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Chapter 7

Inhabiting Welfare Municipalities

Introduction

People cope with distances by means of mobility. The chapters on transports, fisheries and tourism have shown how various forms of societies as routes are produced through mobile practices, challenging our more or less 'normal' conception of societies as territorial units. But we have now reached a turning point in this book. We are no longer only interested in the mobile bonds of associations but address the questions of how the territorial bridging of political entities is enacted (see chapter 1). Therefore we do also investigate '...explicitly the process of the territorialization of space, the construction and signification of demarcations and boundaries' (Paasi 1996: 7-8). These are often re-territorializing practices responding to the challenges following from the mobility of people, capital, goods and information. Among the territorial institutions produced it is argued that the municipalities embedded in the Nordic Atlantic welfare states are of major importance in several dimensions.

First municipalities are real units, political entities, enacted through rules and resources. The local authority of the Nordic Atlantic municipalities is a form of actor-network that is more than the sum of individual interactions micro-sociology would tend to concentrate on. 'The dreamers who would like to restructure macro-actors on the basis of the individual will arrive at an even more monstrous body for they must leave out all the hard parts which has enabled the macro-actors to simplify their lives and to take over all the space' (Callon and Latour 1981: 300). So while peoples' coping with distance in part produces municipalities, municipal authorities are also complex, stabilized organizations coping with a number of challenges, partly on behalf of their inhabitants. Municipalities this way are real associations and entities of local citizens, and we need to add this aspect to our understandings of various citizenships associated with the nation-state, globalization and various bunds (cp Urry 2000). Of course, a number of the capacities of municipalities are due to their connections with nation-state actors, or more or less global/glocal/transnational associations. A number of translations, actions of behalf of others, are played out.

Second municipalities act not only through the means of the organization but also through the resources mobilised with reference to a specific territory. Capabilities of local inhabitants, industries, infrastructures, environments and cultural signs are enacted due to the power exercised with the control of assets defined by the territorial boundaries of the municipality. Most importantly, municipalities have responsibilities for inhabitants' welfare, for infrastructure and for environments, and these responsibilities are territorially defined. There are different degrees to what extent municipalities have these responsibilities, but it is a general characteristic feature of municipalities in all of the Nordic countries, that a wide number of their central functions are defined as matters of public service provisions, translated from welfare state regimes. 'Although its average size and the type of mandate it is granted by national government and legislation may vary, the Nordic type of municipality is an institution that assumes a broad responsibility for the well-being of the people in its area' (Aarsæther and Suopajarvi 2004: 10). The municipalities in Greenland, but more in Iceland and especially in the Faroes have different capacities as compared to their Norwegian, Danish, not to mention Swedish and Finnish, counterparts, but in general Nordic municipalities, also in the Nordic Atlantic, have a number of distinct social and material responsibilities that make them more central actors, than in many other countries.

Third, it is worth stressing that Nordic Atlantic municipalities imply questions of how people construct the places they inhabit. There are politically elected municipal councils at more or less distance from local inhabitants, at least most often less distanced than 'national' parliaments. People tend to engage in local affairs, as the municipality is partly associated with the places people build to dwell. Places territorially include the people belonging hereto through their active engagement in the environment as a taskscape (Urry 2000: 131-137, Ingold 2000). John Agnew defined place in three dimensions: physical 'location', social 'locale', and 'sense of place' (Agnew 1987). John Urry, correspondingly, refers to Bell and Newby's approach to three different senses of community: topographical through propinquity, local social system, and communion of people belonging, but he then adds that the role of bodies, objects and powerful discourses have to be taken more into consideration and point to Ingold's work on 'The Temporality of the Landscape' with Peter Bruegel's painting *The Harvesters* (latest printed in Ingold 2000: 189-208) as a fruitful inspiration (Urry 2000: 133-134). This inspiration nourish our understanding of how people really inhabit places, as they are engaged in the creative construction of the landscape over time and thereby are also associated with traces and memories of this work. On the other hand a 'taskscape' approach does not help much in understanding how local inhabitants also inhabit municipalities through the discourses, practices, encounters and meetings of local politics. As earlier stated (chapter 5) Ingold's phenomenology has no place for powerful discourses enacted at certain distances, and to think of politics in the vein of a Heideggerian dwelling approach would run the risk of not valuing the reality of other imaginations, than those somehow associated with certain people belonging to certain places. Municipalities are to a high extent used as place-bound translators of politically and economically crucial distant relations, by means of the territorial 'mechanisms' of location/topography, local 'community' and communal sense of place. Municipalities link physical, social and cultural space by way of letting objects, information and people pass through their porous boundaries.

