Barents Sea. Inevitably, the Nordic, maritime character of the Barents Sea and Baltic Sea has shaped the formation and history of societies. The region has always been a meeting point of cultures. Contacts between communities, movements of people, and transfer of goods and ideas have created an area that is unique while still, in many respects, resembling the surrounding areas. The aim of the symposium is to analyse the characteristics of the Barents and Baltic Sea region from interdisciplinary perspectives.

Cross-border relationships are an essential part of our increasingly global world. The symposium sets out to examine the versatile interaction and interdependencies between different cultural areas and communities in the Barents and the Baltic Sea region. The aim is also to discuss the application of different scientific paradigms and methods to the study of transcultural encounters. Recognising the processes by which interaction and interdependencies form will help us to understand the challenges and opportunities of multiculturalism. Research provides means of encountering the “Other” and questioning the internal boundaries and normativeness of communities.

The keynote speakers of the symposium are Professor Lars Elenius from the University of Umeå and Professor Anssi Paasi from the University of Oulu.

The symposium focuses on cultural, economic, political, religious, social and other phenomena that affect the region and its relationships with the surrounding world. For example, these themes can be approached from the following viewpoints, among others:

- The Barents and the Baltic Sea region as a concept: under what preconditions could the region be said to form a whole? Or does it form an entity at all?
- The Barents and the Baltic Sea region in the eyes of its inhabitants and/or others: what kind of interests have been shown towards the region and what importance has been accorded to the area? What mental images does the region evoke?
- Critical resources in the region: what conditions and factors in particular have enabled and influenced human communities?
- The spread of influences and innovations in various walks of life to and within the Barents and the Baltic Sea region
- The development of contacts and cooperation within the area; acculturation and the intersection and blending of cultures
- Conflicts and disputes in the area; cultural differentiation; the formation of hierarchies and the exercise of power
- Comparison of the Barents and the Baltic Sea region to other Arctic areas
- Arctic- and Nordic-related issues in other areas

The symposium continues series of researcher meetings at the University of Oulu. These will contribute to Arctic and Nordic research, both of which belong to the university’s focal areas.
Conference program (preliminary, 31 August 2015)

Thursday 10th December
10.00–11.15 Opening words and key note lecture 1
11.15–12.30 Lunch
12.30–14.30 Sessions 1 and 2
14.30–15.00 Coffee break
15.00–17.00 Sessions 3 and 4
18.30– Reception

Friday 11th December
09.00–10.30 Sessions 5 and 6
10.30–10.45 Coffee break
10.45–12.00 Key note lecture 2
12.00–13.00 Lunch
13.00–14.30 Sessions 7 and 8
14.30–15.00 Coffee break
15.00–16.30 Sessions 9 and 10
16.30–17.00 Discussion and closing session

Key note lecturers
Anssi Paasi, professor in geography at Oulu University. His research themes include political geography, theory of regions and power-knowledge relations in neoliberal academy. Among his latest publications is Regional Worlds: Advancing the geography of regions (2015, with Martin Jones).

Lars Elenius, professor in history and education at Umeå University. His research interests include minority policy, ethno-political mobilization and creation of transnational identities in the age of globalization. He is the chief editor of The Barents Region. A Transnational History of Subarctic Northern Europe, published in 2015.

Thursday 10th December

10.00–11.15 Opening words and key note lecture 1
11.15–12.30 Lunch
12.30–14.30  Session 1

Costel Coroban  The Spectacularity of the Arctic in The King’s Mirror and the Old Norse sagas

Sirpa Aalto  Exploitation or Partnership? The Sámi people and the Scandinavians in the light of medieval Old Norse-Icelandic sagas

Masataka Tamai  Barents Sea and Japan – Arctic Council and Japanese Foreign Policy

Juha Saunavaara  Utilization of the new opportunities of the Nordic sea region and regional development policy – Hokkaido as a case study

12.30–14.30  Session 2

Silviu Miloiu  From neutral to belligerent: Romania and Finland and the outbreak of the Barbarossa Campaign

Ruslan Davydov  Crimean War (1853-1856) in the Barents region and in the Baltic Sea region (Historical experience in the context of modern conflict between Russia and West)

Tiina Kinnunen  Women Scholars as Occupiers? Eastern Karelia as a Field of Women’s Scholarly Work, 1941–1944

Andrey Kotljarchuk  Stalinist Terror, WWII and the decline of cross-border relationships in the Barents and the Baltic Sea regions: the role of ethnic minorities

14.30–15.00  Coffee break

15.00–17.00  Session 3

Jukka Nyyssönen  Väinö Tanner and the idea of Fennoscandia – building zones of contact from the Baltic to the Barents

Otso Kortekangas  The Nordic North as a transnational region - De-nationalizing and de-Othering the Sámi

Andrey Repnevskii  Positive results of cooperation of the Russian and Norwegian scientists on creation of joint works on history (1990-2015)

Matti Salo  The Barents History and Encyclopedia Project: Process and Outcomes

15.00–17.00  Session 4


Pauli Heikkilä  Suomi lahden takana. Virolaispakkolaisten asenteita ja toimintaa Kekkosen tasavallassa

