

32nd Year of the Calotte Academy

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The unique event of the Calotte Academy is known for being the longest-running Arctic symposium travelling around the region. The attendees, predominantly PhD candidates, explore the Arctic by bus to acquire a first-hand experience of its appearance, texture, and — occasionally — odour. Its primary objective is to connect researchers with the Arctic and bring together experts from around the world. The programme excels in prioritising open and meaningful conversations, including talking to local people and learning about the real issues of the region.

The Calotte Academy 2023 took place from the 11th to the 18th of June. It started in Rovaniemi and passed through Kiruna, Kautokeino, Alta, Kirkenes, and Inari. The theme for this year was “Non-state Actors and Circumpolar Regionalization”. Throughout the journey, over 30 traveling participants gave their presentations and engaged with guest lecturers at each stop, resulting in a total of 48 presentations. Additionally, daily excursions, both major and minor, were arranged. Unfortunately, the Academy had no opportunity to include a stop in Russia. However, Russian researchers participated in an online session.

Academy attendees convened at Guesthouse Borealis in Rovaniemi, Finland, on Sunday the 11th of June, for the inaugural session, entitled “Non-state Actors & Regionalization”. The meeting started with opening words by Lassi Heininen and an introduction of participants and the program of 2023 Calotte Academy. Afterward, Heather Nicol presented on borders, mobility, and transnationalism in the circumpolar north with a North American focus. For her part, Daria Mishina shared her research findings on the topic of business in the Arctic, specifically about Arctic regional and central development.

In the evening, during the reception in the ‘Alaruokanen House’ (a semi-detached house built in the 1860s and one of the oldest buildings in Rovaniemi), mayor Ulla-Kirsikka Vainio warmly welcomed the participants of the Academy and provided a captivating overview of the city’s recent development. She highlighted the city’s approach to sustainable urban planning, fostering a thriving

economy while preserving its natural beauty. As the evening unfolded, the dinner by Gustav Kitchen & Bar showcased a delightful fusion of traditional Lappish cuisine and modern gastronomic delights. After the dinner, participants travelled to Kiruna, Sweden.

The second session of the Academy focused on the environment and climate. It took place at the seminar room of the Malmfältens Logi & Konferens AB in Kiruna, Sweden, on the 12th of June. Michaela Louise Coote presented on the topic of Arctic interdisciplinary research as a tool for environmental decision-making. Guglielmo Migliori's presentation was focused on policy research. It was titled "Leveraging the Arctic's Frozen Assets: A Critical Path to EU Energy Security and Transition in a Changing Energy Landscape". Virga Popovaitė gave the third presentation of the session on the topic of maps and safety in the Arctic: more-than-human interactions in a search and rescue (SAR) response. The session was closed with Tom Gabriel Royer's presentation on "Questioning the Holisticness of Space Sustainability Law: A Critical Examination of Arctic and Scottish Commercial Spaceports".

After the session, the participants of the Academy went on a remarkable journey at LKAB's Visitor Centre, located 540 meters below the Earth's surface in the world's largest iron-ore mine, which extends 1365 meters deep in total. It was a great chance to explore the mining world, uncovering its impact on Kiruna's displacement and the intricate link between industrial progress and urban development. A documentary on 'green mining' showcased LKAB's sustainability efforts, prompting reflection on resource needs and environmental preservation. Everyone interested concluded with iron pellets as souvenirs, feeling content like satisfied crows.

Next, the Academy visited the Swedish Institute of Space Physics where Information Officer Martin Eriksson provided a comprehensive overview of the IRF, illuminating its key objectives, missions, and scientific collaborations, notably with the European Space Agency (ESA). Philipp Wittmann delved into the technical intricacies of the Jovian Plasma Dynamics and Composition Analyzer (JDC) for ESA's JUICE Mission. He explained the innovative design and the challenges of creating a robust instrument for Jupiter's harsh environment. Wittmann also shared insights into meticulous testing and calibration procedures, with a replica of the JUICE satellite as a visual backdrop. Uwe Raffalski then introduced ozone monitoring using the IRF's KIMRA millimetre-wave radiometer. He highlighted its advantageous polar location for studying polar stratospheric chemistry, drawing attention to a result curve that bore a resemblance to Barad-dûr, though lacking an eye.