To sum up, municipalities are organized actors, enacting territorial responsibilities for inhabitants' welfare, engaged with the meanings of place creation and the translations embedded in passing their boundaries. But communities referred to by municipalities are not homogenous units. They can be approached as either communitarian, fragmented or segmented communities. It is most realistic to conceive the associations and entities translated into municipalities communal reference as segmented; various groups, positions, classes are always in conflict on certain issues, but importantly these conflicts are institutionalised on the municipal stage (Aarsæther and Vabo 2002:

53-54). In Bourdieu's sense, municipalities are social fields, where various actors fight about certain services, resources and identifications, that they agree about valuing, although differently, while this common spatial and temporal association of local citizens and delegations from the state also make the municipality a stable actor.

People live municipalities by way of the services they use, the meetings they attend, the events they participate in, the positions they fight for and the political representatives they more or less support. In addition to this, it is important to state that municipalities with their many public service obligations also employ many local, as well as non-local, people. In many relatively isolated places, the municipality is the major employer, and especially for women. The municipal taskscape is therefore also about kindergartens, schools, social service, care for old people, road and sewage maintenance etc. meaning that the icon of municipality rather than *The Harvesters* would be that of the Municipal Service Worker taking care of inhabitants on behalf of the political representatives, acting on behalf of inhabitants and of the state. The municipality in for example Norwegian legislation is clearly a modern project to rationally connect professional work on one side and the 'good local community' on the other side (Aarsæther and Vabo 2002: 34). People inhabit welfare municipalities that are relationally constructed, relations played out among humans here and there, and between humans, environments, things and symbols along various routes. Narratives accompany practices, by stories of local histories and geographies, bridging people territorially, but in the end the crucial practices are those of combining professional taking care of inhabitants and local political democracy.

This chapter starts by further developing the conceptual framing of territorial bridging, first presented in chapter 1. Then the historical formation of Nordic Atlantic municipalities is outlined from parishes to welfare municipalities. Two case studies from the Faroes and Northern Norway follow, exemplifying an industrial/productivist versus a post-industrial/post-productivist transformation of the local, focusing on the coping role of municipalities.

Municipalities and coping: Bridging distances

Municipalities bridge their inhabitants or citizens by means of territoriality. The production of the municipal society as both an actor and a network is a process of reembedding social relations among people (Giddens 1990) but can also be approached as the process of translation, making a Hobbesian social contract. 'By translation we understand all the negotiations, intrigues, calculations, acts of persuasion and violence, thanks to which an actor or force takes, or causes to be conferred on itself, authority to speak or act on behalf of another actor or force. "Our interests are the same", "do what I want", "you cannot succeed without going through me". Whenever an actor speaks of "us", s/he is translating other actors into a single will, of which s/he becomes spirit and spokesman' (Callon and Latour 1981: 279). Although there is a difference between Giddens' approach to reembedding and institutionalization of social relations and Callon/Latour's translations, it is worth pointing to their joint interest in studying how reembedding and translation of social relations is practiced as a process. Thereby specific reembeddings, institutions, translations, 'bonds' and 'bridges' etc. are not taken for granted entities, while on the other hand it is crucial that when produced these relational entities do last longer than their process of creation.

There are various forms of reembedding or translation of actors and networks into such societal entities. First there is the rather traditional 'territorial bonding' of *Gemeinschaft*, if ever existed with the amount of sameness, strength and durability this concept seems to imply. It is an abstract type in practice co-existing with other forms. The second, opposite extreme, is the mobile bridging of weak, ephemeral ties that maybe associated with cosmopolitan or 'cosmomobile' utopia or simple

with the transactions of non-institutionalised market relations. Again this is an abstract category, implying of more or less totally individualised and divided *Gesellschaft*. The more interesting forms are the more paradoxical, whether with strong ephemeral or weak lasting temporality, or whether with territorial bridging or mobile bonding spatiality. I will go through a matrix (figure 7.1) further developing the two paradoxical forms of coping – territorial bridging and mobile bonding (figure 1.1) by adding temporal notions. Again the two extreme are of less interest for our analysis of coping's societal production. The intense encounters of people meeting in ephemeral strong and territorial bridging relations of the cultural event, the love affair or the like may cause further reciprocities or contribute and give fire to redistributing associations, but is it only through such translations that they produce societal entities. Opposite, the loose but lasting contact among people associated with a common cause, special interest, profession or obsession may contribute to regulate and stabilise reciprocities or redistributing associations, but it is again only via such translations that they really make of difference. Neither encounters nor contacts produce actors.