Ritva Kylli  Tukholma, Tornio ja takamaiden tavaravirrat – pohjoisten yhteisöjen kaupan ja kehityksen 1600- ja 1800-luvut

Samu Sarviaho  Karjalan historiankuvan tyyppipiirteiden muodostuminen 1800-luvun puolivälissä ja historiankirjoituksessa

18.30–  Reception
Friday 11th December

09.00–10.30  Session 5
Thomas Lundén  Border towns in the Barents – Baltic area: Temporal and spatial characteristics
Jaroslaw Janczak  Baltic Sea and Barents Sea Region(s) Cross-border Towns and Cities: Between Cultural Encounter and Paradiplomacy
Elena Sychenkova  Kolarctic and promotion the equal opportunities in Barents cooperation

9.30–10.30  Session 6
Arseniy Sinitsa  The Russia’s Arctic Barents sea regions among the other Russia’s Arctic regions: the demographic point of view
Aleksander N. Davydov  Archangelsk in the Historic Context of Maritime Contacts between Circum-Baltic and Barents Regions

10.45–12.00  Key note lecture 2

12.00–13.00  Lunch

13.00–14.30  Session 7
Maria Ilcheva  Social policy in the Arctic: The Russian, Scandinavian, and American models in historical perspective
Eva-Maria Stolberg  The Transnational Challenge of Industrial Pollution in the Barents Sea in the Late Twentieth Century
Helena Soini  The ethnic memory and the image of the North in the Russian-Finnish literary relations

13.00–14.30  Session 8
Nadezda Polevshchikova  Social and economic changes in the republic of Karelia as indicator of changes in the Barents region (forest territories changing to recreational ones)
Alexandr Pashkov  Timber industry and timber trade in the Northern Russia as the locomotive of progress: economic and social aspects (1861-1914)
Ekaterina Melnikova  “European Far East” legacies of the Soviet West: “Sovietization” of Finnish Karelia through anthropological lens

14.30–15.00  Coffee break

15.00–16.30  Session 9
Andrian Vlakhov  Grass-roots cooperation between Russian and Norwegian communities of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region: an insight into the Russian discourse
Oksana V. Zaretskaya  The development of cooperation in the Baltic and the Barents regions: Russian-Scandinavian Relations
Practical information

Presentations:

There will be Microsoft PowerPoint projection facilities available in each room. You can either run your presentation from your USB stick, or you can upload it onto the computer ahead of your presentation (during the breaks). Each presentation is allotted 30 minutes. This means a 20–25 minutes presentation and 5–10 minutes for questions.

Abstracts:

If you wish to make changes to your abstract please send a revised version by November 9th.

Location:

The conference will take place in the main campus area – Linnanmaa campus – of the University of Oulu, approx. 6 km to the north from the city center:


Linnanmaa campus map (conference rooms are located near to the entrance C – in the north of the campus):


Transportation:

From the airport to city center:

The airport is located 13 km southwest of the city center. You can reach downtown Oulu either by bus or by taxi. Buses number 8 and 9 serve the airport. The bus fare from the airport to city center is €5.80, ca. 25–35
minute drive. The taxi fare from the airport to city center is approximately €30–40 and to the university ca. €35–45.

**From the train station and bus station to city center:**

Both the train station and the bus station are located on the eastern edge of the city center. You can reach all downtown hotels easiest on foot (ca. 10–15 minute walk).

**To the university:**

The Linnanmaa campus of the University of Oulu is located 7 km north of city center. You can reach the university by taking any of the following buses: 1 (→ Jylkynkangas), 2 (→ Ritaharju), 3 (→ Ritaharju), or 8 (→ Teknologiakylä). The journey takes around 15–20 minutes. Convenient bus stops for downtown hotels are Toripakka, Kaupungintalo and Pokkitörmä. We recommend that you exit the bus at the bus stop Yliopisto P when heading to the university.

Bus number 8 operates between the airport and the university. To reach the university from the railway station or the bus station, walk to bus stop Toripakka or Kaupungintalo and take any of the buses above.

The bus fare from city center to university is €3.30. Route information is also available on the website: [http://www.oulunjoukkoliikenne.fi/journey-planner](http://www.oulunjoukkoliikenne.fi/journey-planner).

**Accommodation:**

Hotel Cumulus Oulu offers accommodation at a reduced rate (91 € /night /incl. breakfast) to the participants of the symposium (Reservations: telephone: +358 8 8827 111). If you wish to use this option, please make your reservation by November 9th and remember to inform them that you are going to participate in the “Barents & Baltic Conference”. There are several other hotels and Bed & Breakfast opportunities in Oulu as well. The easiest way to compare them and to make a reservation might be to use the www-services of international hotel agencies, for instance Ebookers.

**Other information:**

There is no conference fee. Please keep in mind that participants are expected to cover their travel, accommodation and lunch costs themselves.

This program is a preliminary one and will be updated, for instance, in relation to conference rooms. Participants will be informed by e-mail as updated versions are available.

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