

# PLACE REINVENTION



# Place Reinvention

# Northern Perspectives

## Edited by

TORILL NYSETH University of Tromsø, Norway

ARVID VIKEN
Finnmark College, Norway



First published 2009 by Ashgate Publishing

Published 2016 by Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN 711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Copyright © Torill Nyseth and Arvid Viken 2009

Torill Nyseth and Arvid Viken have asserted their moral right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as the editors of this work.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

#### Notice:

Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

### **British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data**

Place reinvention: northern perspectives.

1. Urban renewal--Europe, Northern--Case studies. 2. Place marketing--Europe, Northern--Case studies. 3. Sociology,

Urban--Europe, Northern.

I . Nyseth, Torill. II. Viken, Arvid.

307 3'4'0948-dc22

#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Place reinvention: northern perspectives / edited by Torill Nyseth and Arvid Viken.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-7546-7475-7 (hbk)

- 1. Place marketing--Scandinavia--Case studies. 2. Tourism--Scandinavia--Case studies.
- I. Nyseth, Torill. II. Viken, Arvid.

G155.S35P53 2009 914.80068'8--dc22

2009009822

ISBN 9780754674757 (hbk) ISBN 9781315600574 (ebk)

# Contents

List of Figures List of Tables		vii ix
Prej		
1	Place Reinvention at the Northern Rim Torill Nyseth	1
2	The Industrial Imperative and Second (hand) Modernity Karl Benediktsson	15
3	Place Reinvention by Real Changed Image:	
	The Case of Kiruna's Spectacular Make-over Kristina L. Nilsson	33
4	Kirkenes – A Town for Miners and Ministers Arvid Viken and Torill Nyseth	53
5	Gendered Places:	
	Cultural Economy and Gender in Processes of Place Reinvention Magnfríður Júlíusdóttir and Yvonne Gunnarsdotter	73
6	Creating 'The Land of the Big Fish':	
	A Study of Rural Tourism Innovation  Anniken Førde	93
7	Constructing the Unique – Communicating the Extreme	
	Dynamics of Place Marketing  Brynhild Granås	111
8	City Marketing: The Role of the Citizens	127
	Krister Olsson and Elin Berglund	

9	Gry Paulgaard	143
10	Reinventing a Place through the Origin Myth <i>Turid Moldenæs</i>	165
11	Globalized Reinvention of Indigenuity. The Riddu Riđđu Festival as a Tool for Ethnic Negotiation of Place Paul Pedersen and Arvid Viken	183
12	Reinventing Rurality in the North  Mai Camilla Munkejord	203
13	The Narrative Constitution of Materiality  Arvid Viken and Torill Nyseth	221
Index		239

# List of Figures

2.1	The area included in the amalgamated municipality of Fjarðabyggð in 1998	18
3.1	Kiruna is located in a harsh northern climate area	36
3.2	The dark mining Kiruna is well illustrated with the 'ghost town'	39
3.3	Can the space age Kiruna provide tourist trips out into space	
	in the future?	40
3.4	The cracking ground is a reminder of the deformed Kiruna	42
3.5	The proposal of <i>new Kiruna</i> with its winding streets	44
6.1	'Sørøya – The Land of the Big Fish' (www.hasvik.com)	105
8.1	The difference between selling and marketing a city	130
8.2	Wooden houses in Arboga town centre	134
8.3	Sign by the main country road passing Arboga town	135
8.4	Meeting places in Arboga town centre	137
8.5	Medieval festival in Arboga	138
8.6	Preferred ways of participating in the urban planning	
	and management in Arboga	139
11.1	The festival camp	190
11.2	One of the stages – Nenets performers	191



# List of Tables

4.1	Events, processes and actors in the narration of Kirkenes as a	
	manufacturing and transport town	59
4.2	Events, processes and actors in the narration of Kirkenes as a	
	border town	60
4.3	Events, processes and actors in the narration of Kirkenes as a	
	political town	63
4.4	Events, processes and actors in the narration of Kirkenes as an	
	inclusive town	66



## List of Contributors

**Karl Benediktsson** is professor in human geography, University of Iceland. His main research field is in land conflicts, fresh food trade, and rural space in Papua New Guinea as well as post-productionist agriculture, coping processes, landscape, nature and place-reinvention in Iceland. Among his publications are international journal articles in *Sociologia Ruralis* and *Geografiska Annaler* and the monograph *Harvesting Development, The Construction of Fresh Food Markets in Papua New Guinea* (2005).