Figure 7.1 Time and space of paradoxical coping

Temporality/spatiality	Territorial bridging:	Mobile bonding:
Ephemeral strong:	Encounter	Reciprocity
Lasting weak:	Redistributing association	Contact

How encounters and contacts translate into reciprocity over distances have been studied in the 'mobile' chapters 4, 5 and 6. People perform networking of society as a route, where flows are governed by networks of reciprocity. The reciprocity of these organised contacts and repeated encounters may imply redistribution over distances as in the case of sending money to hazard victims through NGOs or the case of migrants sending money home (see chapter 5), but their limit is their exclusiveness. They cannot take responsibility for every citizen, inhabitant, traveller, or migrant in a certain societal entity, other than of the bonding association or of the receiving 'community' or household. Mobile bonding shifting between the present encounter and distant contact, produce bonding social relations of reciprocity, friendship, concern, engagement, solidarity, support and help but only for those included.

Redistributing association is the form of societal unit embracing municipalities and states. It is often one of the more durable societal units, and it should be its ultimate quality to bridge and include every inhabitant in a territory thus translating them into citizens. Political entities bridge physical, social and cultural distances by inclusion of settled, recognized actors within its boundaries. This inclusion is first and foremost performed by way of physical boundaries, but as we have seen with the case of migrants (chapter 5) and tourists (chapter 6) it is not every human present that is recognized as citizen. Time matters, like also social and cultural demarcations of strangers. Hence, for those included, redistributions of welfare goods are valid, thus expressing a certain form of generalised reciprocity or solidarity. This unit also depends on a translation from above – from the welfare state – of resources and rules – following more or less universal procedures, that is universal for the included.

There are important questions that must be posed about municipalities and territorial states: Are they 'based on the categorical fallacy taking administrative regions for political communities'?

(Zierhofer 2004: 114)? This means that there can be other ways of constructing political entities than that of territorial demarcation. Wolfgang Zierhofer defines politics as ‘the communication of aims to reach understanding over forms of co-existence’ (Zierhofer 2004: 115), but in the end he does not (yet) envision the emergence of other forms of political entities, able to mediate understanding and, I add, redistribution, irrespective of the status of the actor. Ironically, the far most normal way of reaching a committed understanding across social and cultural distances is to draw boundaries and enclose those that then have to come to an understanding. These translations are only performed due to technologies enacting timespatial stabile material limits. Of course, baboons and other animals do also perform territoriality, but it is only humans that make the more lasting associations by material means. The social inclusion and exclusion of who is in and out is not only sociality among humans. Non-humans are actively used, and Callon and Latour stress that this is the limit of ethnomethodology. Power is performed by material means, and among humans as opposed to baboons, power is more than corporeal; its exercise also depends on disembodied material means. ‘The ethnomethodologists forget to include in their analyses the fact that ambiguity of context in human societies is partially removed by a whole gamut of tools, regulations, walls and objects of which they analyse only a part. We must now gather up what their analysis leaves out and examine with the same method the strategies which enlist bodies, materials, discourses, techniques, feelings, laws, organizations’ (Callon and Latour 1981: 284).

Bridging or bonding, territorial or mobile, weak or strong, lasting or ephemeral relations, or more likely complex hybridities of these, are made by way of socio-material practices and discourses. As Benedikt Anderson stressed in his famous work on nations *Imagined Communities* (1991) national projects come into being through media, books, papers and curricula spreading out over distances socio-material references translating people into the, real, imagination of performing communities. Texts, maps, regulations, statistics, plans, roads, paths, guards, projects and not least buildings also make municipalities into real imaginations. Translating by boundary crossings, municipalities refer to territorial state systems that are trans-municipal. Municipalities and states actors are made into ‘lasting asymmetries’ and ‘black boxes’ that become ‘obligatory passing points’ (Callon and Latour 1981: 286, 287).

I find Callon and Latour’s work useful in drafting out how municipalities are materially constructed in the Nordic Atlantic, although their article was only a piece on how to overcome binary distinctions between micro- and macro-analysis. Callon and Latour point to the need of forgetting the various sizes, scales etc. of actors. To the coping approach it means to acknowledge the plurality of types of actors that can cope. It can be individual humans, households, groups, firms, organizations, municipalities, states etc. Consequently, the coping of municipalities and of their inhabitants is a complex and hybrid process, where municipal authorities and agencies, households, firms, voluntary organizations, business organizations, cultural performers, state agencies etc. are combined. This weight put on not *a priori* prioritizing specific actors is in line with approaches to governance rather than government and to coping strategies rather than just local development (Aarsæther and Bærenholdt 2001: 24). The approach implies that innovations, politics and civil action are not performed in separate fields, but work across traditional notions of public, business and civil spheres. Municipal creation of opportunities in the context of contemporary, post-industrial, challenges is thus a matter of networking across various actors, where the municipal actor is neither a unitary nor the sole, dominant actor (Aarsæther and Suopajarvi 2004).

