

## C11-O02

### CONSTRUCTING THE PAST OF ARCTIC FUTURES: HISTORY AND HERITAGE AS GEOPOLITICS

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Over the last centuries, entrepreneurs, states and Arctic residents (indigenous and non-indigenous) have competed for control over resources and for influencing the future in the Arctic. Previous research has analyzed such struggles on different arenas, with particular attention to diplomacy, science and resource extraction. Less is known about the role of historical remains of human activity in this context. The objective of this paper is to analyze the role of cultural heritage sites in the struggle for influence over the future of the Arctic.

The paper will focus on heritage sites in two areas in the Arctic – Svalbard and the Norrbotten county of Arctic Sweden. The analysis is based on field research conducted in the Arctic within the framework of two research programs – Arctic futures and Mistra Arctic Sustainable Development – funded by the Swedish foundation for strategic environmental research. The cases analyzed shows that competing stakeholders in those regions have used cultural heritage sites to promote their interests and influence the future, through practical re-use, by narration and through heritage management. The results show that industrial heritage sites in the Polar Regions can play a significant role in competitions for influence and resources there. By enrolling the heritage sites into actor networks, competing stakeholders populate places with allied actors and actants. In these networks, the heritage sites can play different roles, defending indigenous rights, promoting corporate interests, manifest national prestige, attract tourists, to create a sense connectedness to distant polar places, as well as legitimizing claims for influence over territories and natural resources.