**Elin Berglund** is a PhD student at the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden. Her research field is cultural economy, place identity and city marketing.

**Anniken Førde** is associate professor at the Department of Planning and Community Studies at the University of Tromsø. Her research field is gender studies, rural development, innovation and tourism. Among her publications are articles on rural entrepreneurship and a co-edited book on cross diciplinarity.

**Brynhild Granås** is a PhD student in the Department of Sociology, University of Tromsø. Among her publications are *Mobilities and Place* (edited with J.O. Bærenholdt 2007) and *Place Reinvention in the Nordic Peripheries, Dynamics and Governance Perspectives* (2007, eds with Torill Nyseth).

**Yvonne Gunnarsdotter** is associate professor at the Department of Urban and Rural Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, at Uppsala University, Sweden. Her research is in rural development, ecotourism, gender, and male identity building in rural Sweden. She has published in both international journals and had contributions in books, for instance in the book *Ecotourism in Scandinavia*. *Lessons in Theory and Practice*.

**Magnfríður Júlíusdóttir** is assistant professor at the Department of Geology and Geography, University of Iceland, Reykjavik. Her reasearch field is gender studies in geography, and she has done field research in Africa as well as in Iceland and published reports and journal articles on this subject. She is appointed as representative of the editorial board of NORA, Nordic Journal of Gender Research.

**Turid Moldenæs** is associate Professor at the Department of Political Science, University of Tromsø. Her research field is in organizational theory, narrative theory and constructions of local identity. Among her publications is the book *I Sitt Bilde? Identitet og Identitetsproduksjon i Lokalsamfunn* (2006) and in the journal *Systemic Practice and Action Research*.

**Mai Camilla Munkejord** is a PhD student at Finnmark college in Alta. Among her work is an article in the journal *Sociologia Ruralis* (2006) and several papers on rurality and gender.

**Kristina Nilsson** is assistant professor and senior lecturer in spatial planning at the Department of Urban and Rural Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala, Sweden. Her research in field is urban and rural planning and sustainable place development. She has published on issues such as managing complexity in spatial planning, recreation and spatial planning, methods in place development etc.

**Torill Nyseth** is associate professor at the Department of Planning and Community Studies, University of Tromsø. Her research field is in local democracy, public policy, governance and administration and in urban development and design. She has also been a college lecturer and worked as a municipal planner. In addition to many journal articles and contributions in political science, entrepreneurship, urban planning and governance, among them in *Local Government Studies* and *Planning Theory and Practice*, she has published the book *Dugnad og Demokrati* (2000 with Toril Ringholm, Asbjørn Røiseland and Nils Aarsæther), *Nærdemokrati: Teori og Praksis* (2002, with Nils Aarsæther), *I disiplinenes grenseland* (2007, eds with Svein Jentoft, Anniken Førde and Jørgen Ole Bærenholdt), and *Place Reinvention. Dynamics and Governance Perspectives* (2007, eds with Brynhild Granaas).

**Krister Olsson** is senior researcher at the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden. His research field is city marketing, cultural heritage management and cultural economy. Among his publications are contributions to the books *New Urbanism & Beyond: Contemporary and Future Trends in Urban Design* (Haas, 2006, ed), *Reshaping Regional Planning* (Snickars, Olerup and Persson, 2002 eds), and in journals such as *Plan* and *Town Planning Review*.

**Gry Paulgaard** is associate professor in pedagogics at the University of Tromsø. Her research field is youth identity with modernity and place enactment. She is a member of the steering committee of the "Arctic Youth Research Network". She is also participating in a Nordic Research project; Young people in the Barents region – work and welfare. Among her many publications are articles in *Young, Nordic Journal of Youth Research*, several books and book chapters. She is a member of steering committee for the research School "Citizenship, Encounters and Place Enactment" (CEPIN) at the University of Tromsø.

**Paul Pedersen** is chair researcher at Norut Science Ltd in Tromsø. In the last years he has concentrated on labour market analyses, analyses of migration, and evaluation of consequencies of specific rural and ethnic development policies. He has published books and articles on this. A recently finished project is called The Revitalization of Coastal Sami identity, and a book is forthcoming based on this research. He is also participating in a Nordic Research project; Young people in the Barents region – work and welfare.