The implication of these considerations is to understand innovation broader than just business development and politics as broad as coping with the three dimensions of innovation, networking and formation of identities (see chapter 1). Coping include ‘sub-politics’ that has not normally been associated with the political sphere. Ulrick Beck’s sub-politics address the many significant decisions and actions taken with far reaching consequences, although performed outside of the

traditional political sphere. Inspired from Latour's scheme (1993) Wolfgang Zierhofer suggests to see sub-politics as 'technological developments, business decisions, cumulative outcomes of market operations, institutional transformations and so on' below the modern concept of the political recognition of 'My/our political interest' versus the 'Political interest of the other/s' (Zierhofer 2004: 113). I suggest that coping is this unrecognized hybrid third. It is not only the articulation and action of one homogenous municipal actor versus the other. Coping should be beyond the binary us-other dichotomy. It does neither demarcate the other nor belong to the other. It is neither mastering nor adaptation (see chapter 1). Coping is somewhere between, crosscutting the distinction between 'strategy' and 'tactic' (cp. de Certeau 1984).

This chapter suggests that the coping approach is a fruitful way to understand how people's engagements with inhabiting municipalities and their translation along side with the welfare state in the Nordic Atlantic. It does also suggest that research findings on actions, innovations, networking and local politics around Nordic Atlantic municipalities provide very illustrative examples of how more or less tacit coping practices produce societies.

From parishes to welfare municipalities

Municipalities in the four Nordic Atlantic countries, Norway, Faroes, Iceland and Greenland, have mixed and varying histories. In brief there are two histories: First there is the complex emergence of municipalities involving colonial administration, ecclesiastical administration and post-colonial nation-building. Second there is the contribution to the formation of the welfare state by municipalities from below. I will start with a brief introduction to the first history in the different countries as a background for discussing the second history more principally across countries.

Greenland's first quasi-municipal councils were founded in 1857 – the so-called *Forstanderskaber*. These were councils of local officials of the colonial power Denmark combined with selected hunters from various parts of the colonial district covered by the council (Janussen 2003: 43). These were superseded by the first elected Municipal Councils (*Kommuneråd*) in 1911 (Dahl 1986: 44). After the Second World War, municipalities were enacted in the Danish way, and municipalities became central pillars in the Home Rule Government system from 1979 and onwards with responsibilities for social services, culture and education, public housing, physical planning, fire protection and supply of water and electricity. A municipal reform was implemented in 1975, thereby strengthening the influence of administrators from Denmark before the introduction of Home Rule, (Dahl 1976: 30, 72), and a new revised law on municipalities, their responsibilities for services locally and the role of sub-level village boards was implemented in 1995 (Hansen 1998). Meanwhile, the territorial structure of municipalities is still also a mirror of the colonial structure, where each municipality has its district, and 'towns' are simply defined as the municipal centres, irrespective of size of population, surrounded by villages/hamlets. The meaning of topography and distance is significant in Greenland. Furthermore, the church and the clerical administration have been crucial in the development of Greenlandic municipalities, especially in education. Churches and schools belonged to the same system in the first half of the 20th century, and the territories of parishes and municipalities still mirror each other. In small villages, the church and the school use the same building, as also the catechist perform both lay priest and teacher. The catechists, taught by Danish clericals and missionaries, were central actors in building the Greenlandic Nation in the 19th and the 20th century (Thuesen 1988, 1995). Municipal units and their sub-units on village level were instruments of the exercise of colonial and ecclesiastical rule, engaging locals, although parishes and community administration were never used for institutionalizing forced labour, as were the case in for example the Spanish colonial rule in the Peruvian Andes (Wilson 2004: 139). As shown in chapter 5 and 6 Danish colonialism in Greenland were accompanied by a certain 'capsule' respect for the indigenous expected to 'stay primitive'. It was thus no coincidence that first selected

hunters, representing the preferred indigenous occupation, were included in *Forstanderskaber*, and second that the 19th century missionary activity led to the institutionalization of a Greenlandic education of Greenlandic catechists, until the 'Danish modernisation period' 1953-1979, where Greenland was a county of Denmark, meant a large influx of Danish administrators and teachers in Greenlandic municipalities.