On the 13th of June, the third session, titled "The Arctic Yearbook Presents: Indigenous Sovereignty and Sámi", started in Kautokeino, at the Sámi University College. The session started with the opening words and introduction to EALAT by Anders Oskal, the Secretary-General of the Association of World Reindeer Herders. After that, Heidi Maarit Pietarinen and Amna Qureshi presented their project, "Life Between Art and Blood". The third presenter of the session, Larry Ibrahim Mohammed concentrated on an analysis of the Kvalsund Wind Power Project in Northern Norway. The next presentation, given by Laura Junka-Aikio focused on military colonialism and building critical approaches to the militarization of Northern Finland in the era of NATO membership. The session was closed with Jacob van Haaften's presentation on decolonized nature relatedness and indigenist mixed methods research design and implementation.

Later that day, practicality and ethics were discussed during the next session. Zhanna Anshukova presented on the topic of cross-border challenges in Arctic research, talking about the differences

in ethical reviews in Sweden, Norway, and Finland. The session continued with the discussion and brainstorming on how to make a research plan, project design, fund-raising and network-building.

After the session, the Calotte Academy participants travelled to Alta. There, at UiT Alta Campus, Jan Olli said a few words about the recognition of the land rights for the Indigenous people of Sámi in Finnmark. After this presentation, Aslat Heandarát Eira and Ingrid Fredriksen shared their personal account on reindeer herding in Sápmi as a part of the fifth session on the topic of smart specialisation, de-colonising tourism and Sámi governance.

The next morning, the same session continued with the opening words by Professor Urban Wråkberg from the Northern Studies Research Group of UiT Alta. This was followed by Sveinung Eikeland's presentation on smart specialization for the achievement of SDGs in European Arctic regions. The next presentation given by Frida Marie Omma Jørgensen was focused on traditional and local ecological knowledge in nature-based tourism. The session was closed by Peter Haugseth presenting the Sámi electoral system and cultural revitalization processes and some consequences of inclusion and exclusion.

In the afternoon, session number six, focused on Marine Environment and Climate, started with Auni Haapala talking about urban (in)visibilities of global fisheries in Tromsø, Norway. The next speaker was Lluçia Mascorda-Cabre presenting on the topic of offshore shellfish aquaculture sustainable and focusing on protein while enhancing marine biodiversity examining the Brexit case study and how lack of cooperation and political will can influence food security. Then, Anna Margarete Pluschke gave a presentation titled "The Arctic Council – Ready to tackle the balance between marine environmental protection and the impacts of climate change?". The last presentation of the session was on the topic of clearing the air: Serafima Andreeva introduced the understanding of the use of knowledge on black carbon through the Arctic Council in Norway and Canada.

The initial plan to visit the stunning Alta Dam after the sixth session had an unforeseen obstacle. As the bus was too lengthy for the road restrictions leading to the dam, the trip had to be redirected, leading to an exciting adventure at the Norwegian-Russian border. It was a stimulating occasion, where several attendees perused a picturesque gift shop filled with Russian collectables such as Matryoshka dolls, small Lada automobiles, postcards, stamps, and more!

On the 15th of June, the day started at Barents Institute in Kirkenes. The seventh session, focused on non-state actors and regionalization, started with welcoming words from Victoria Tevlina. Then, she presented the book project "From Northeast Passage to Northern Sea Route. A history of the waterway North of Eurasia". Jakub Wambach and Marie Crikova presented on cross-border cooperation in the North Calotte Region, observation and application of the approaches to Euroregion Neisse-Nisa-Nysa. The third speaker was Alma Karabeg, who talked about non-state actors in the Arctic and specifically about research institutes on the multi-level governance scene. After that, Tatiana Petrova presented on the topic of bridging youth and regional development through a dialogue. The session was closed with Gleb Yarovoy's presentation titled "When a dream does not come true. Re-interpreting regional cooperation in the Euro-Arctic Rim".

Between the sessions, the Academy had a chance to visit the town hall of Kirkenes. Participants were given a presentation about Sør-Varanger, in eastern Finnmark, which borders Russia, Finland, and Norway, with three border rivers and Kirkenes, its administrative center. The municipality

strives to diversify its economy, notably in tourism, fishing, and services. EU sanctions and border closures have hit local businesses. The shipyard can no longer repair Russian boats, risking 200 jobs. Cross-border cooperation possibilities arise with Finland joining NATO. Challenges include an aging workforce, high expenses, energy deficits, and regional instability. However, hope hinges on tourism, education, and entrepreneurship, notably the Nothing Hill project.

The eighth session of the Academy was titled “Unveiling Truth in the Face of Censorship: (Cross-Border) Journalism in the European North”. Anna Jarovaja gave a speech on independent Russian journalism in the North, asking a rhetorical question: “is there life after death?”. Thomas Nilsen and Alte Stålesen continued the topic by focusing on cross-border journalism from Kirkenes in times of censorship. The session was closed by Georgy Chentemirov introducing the Journalist Union of [Russian] Karelia and discussing free journalism in a restrictive state.