**Arvid Viken** is associate professor at Finnmark College. His research field is tourism development in which he also has many publications. Among those are the books *Turisme*, *Postmoderne Kultur og Tradisjon* (2000) and *Turisme*, *Miljø og Utvikling* (2004) and many articles in international journals, for instance *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Sosiologi Idag*, *Acta Borealia* and *Polar Records*. He has also been Rector at Finnmark College.



# **Preface**

The title of this book – *Place Reinvention: Northern Perspectives* announces a focus on place and place development – a topic that currently is hot in most social sciences all over the world, also in the marginal northern parts of Europe where most of studies in this book originate from. This collection of essays is a contribution to the discourse on reinvention that is affecting almost every place these days, the urban mega-cities as well as rural townships. The book's focus is on how places are reinventing themselves within the context of globalization and a new economy. It has become more important than ever to appear as attractive, not only towards newcomers and potential investors but also in respect of the inhabitants. This new and expanding discourse on place making is addressed through a critical and analytical social science perspective.

Empirically, the analyses in this book are unfolded along the northern European periphery, in Norway, Sweden, and Iceland. The book originates from a series of Nordic research projects and networks that have focused on restructuring, renewal and reinvention of place and space. The idea of the book is to further develop the theories of place reinvention through case studies that illustrate the diversity of the phenomena. The studies demonstrate that places in the North are still strongly involved in production industries; however, less dominant than before and complemented by a variety of new industries. Many of the transformations that have been observed happen within the spheres of the traditional industries. A cultural economy is also evolving, side by side with heavy industry and traditional modes of production.

The book is multidisciplinary in the sense that the authors come from sociology, social anthropology, cultural geography, political science and planning, but also in the sense that many of the presentations draw on theories crossing different disciplines.

The editors would like to thank all our fellow contributors for their thorough work in several rounds of drafting and editing. Apart from the work of the contributors the creation of this book has depended on numerous other forms of support. In additon to the support from NORDREGIO who financed the research on place reinvention and the funding from the Norwegian Research Council to the project 'Globalization from below', the Department of Planning and Community Studies at the University of Tromsø and Alta College have been our main sponsors. We also would like to thank Ashgate Publishing for their professional response during the editing and production process, and thank John Hobson for his excellent proof-reading.



# Chapter 1

# Place Reinvention at the Northern Rim

### Torill Nyseth

Marginal places, those towns and regions which have been 'left behind' in the modern race for progress, evoke both nostalgia and fascination.

Rob Shields: Places on the Margin (1991)

#### Into the Zones of Otherness

In the introduction to his book *Places on the Margin* Rob Shields (1991) characterizes marginal places as left behind, and that those places on the margin form a 'mythic heartland ... a zone of Otherness' (Shields 1991, 4). Shields' 'margin' is located on the rim of the British Isles and in North America. This book is about the Otherness of places on the 'margin' of Europe, nearly as far as you can get from the European metropolis and still be in Europe. According to Berg and Kearns (1998, 129) there is a tendency that '... geographies of other people and places become marked as Other – exotic, transgressive, extraordinary, and by no means representative ...'. One of the consequences of this, Kitchen (2005, 6) remarks, is that the theoretical production 'casts much of the world's geography into silence'. This book tries to break this silence. It challenges the centre-periphery conceptions, relating empirical studies to trends that have removed the material basis for such stances; basically the globalization and mobilities turn in the comprehension and constitution of the world. Through 12 case studies of places in northern Norway, Sweden and on Iceland, marginality becomes questioned, their uniqueness exotic and at the same time marked by urban winds. However, as will be argued here, these areas are not left behind in these enacted peripheries. According to Bærenholdt, 'People connect and live together over distances to such an extent that we can envision a globalization from below, which has been going on for centuries in the region' (Bærenholdt 2007, 256). Borders that physically were lines of separation becomes points of connection, producing new places and borderlands. New industries like tourism and traditional industries like fishery merge and form new niches like fish tourism, building networks to markets far away, and re-image the localities in their making. Routes become more important than roots (Friedman 2002). 'Marginal' in a global world has become an anachronism – impossible. Every place is a global space.

In this book the approach to these processes of changed marginality is performed through the concept of place reinvention – a concept that relates to ideas like place branding and place promotion and at the same time questions the rationale behind them.