Iceland's small *hrepps* municipalities have historical roots back to the 11th century, while the municipal system as such was again founded in the 19th century. Following Danish sovereignty over Iceland from 1662, municipal structures lost power and a Danish law abolished the old *hrepps* in 1809, until they were re-established in 1872 in connection with increasing Icelandic pressure for independence (Hovgaard, Eythórsson and Fellman 2004: 20). Denmark was forced to reorganise local administration, in response to the *Allthing's* claim of autonomous primary communes (Aronsson 1997: 178). The territorial system was more or less stable from the 11th century until the gradual process of amalgamations in the 1990s. The main adjustments had been that a number of town municipalities had been added, alongside the rural continuities. The number of municipalities has now been reduced from 204 in 1990 to 104 in 2005 (Hovgaard, Eythórsson and Fellman 2004: 21). As in other Nordic cases, there is a certain overlap between municipal and ecclesiastical administration, since the rural municipalities, *hrepps*, and the parish were more or less the same units territorially. Interestingly, Iceland's *hrepps* and not the churches had social responsibilities for the poor people (Ohlsson/Röger 1987: 42). Until the early 1990s Icelandic municipalities still had an obligation to secure jobs for all inhabitants; an obligation that made municipalities often economically involved in local business, typically fish processing. However, this engagements how been prohibited with recent Municipal laws, parallel to the same development in the Faroes, where the new municipal law from 2000 prohibited municipal participation in business..

Faroese municipalities came into being through Danish laws in 1872 and 1908, with territories based on the existing eight parishes. Meanwhile the traditional territorial division of the Faroes had followed the boundaries of agricultural common grazing lands of the century old, around one hundred, villages (*Bygd*). The villages were so to say the indigenous construction of communities based in sheep farming. It was not until the industrial development of fisheries in the 20th century, that municipalities were divided into a maximum of totally 51 municipalities reached in 1967. This was also the period were the municipalities had new tasks and taxes. 'People from one village were reluctant to pay taxes to a municipality that also, or primarily, made investments in other villages' (Hovgaard, Eythórsson and Fellman 2004: 15). There have been a number of examples of very strong local patriotism in the Faroes that are some of the most striking examples of how people inhabit municipalities practicing incorporated senses of place. Every village pursued a game to gain their school, their old people's home, their fish processing plant and their harbour, thus extrapolating the agricultural community into the industrial welfare society (Bærenholdt 1993: 142). Following the Faroese crises in the beginning of the 1990s this system is more or less dismantled. There is an ongoing process of municipal amalgamation (from 50 in 1990 to 35 in 2005) and a new orientation to municipal welfare service provision, physical planning and the general business framework (Hovgaard, Eythórsson and Fellman 2004: 16-17). These are areas were Faroese municipalities are late comers.

In comparison, Norwegian municipalities were amalgamated around 1970 in processes similar to those in Denmark and Sweden (although no Nordic country at that time made so large municipalities as in the case of Sweden). Thereby Norwegian municipalities did no longer correspond to traditional communities, while on the other hand new professional administrations were developed. Municipalities became enactors of the welfare state, by Ottar Brox seen as the 'new colonizer', pointing to the paradox that municipalities administer universal welfare services on behalf of the state and regulated by state rules, while they were not allowed to intervene in the fields

of business, where municipalities really differ (Brox 1984). However, during the 1980s Norwegian municipalities formed business foundations and implemented local economic development policies (Larsen and Aarsæther 1985). Furthermore, Norwegian municipalities have provided welfare service both because of state imposed obligations and because of their own initiative. However already during Danish rule in the 18th century, poor-relief became an obligation for parishes (Nagel 1991). State imposed welfare obligations for municipalities to administer increased in the 20th century, and especially in the 1960s and 1970s (Seip 1991, Grønlie 1991).

Historically, Norwegian municipalities emerged with parishes as in the case of Iceland and many other countries. During Danish rule until 1814, local territorial administration was overruled by Danish officials. In a classical article the British anthropologist J.A. Barnes studied networks, class and committees in the island parish of Bremnes in Western Norway (Barnes 1954, see also chapter 5). According to him local assemblies lost power to the king already in the 12th century, while the later Danish rule was even more bureaucratic. But it was not until *Formannskapslovene* 1837 that local councils became elected. Barnes' observations interestingly linked national independence and rural local government suggesting more emphasis to be put on this connection: 'Yet the problem of the rural effect of political independence does not always receive the attention it merits' (Barnes 1954: 56). For him it was an open question whether or not the end of colonial rule implies changes in political rule in rural areas, while they always change in the centres. One provocative, and fairly one-sided, argument could be that there is a continuity in state imposed obligations to local administrative from the colonial administration of the Danish absolutist state to the late 20th century Norwegian welfare state. During the 19th century union with Sweden, 'In Norway it was clearly a demand for national sovereignty that underpinned the demand for autonomy and regional districts – and it was for the same reason that the Swedish government did not approve' (Aronsson 1997: 178). However, 20th century Norwegian municipalities are more complex and indeed ambivalent entities in relation to the nation-state (Aarsæther and Vabo, 2002).