On the evening of the 15th of June, the Calotte Academy travelled to Inari. The next morning, session number nine, “The Arctic Yearbook Presents: Indigenous Sovereignty and Sámi”, took place at Jeera. Pasi Jaakonaho introduced the ultimate tools in the Arctic – puukko, sámieniibi, and kniv. Eleni Kavvatha presented on the ability of non-state actors to influence policy related to Indigenous tourism in the European Arctic – the case of the Sámi in Norway, Sweden, and Finland. The next presenter, Owen Harrison, discussed the role of the individual in the reconciliation between settlers and the Indigenous population in Canada. After that, Sharon Beaucage-Johnson introduced her research on the effects of colonization on Indigenous women’s relationality. The last speech, given by Marlene Payva Almonte, was about rethinking nature in the context of climate change and ‘green’ transformation from the Indigenous peoples’ perspective.

The tenth session concentrated on Arctic geopolitics, security and cooperation. Olivia Wynne Houck presented on Norway, NATO, the Soviet Union and the spectre of bases of Svalbard. After that, Soili Nystén-Haarala introduced the current geopolitical situation of the Arctic railway. Following Soili’s presentation, Mari-Anna Suurmunne examined conflicts and geopolitical tensions highlighting challenges for global engagement of higher education institutions. Then, Lassi Heininen closed the session by introducing and discussing common interests vis-à-vis special features – (re)structuring (Arctic) geopolitics.

In the evening, the Academy travelled to the UTAC test centre in Inari, a bit north of Ivalo. Within UTAC’s traditional wooden hut, the members of the Academy attended a captivating presentation of the company’s operations. Later, as a reminder of Lapland’s chilly winters, the participants ventured onto the indoor track, which was held at a temperature of minus 7°C (19.4°F), and also had the opportunity to observe the outdoor ice tracks — which, in the summertime, resemble rectangular artificial lakes.

The morning on the 17th of June started with the online session during which Russian colleagues Alina Cherepovitsyna, Ekaterina Kuznetsova, Svetlana Tuinova, Yulia Zaika, Upasak Bose, and Alexander Sergunin focused on sustainability and alternative energy in the Russian Arctic and Western-Russian relations. As well as last year, these scientists couldn’t travel with the other researchers because of the political situation, but when they joined online, it showed how important it is for people to talk and work together sharing their perspectives, which is what the Calotte Academy stands for. This continuing situation is a clear example of politics getting in the way of researchers working together across borders.

In the afternoon, the Sámi cultural performance and student engagement event in the form of the Zoom workshop for Circumpolar Studies Students was the twelfth and last session of the Calotte Academy trip. The workshop brought together circumpolar students from across the University of the Arctic to participate in an evening workshop highlighting cultural performance, traditional knowledge, and other elements of Sámi culture. First, the projects connected to Sámi education, especially distance education, were presented by Pigma Keskitalo. Then, Inker-Anni Linkola-Aikio introduced the linguistic landscape PhD project. The third project, presented by Line Reichelt Förelund, was about game-based learning. The fourth presentation was about studying yoiking from a pedagogical perspective, presented by Laila Aleksandersen-Nutti. The final presentation was on Sámi filmmaking, presented by Liisa Holmberg.

On Sunday, the 18th of June, the Academy travelled back to Rovaniemi.

The Calotte Academy 2023 journey was an enlightening exploration of the Arctic's multifaceted dimensions. From Rovaniemi to Inari, this odyssey ventured into the heart of Arctic complexities. It fostered meaningful connections among participants and promoted open dialogue with local communities. It showcased the spirit of cooperation and resilience that defines Arctic research – and Arctic life more generally. Sessions covered an impressive diversity of topics, from Indigenous sovereignty to cross-border journalism, through outer space, emphasizing the Arctic's significance on the global stage. Excursions, like the memorable visit to LKAB's iron ore mine and the unplanned Norwegian-Russian border visit, added instructive and exhilarating twists to the journey. As the participants returned, they carried back not only knowledge, but also a deeper appreciation for the Arctic's vast and intricate landscape. In conclusion, the Calotte Academy continues to be a vital platform for fostering Arctic understanding and collaboration, transcending borders and obstacles, and bridging different views. Finally, it is essential to express gratitude to Professor Emeritus Lassi Heininen, whose expertise, enthusiasm, and guidance made this remarkable journey possible.