### **Beyond Place Branding**

A standard approach to place transformation in postmodern society is through place marketing perspectives. Re-imaging of place is often understood within the discourse of entrepreneurial managerialism (Harvey 1989). Terms such as place marketing, place branding, and competitive place identities (Anholt 2007) are among those that have emerged in this field. As Brenner and Theodore (2002) point out, it is a part of the true neo-liberal vision that a place should be branded and marketed. The practices of selling and promotion of place are therefore tightly linked to entrepreneurial strategies. As a part of the cultural shift, places have to represent themselves as interesting and entertaining, not only places where you can live a good life. In the global competition between places local actors are fighting to attract industrial investors and offer them the best possible terms to convince them to invest in their specific place. Place marketing is a broad entrepreneurial ethos which has permeated the common affairs of particular places.

Place reinvention goes beyond the concept of place branding and represents a critical perspective on certain aspects of branding as a practice. While branding is an active strategic and deliberate policy for changing the image of a place, place reinvention is underpinned by more contingent and discrete processes of change. Branding means narrowing down a place's identity into fancy logos and slogans – it is selective story-telling (Sandercock 2003), a form of collective impression management (Jensen 2007, 12). Place images tend to be characterized by simplification, stereotyping and labelling (Shields 1991, 47). Branding places is a way of inscribing a certain logic in space – both symbolically through logos, slogans and so on, and materially through construction of buildings, infrastructure and landmarks. Place branding activities must be based on an understanding of demand patterns and images of place consumers, and on identifying the position of the place in the view of competitors. As with place myths, the branding process is a process of creating an evocative narrative with a spatial referent through selective narration – the act of representing the place in a favourable light. Places are packaged and sold as a commodity (Ward 1998, 1). Place promotion has therefore been labelled the carnival mask of late capitalist urbanization (Harvey 1989, 35). Place promotion reduces the complexity involved in local histories and identities inherent in their formation. In order to create a more attractive place image social and cultural meanings are selectively appropriated and problems are played down. Place branding does not do justice to the richness and diversity of places and their peoples. Place reinvention is more than fine words and this quotation from Stephen Ward leads us to a broader understanding of the concept:

Yet marketing, narrowly defined, is not enough. Behind the fine words and images there has to be at least some physical reality of buildings, public spaces and activities that give some genuine promise of a re-invented city (Ward 1998 193).

An important part of our argument is therefore that changes in the symbolic representation of place involved in branding and re-imaging strategies often are contested.

#### **Place Reinvention Practices**

The focus in this collection is what can be called the practices of place reinvention; practices that involve both economic and symbolic transformations constituting a changed sense of place. Processes of reinvention are related to changes in industrial bases and the representational changes accompanying these changes. This means that the focus is not so much on landscapes, townscapes and architecture but rather on how economic restructuring is followed by a changed symbolic and redefined meaning of place. The term 'reinvention' indicates that something has been left behind and has to be recreated, renewed or redefined. Several known processes have over the years changed the character of most places, processes that are going on all the time. Some processes change the raison d'être of the place – the genus locus of a place, for instance the industrial basis or status, whereas other processes are more related to changed landscapes and townscapes, and often these two processes are merged; townscapes change due to shifts in industrial bases. Changes in the modes of production followed by an ongoing restructuring of the local economy may lead to changes in place identities and place images.

Places are put under an innovation imperative according to Thrift (2008). This may lead them to boost their attractions in the form of place marketing – or as we emphasize in this volume to a series of other forms of innovation. Place reinvention is a concept that focuses both on inventions and interventions as vehicles for change of both urban and rural places (Robinson 2006, 251). Inventions are the more continuous changes going on all the time, while interventions are linked to those more direct, planned and intentional processes attempting to achieve change. Inventions are not only a label that fits the larger cities. We find many rural places in this collection to be experimental, innovative, open, fluid and dynamic places concerned with re-imaging the place to adapt to a new global context.

Places never reach a position of completion; they are always an ongoing affair, always in the making. Place reinvention addresses the numerous ways places are being produced and reproduced. The concept goes beyond place branding and directs attention towards the relationship between symbolic and imaginative change and planned regeneration. By place reinvention we mean transformations resulting from interplay between actors such as industries, authorities and the public, between projects of construction, promotion and consumption, and processes related to information, identity and imagery. Reinvention of places is a matter of intention, intervention and hazard; it is both planned and something that just happens as more or less unintended consequences of other ongoing processes. Thus, new place images are not only results of strategic development processes

aiming at profiling and promoting place, but also products of people's everyday life, and local and national politics.