Due to the diverse histories of Norway, Iceland, Faroes and Greenland, since struggles for national independence from Danish rule were and are performed at different times from the 18th to the 21st century, there is no one answer to the question about the relation between colonial rule and local authorities. This is also the case with the next issue of welfare municipalities. However, there can be a sense of continuity from the rather centralist state of Danish (and Swedish) Absolutism to the implementation of the Scandinavian Welfare State after the Second World War. But the Scandinavian Welfare State model is not one model introduced in the same way and time in the Nordic Atlantic, since Greenland and especially Iceland and the Faroes have their specific histories.

In Greenland municipalities represent continuity from colonial rule, but their functions grew with Danish welfare state developments from the 1950s to the 1970s and still occupy many (Danish) non-permanent residents. There is thus a colonial legacy around Greenlandic municipalities, and it is often said that things have changed less outside of the political centre of the Home Rule Government in Nuuk. Short physical distances play a significant role in the reproduction of this post-colonial heritage, but the other side of the story it also that municipalities and the Greenlandic association of municipalities gained significant welfare society building capacities with the Home Rule Government. For Greenland, the answer to the question about the relation between colonial rule and local authorities is thus ambivalent and also difficult to generalise.

In the cases of Iceland and the Faroes the very many and small municipalities up to 1990 played rather tacit roles in social construction, but in different ways. While Icelandic municipalities clearly became atoms in the common nation building process of the 20th century, the Faroese case is more ambivalent as the question of independence from Denmark has divided the Faroese people into two camps throughout the 20th century. Furthermore, it could be suggested (eg. by the Faroese historian and ethnologist J.P. Joensen) that many Faroese used to belong more to their village than to the

nation, which is also a sign of the incomplete production of the Faroes as a societal political entity, although in another way than in the case of Greenland. Faroese municipalities were never engaged in the implementation of Home Rule to the extent we saw in Greenland 30 years later. With the ongoing infrastructural and administrative integration of the Faroes – and especially the ‘Mainland’ (excluding the Suduroy, Sandoy and some isolated smaller islands) - this may now change. The point is that few Faroese municipalities managed to fully perform the role of welfare municipalities, because welfare services were provided from the political centre of Tórshavn, because of the small size of municipalities and their staff, administration and capacities. This may change in the 21st century. Also in Iceland, the long persistence of very small municipalities should be seen in connection with the lower level of social expenditures and welfare services in general as compared with the other Nordic countries (Hansen 2003: 77). Icelandic municipalities did not come to administer the majority of public expenditures as was the case with the decentralisation of public services to larger municipalities in Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Norway (Eythórsson 1995; 1998: 35). It is fair to say that Iceland and the Faroes did not see the emergence of the Scandinavian, Social Democratic welfare state system (Esping-Andersen 1990) until the 1990s.

The enactment of welfare municipalities is a highly gendered question. In all of the Nordic countries the development of welfare services such as kindergartens and care taking for old people came alongside with women’s increased political influence in parallel with their growing employment outside of household work. But this trend emerged later in the Faroes, for example kindergartens were not introduced in some Faroese municipalities until during the 1990s. Although there are significant local differences, associated with political and religious distinctions, there is an interesting correlation between women’s increasing representation in municipal councils during the 1990s and the development of welfare services (Jacobsen and í Jákupstovu 2005). Until the 1990s the Faroese welfare system was more in line with the conservative South European family-oriented welfare systems, than with the statist Scandinavian Welfare regime (Esping-Andersen 1990). Faroese politics were constructed with images of the male entrepreneur and the female care-taking at home, industrial policy was in the fore-front while public health and social policies were more or less seen as a field secured by the Danish state. This system worked as long as only men travelled the sea as fishermen and sailors and owned money in the Faroese diaspora abroad, until the crisis in the early 1990s forced whole families to emigrate, since women now lost the more invisible jobs they had gained during the 1970s and 1980s (Jacobsen and í Jákupstovu 2005).

The history of Nordic Atlantic municipalities is complex, but it is also showing a number of characteristic continuities and distinctions. Continuities can be traced back to the colonialist performance of the rather centralist Danish state (as mentioned above, see also chapter 8). These were territorializing practices, based on the unity of State and Church since the reformation, locally performed by parishes. The irony is that this process also facilitated empowerment from below, since people were given a role in the system. Stein Rokkan and Derek Unwin expressed the point that ‘...the Reformation raised a wall against cultural ‘exits’ into other territories. This barrier was not only an important strategy in legitimizing the territorial state; in the long run it was also a crucial step forward in preparing people for the use of ‘voice’ within the system’ (Rokkan and Unwin 1983: 26). They saw this, together with mass education, as a part of the process of producing the ‘victorious peripheries’ (ibid 79, 126) of Norway, the Faroes, Iceland and Greenland. The distinctions then is between the earlier statist implementation of this in Norway and Greenland, as compared to the cases of Iceland and the Faroes, where parish municipalities was less integrated in state administration until the 1990s. Meanwhile, local voices were parts of the production of welfare municipalities across this distinction.