It is this complex dialectics between material space and discursive representation that we try to catch in the notion of place reinvention. Through the concept of place reinvention the aim is to give attention to the complexity involved in place transformation which the branding literature seems to ignore or simplify. We relate place reinvention to particularly two dimensions, a material and a symbolic, which will be elaborated in the following section. The political implication of such reinventional processes will be discussed thereafter.

#### **Analytical Dimensions of Place Reinvention**

## Material production of place

Perceptions of place reflect activities going on in many spheres, including production, consumption, everyday life and cultural spheres. Concerning the production sector the perspective has changed significantly in recent years – about what production is, its relation to consumption, to authorities and to place. Traditional industries are no longer seen as a necessity for every community, nor is mass production seen as a key to industrial success. This has produced a view of towns and cities as sites of consumption more than of production (Lash and Urry 1994). This theory has recently been discussed by Thrift (2008) who argues that sites of consumption also are sites of production, as there are obvious links in-between, in an economy where the consumers take part in the production. This tight relationship also indicates that production is something going on in most places; it is a function of the existence of social life in places. Thus, towns are still obviously also sites of production. Due to the industrial turn called post-Fordism, technology has become more flexible and adaptable, and enables smallscale production being profitable (Piore and Sabel 1984; Lash and Urry 1994). Companies wherever located can be integrated in huge international production systems. In many places production has changed from being locally based for a local market, to production adapted to global specialization and diversification, and for international markets. Therefore, in most places the industrial base is in a process of change; traditional industries become technologically more advanced and effective, and do not employ as many people as before.

Most of the places discussed in this collection have always been oriented towards an international market as they have a history as fishery villages or mining towns. Integrated in an extremely open economy, very much depending on natural resources and international markets, the northern regions have always been part of national and international economic systems, and thus have long traditions in adapting to changing economic trends. In this book places that have depended on fish markets are, for instance, represented by Vadsø, Båtsfjord, Berlevåg, Sørøya in Norway and Fjarðabyggð in Iceland. Others that have been depending on global

markets for minerals are Pajala and Kiruna in Sweden and Narvik and Kirkenes in Norway.

Several of the places have also experienced industrial restructuring, being transformed from exclusively manufacturing sites to places with diverse industrial platforms. Several of the studies will demonstrate that places in the North still are strongly involved in production industries, however less dominant than before and complemented by a variety of new industries. In Chapter 2, Karl Benediktsson emphasizes that restructuring in a small Icelandic community is all about jobs, jobs, jobs – and only jobs in the manufacturing sector counts. In 2008 this small community, Fjarðabyggð, has been transformed from a small fishing village to a site for international aluminium production. Being recognized as places in rich areas of natural resources like oil, gas and hydro-electric power, many of the places in the North undergo processes of restructuring that take the form of re-industrialization. In Kirkenes (Chapter 4), near the Russian border, the town is preparing for an oil era, and an old iron ore mine has been reopened more than ten years after it was closed down and a process of restructuring the local economy started. There is a historic continuity in local economic development that marks certain places, particularly where the economy is based on natural resources of some kind. The social relations embedded in a place supports some forms of production and resist others. Thus, as old industries are vanishing, the cultural and social capital of people tend to live on. There is therefore a tendency for local production systems to survive, sometimes only culturally or in the form of continuity of businesses, partly in new forms.

Oil, gas, minerals, fish, waterfalls and so on produce not only hard currency in a global market, but also a highly materialized and embodied sense of place. In Narvik people still frequently wash their windows to get rid of the dust from the coal storage, and in Båtsfjord fish still represents the 'smell of money'. On the other hand, materiality is also changing its meaning. In Sørøya big fish has been transformed into something almost erotic, at least for male tourists.

In many places the industrial base is a combination of production for national and/or international markets and production for locals and travellers. From a production point of view, most places are diversified, multifaceted and complex industrial systems. They are not passive containers even if some of them are competing with other localities and forced to attract capital by offering tax breaks, cheap land and free infrastructure. However, what these local economies are labelled vary according to local traditions, international trends and political opportunities.

## Symbolic production of place

Place promotion is intimately linked to image communication (Gold 1994). In *The Economies of Signs and Space* Lash and Urry (1994) develop a new paradigm for understanding how economic development is connected to images. The shift towards a cultural and experience economy means that, to an increasing

degree, cultural values are added to products. The idea of a 'cultured' economy lays the ground for the semiotic focus in efforts to develop place. Signs, images and symbols of place are carrying place specific cultural values, and must be understood as cultural expressions. Place marketing is, according to Philo and Kearns (1993), characterized by making use of 'imageneering' concepts or symbols to construct competitive place images. Place marketing involves quite specific interpretations of what are the symbolic attributes of a place, and implies a symbolic communication of these interpretations. Such symbolic communication is not only directed towards the target group of an external market, it also demonstrates locally how our place should be understood. In this collection, an example of the analyses of symbolic representations in marketing is found in Chapter 7 where Granas discusses the uniqueness of Narvik communicated through 'strong experiences'. However, place reinvention, even the most explicit place marketing campaigns as the one in Narvik, is never a promotional campaign only. The case also exemplifies how the ascription of meaning to the place is regulated by the positioning of the place within extensive symbolic relations of north and south as well as centre and periphery.

The symbolic production of place is not only obvious in place promotion and selling of place, also physical regeneration and the construction of flagship projects of particular architectural value can be powerful symbolic representations of place (Hubbard 1996). In Chapter 3 Kristina Nilsson analyses the relocation of the city centre in Kiruna as an example of an extreme make-over of a town. Even if the reason is industrial – to get hold of the iron ore in the soil beneath the city centre – the symbolic implications are numerous. Nilsson discusses four different place images that have turned up in the local discourse that demostrate how different actors perceive quite different futures for Kiruna as a place, from a dark mining town to an image of a completely new and modern townscape.

Re-imaging processes then involves physical reconstructions as well as semiotic work (cf. Short 1999, 46). In Kirkenes, to attract investors, workforce and tourists, the question of town make-over has been raised, and the semiotics and narratives of the town has already changed – it has become a border town with lots of signs of a cross-border region (called Barents Region) and Russian co-existence such as street names being spelled in Cyrillic and the Russian language is heard all over. However, more important than semiotic changes, are shifts related to narratives and discourses. Through the construction of symbolic boundaries global flows allow people to construct their 'locality' in a range of ways (Appadurai 1990).

Through symbolic expressions places also communicate their identity (Philo and Kearns 1993), an important aspect in their struggle to be attractive. This is particularly demonstrated in Chapter 11 (by Pedersen and Viken) where place reinvention is linked to a particular event, an ethnic festival (Riddu Riđđu in Gáivuotna). The festival has brought about a revitalization of the coastal Sami culture and in marketing the place as a site for international indigenousness. In this case reinvention of place involves renegotiation of local identities. Symbolic production of place is also analysed in Chapter 9 (by Paulgaard), which focuses

on a film called *Cool and Crazy* – a film about a male choir in the small fishing town Berlevåg. The film produced a changed image of the place. The uniqueness of place is here demonstrated by the authenticity and universality of the 'Other' through close-up pictures of quite ordinary men singing in a snow storm with icicles hanging from their beard. The symbolic construction of place is here demonstrated through difference – the film reinvented the place into a more exotic site in sharp contrast to depressing images of a place where the fishing industry is bankrupt and were young people have moved out.

Where cultural industries are replacing manufacturing industries, for instance tourism, signs and images of place are decisive. In the case demonstrated by Førde (in Chapter 6) the traditional fishing village Sørøya is transformed into a tourist resort based on fish tourism. In marketing this destination the slogan 'The Land of the Big Fish' was developed, playing with erotic signs and male obsession with catching the big fish using a female figure holding a big cod. The cultural power to create an image has become more important as traditional institutions have become less relevant mechanisms of expressing identity (Zukin 1995).