This was the voice of the peasant free-holder (Witoszek 1997, Aronsson 1997, Trädgårdh 1997), and for Greenland: the hunter engaged in the *Forstanderskaber*. Parish councils from the 19th

century became the agenda for the peasant/(hunter) representing the stereotype of the rural elite, forming the political basis for the construction of a national political culture. The 20th century increasingly saw the promotion of the Social Democratic welfare project, and until the 1920s a number of welfare systems were introduced in municipalities dominated by Social Democrats. This 'commune socialistic' shaping of welfare municipalities 'from below' took place in a number of Danish (Kokstrup 1996) and Norwegian (Grønlie 1991: 43-46) municipalities. Thus, these municipalities were front-runners in the implementation of Social Democratic policies, increasingly taking over as welfare state policies, especially after the Second World War. But these municipalities were mainly urban, and they were not so common in the Nordic Atlantic. A North Norwegian example would be Mo in Nordland (Grønlie 1991), while also smaller, rural, municipalities in Northern Norway took part in the performance of 'electric power communalism', paving the way for production and distribution of electricity locally, before the Second World War (Nilsen 2002: 10). After the Second World War a number examples of 'municipal socialism' was performed in the form of municipal and trade union participation in industrial activities (Neskaupstadir in Iceland and Tværøyrir in the Faroes), and in Norway municipal innovation in welfare provision increasingly became part of nation-state agenda, whereas the Greenlandic case still had in many ways other, more colonial present, histories.

Clearly, the municipal actor is not of one and a simple type. Municipalities are spun into nets coping with the actions of colonial states, independent states, home rule governments, Social Democratic and other political parties, peasants, hunters and not least women entering the labour market and politics. We will see in the sections following, that municipalities also come into being actors in their relations with private business, regional authorities, voluntary organisations, entrepreneurs, families, ethnic groups, religious congregations but also their environment, traffic and people's commuting. We have seen various ways in which municipalities were involved in the enactment of welfare state, and there were also examples of the role of municipalities in local economic development project and even municipal participation in industrial production. Bob Jessop has suggested an overall shift from the Keynesian national welfare state to the Schumpeterian post-national workfare state (Jessop 2000), but the Nordic Atlantic has its peculiar developments. Icelandic and Faroese municipalities used to intervene much more in business innovation, but are now on their way to form welfare municipalities as part of national systems. A particular case is the history of Klaksvík in the Faroes; it is a case of the restructuring of what we use to label the territorially embedded industrial town. On the other side, North Norwegian municipalities have been engaged in running the welfare state for long, while people are increasingly mobile. Inhabiting a municipality is only partly a question of (public service) work. It is rather a question of getting service, infrastructure and an attractive environment to choose to live in. Life in the dispersed Storffjord municipality in Northern Norway is an illustrative example of such post-industrial trends. The two next sections discuss some coping processes in these two localities.

Restructuring territorial bonding Klaksvík

Klaksvík is the central village in the northern part of the Faroes. It is the second-biggest town, or the biggest village, of the Faroes. The population has been as much as 5000, but during the severe crisis in the Faroes in the 1990s, the population dropped to around 4500. Having developed historically from a number of smaller villages, Klaksvík is today a fairly concentrated settlement. It has a natural harbour in a fjord on the northern island of Bordoy, and it is a fishing town. Klaksvík is well known for a strong sense of identity, indeed for an almost armed confrontation with the capital Tórshavn and the Danish

state in the 1950s. There used to be a strong religious influence from the Plymouth Brethren community (locally called the “Baptists”), which is further related to the dominance of certain families and the Conservative political party.