### Political production of place

Politics is territorial but these territories are simultaneously real, imaginary and symbolic (Keith and Pile 1993, 224). To enhance the attractiveness of a place pro-growth economic development is defined as the basic strategy. Places are products of social and industrial activities, but today place development is also a question of choice, and matters for political negotiations, policy making and planning. Thus, place development tends to be on the political agenda. Places are scenes where structural development patterns intersect and trigger off new regimes. And more than before places as such are areas for political interests, negotiations and governance. This also reflects changes in the social composition of the local population with regard to class, gender, race and age. Social stratification is expressed in new ways, for instance through gentrification of working-class areas. With economic restructuring follows a recomposition of class distinctions and social cleavages; political behaviour changes and new groups may enter positions of power where they are able to impose their preferences, values and perspectives upon a place. New place images may therefore mobilize and legitimate particular sets of actions or policies (Jessop 1997), and there is a potential of new conflicts produced by place brands (Mommaas 2002). Images are social constructions, and as such never neutral. To produce images, is to enact power.

A renewed focus on place development has emerged in a period with major shifts in the political culture, defining new rules of the game for local governments (Clark 2003). Transformations in the classic left–right dimension to political pragmatism (Beck 2002), new public management, and new modes of governance all affect the way 'place images' are perceived and produced. Place transformation is a field that is not governable through 'government' alone. New governance

regimes appear as consequences of a break with established ways of understanding politics. A number of different processes are intertwined, many beyond formal systems of 'conductors'. Chapter 5 (by Júlíusdóttir and Gunnarsdotter) shows how new forms of governance, for instance in the form of public–private partnerships, evolve even in quite small and remote Swedish villages as Pajala, as a part of a reinventing strategy aiming at transforming the town into a 'Cultural Municipality'. This reorganization of local development issues changed the profile of the policy involved from culture as a matter of art and identity towards culture as business.

A particular form of political production of place is illustrated in Chapter 4 (by Viken and Nyseth) about the border town Kirkenes. One of the narratives told here is the image of a political place, a place for international politics. Its localization close to the Russian border has in a sense always marked the town as of national political importance. The fall of the Soviet Union and the opening of the border to Russia have, however, made Kirkenes into a political destination. Diplomacy, cross-border cooperation and political meetings are going on all the time and ministers and high-profile politicians are visiting Kirkenes almost on a daily basis these days.

Places can be planned, and even moved or relocated as in one of the cases in this book (the Kiruna case). This is a highly political issue and a matter of negotiations and governance. One aspect of this is how local citizens can be involved in promotion strategies directed towards targeted consumer groups in external markets. This question is analysed in Chapter 8 (by Olsson and Berglund) based on a study of urban planning in the Swedish town Arboga. The authors argue that knowledge on how local citizens actually experience and value the practice of city selling is limited. Traditional methods of citizen participation, like public meetings often do not involve large groups of citizens even if they become affected by place reinvention. The authors argue that systematic mapping of common interests through survey data analyses in urban planning could complement traditional methods of public participation.

Politics is also about the driving forces, which in regard to place reinvention are numerous. Some of them are related to economic crises in the local economy. One example is the enforced restructuring of three mining towns: Kiruna in Sweden (Chapter 3 by Nilsson) and Narvik in Norway (Chapter 7 by Granås), and in Kirkenes where this situation led to a close-down (Chapter 4 by Viken and Nyseth). Another example of this is demonstrated in Chapter 11 (by Pedersen and Viken), where crises in fisheries and agriculture in this coastal Sami area gave rise to an ethnic reinvention process. In several of the towns in Iceland, Pajala in Sweden, and in several of the Norwegian cases, the reasons for problems in the 1990s were blamed on others, the market, the authorities and on globalization of markets. For instance, the major decline in fish resources in the many fish-dependent communities on the coast of Iceland and North Norway is elaborated in several of the case studies in this book. At a more profound level, overall changes in the economy, for instance the cultural shift, such as a shift from Fordist mass production and industrial manufacturing towards a cultural economy, are also

important drivers affecting the places in the North. Among the deeper changes are also those related to globalization and increased competition expressed, for instance, through different processes such as global tourism at one end of the spectrum, discussed in Chapter 6, and at the other end the revitalization of local identity could also be linked to another consequence of globalization. The global discourse on indigenous rights was one of the driving forces behind the international indigenous festival Riddu Riddu discussed in Chapter 11. Drivers can also be political; an intentional and strategic change. Place promotion policies have become a mandatory part of economic development policies in even the most remote communities in the North partly as a consequence of tourism but also to attract new inhabitants from more urban regions of Europe.

## A Narrative Approach

There has been a change of direction towards narrative in social sciences that also has inspired the approach of this book which contains a number of case studies, or 'case stories' from the northern rim of Europe. Most knowledge can be seen as narratives, and narration is a way of mediating information – facts as well as fiction; 'narratives is natural mode of human consciousness – in contrast to ... logic and reason' (Bowman 2006, 8). Narratives are both modes of constructing reality, and a means for conveyance and politics. Narratives are central in human communication and in the way we present and interpret each other. Narratives represent a way 'in which people make sense of the world and construct identity by ascribing meaning and ordering events in a logical manner' (Gilpin 2008; cf. Czarniawska-Joerges 1995; Czarniawska 2002). Even though narratives demand narrators, there is also a tendency for stories to live their own life reducing its authors to co-authors; they are something that circulates among people giving meaning to events, space and human actions.

There are at least three ways in which this book can be said to have applied a narrative approach, using a scheme presented by Czarniawska-Joerges (1995). The first is that each chapter represents narratives from the field, narratives about places on the northern rim. These stories go into the body of knowledge about these places, and into the discourse concerning restructuring, place marketing, identities and so on. The second way the narrative approach is revealed is through referring to particular narratives in the field, narratives that people tell and that are important in their lives. The last way narratives can be studied, also demonstrated in this book, is to reveal how stories constitute and influence interpretations of social life which adds to the construction of the place.

In Chapter 11, Moldenæs make use of an autobiographical approach in constructing the origin myth of the small town Båtsfjord on the coast of Finnmark in Norway. Through this approach the story of how the identity of the place was created is expressed through the actors' self-presentations towards an external audience. There are also other narratives and other forms of narrative analyses

appearing in the chapters. People's perceptions of place give rise to what Somers (1994) calls ontological narratives – people's personal experiences. Narratives from women's lives are for instance presented in Chapter 12 (by Munkejord), in Chapter 5 (by Júliusdóttir and Gunnarsdotter) and in Chapter 6 (by Førde). People also tell about their places as such: local history, events, legends and material realities are important in the stories people tell in interviews concerning the place where they live, stories they more or less share as members of a community. Somers (1994) calls this type public narratives. A third form of narratives – what Somers defines as conceptual narratives – are stories that are inscribing in academic or public discourses. Such stories are demonstrated in Chapter 5 when public officials claim that Egilsstaðir and Pajala are on their way into the cultural economy, or when an informant in Kirkenes says 'Kirkenes is a hybrid community'. The choice of one type of these narratives is determined by the educational background or the profession people have. Such professional narratives are demonstrated in Chapter 8 (by Olsson and Berglund) where the small Swedish town of Arboga is described according to its historical and cultural profile with a street pattern from the Middle Ages. We also find this form of narrative demonstrated in Chapter 7 (by Granås) in the professional marketing of Narvik. A particular form of narratives is the meta-narratives – grounded in grand theories or ideologies (Somers 1994). Metanarratives are often inscribed in discourses, for instance academic discussions concerning place, region or cultural economy. In this way narratives about local changes are narratives about adaptations to international or global trends, and how global trends are embedded in local performance and culture. Such narratives are for instance represented in Chapter 4 (by Viken and Nyseth) in the narrative about the multiculturality of Kirkenes.

Narratives in the form of self-presentations about the urban character of the towns located in this peripheral part of Europe seem to flourish (cf. Throgmorton 2003). One is about the town as a site of opportunity and excitement. This is illustrated in the optimistic plans that tell about a prosperous future of the small village Fjardabygd in Iceland as a site for a new aluminium smelter (Chapter 2, by Benediktsson), about Båtsfjord as a world site for fisheries (Chapter 10), and Kirkenes as a hub in a future oil industry (Chapter 4). Another narrative has almost an opposite tone – the nightmares narratives addressing challenges related to unemployment, out-migration, economic crises or diminishing fish resources. In several of the chapters in the book such stories are told: about crises in the fisheries in the 1990s, about falling prices of iron. In several of the cases one can see the contours of a narrative of victimization (cf. Gilpin 2008) – others are blamed for the crises: public authorities, globalization or the 'market'. A fifth type of narrative is about 'town ghosts', for instance in Berlevåg the cinematic narrative where people refer to the community of good old days. Also this is a type of narrative in Kirkenes – the 'good old days of mining', when everything was arranged by the company – a narrative that is said to have blocked the way for innovation and development; in such a dependent climate people sat passive, waiting for someone to get things in order, create jobs and services, and so on. We also find examples