Coping processes in Klaksvík are typical of a strongly embedded local economy with relations to international fish markets, while the weakness of state regulation and the absence of linkages to national strategies is another specific characteristic (Hovgaard 2001). Klaksvík developed into one of the major localities for the development of the fishing industry in the Faroes from the beginning of the 20th century (Haldrup and Hoydal 1994). Its history in this respect is linked literally and symbolically with a specific entrepreneur and his family. The municipality itself, local trade unions and in particular the local savings bank also played major roles in the development strategies pursued in Klaksvík throughout the 20th century. The many fishing vessels and fishing companies have had the major fish-processing plant “Kosin” as the cornerstone of local development, although it has been closed down and reconstructed several times. In fact, people in Klaksvík have coped with several crises thanks to local innovations in the social organization of the economy, almost turning the lack of national linkages into a comparative advantage for the area over other Faeroese localities. There are strong connections between networking and the formation of identity in the way dominant forms of coping work in Klaksvík. The municipality always acts as a background local regulator, but the central actors are to be found in the networks of local entrepreneurs and their supporters. The networks also include cultural activities as well as religious communities and families. The most crucial factor is probably the tradition of raising local capital when it is needed. This is done through the local savings bank as well as informally. The other important factor is the idea of keeping businesses in local hands. Klaksvík is not a case where there is much technological (i.e. product and process) innovation in the industries. The innovative work is more social in character, and this is strongly linked with the related reproduction of local identity: “in Klaksvík the strong adherence to “the local” is a powerful source for managing crisis and transition” (Hovgaard 2001: 231). Reflexivity in Klaksvík is a collective – even a hegemonic – process of working within the local tradition. The key to Klaksvík’s social innovations is the network of actors with strong reference to a common local discourse of identity. In Klaksvík most people identify with the traditions of local social innovation mediated through local networks. Meanwhile, there may be an important “institutional” component in Klaksvík’s advantage as the stronger fishing town in Faeroese society. One might ask whether the localist Klaksvík strategy will remain viable in the long run, especially in relation to the potential of national Faeroese economic development. One answer is that the restructuration of Faeroese economy following the early 1990s crisis meant a dismantling of national regulations of for examples fish sales, thus paving the way for a more persistent local-global structuration of the Faeroese economy. This would imply that local industries with viable bonds to international markets have better possibilities and are vital to economic development, thus giving localist Klaksvík strategies new prospects (Apostle et al 2002).

Analysing how businesses and people in Klaksvík coped with the 1990s crisis raises paradoxical questions like ‘how one can survive on “sheer defiance”, while everything else seems to have changed?’ (Apostle et al 2002: 116). Restructuring the economy in fact meant an abolition of former vertical structures and increasing entrepreneurship among a number of smaller firms. ‘Paradoxically it seems fair to say that nothing seems to be “as it was”, but still it is. The case of Klaksvík actually shows the enormous strength of locally grounded and traditionally bound institutions which manage to keep their fundamental orientation, while still maintaining the capacity to adapt to new circumstances’ (Apostle et al 2002: 116). In am here referring to the analysis by Gestur Hovgaard, himself inhabiting Klaksvík and running a Centre for Local and Regional Development. He points to the ‘stability in change’ performed through coping characterised by territorial bonding of local inhabitants, while responding to the challenges of what is more or less perceived as an outside world of fish stocks, markets and regulations, handled through non-committed mobile bridging relations. The ‘sheer

defiance' of the locality is supported by the historical evidence from the 20th century modernisation of the locality with the late 19th century foundation of the hospital, the forming of the municipality in 1908, the founding of the local savings bank in 1919, the construction of the power station in 1931, the harbour in 1937 and so on (Apostle et al 2002: 118). This is a living narrative about a tradition for autonomous entrepreneurship, and the municipal authorities facilitate its continuation, always prepared to pave the way for collective action, when in need.

The paradoxical success of *Gemeinschaft-like* territorial bonding can be more uncertain, than it seems. The mobility of people raises (Apostle et al 2002: 121) and this is not the least the case because of one the most recent victories of the municipality: The construction of sub-sea tunnel connecting Klaksvík with the rest of the Faroese 'Mainland' (Eysturoy, Streymoy and Vagur, see map XX in chapter 4). Klaksvík is increasingly becoming part of the 'Mainland' local labour market, and many people already commute to Tórshavn with cars on the ferry. Whereas municipalities outside of the 'Mainland', namely on the Southern Island, Suduroy, still tend to engage more or less directly in raising capital, buildings and infrastructure for local business (Apostle et al 2002: 60-64), a number of municipalities on the 'Mainland' are increasingly become first and foremost 'welfare municipalities'. The territorially bonded traditional Faroese municipality (Klaksvík, but also Tværoyri on Suduroy) did perform welfare municipality at an early stage alongside with their support to business in fisheries, but there is now an ongoing increased awareness of municipalities as providers of welfare services as well as attractive environments for dwelling (see chapter 4). Meanwhile, fish processing firms such as 'Kósin' in Klaksvík are getting involved in ever more distant commercial networks that do also involve new alliances, mobile bonds, with foreign firms. Still the Klaksvík narratives about local tradition is a stabilizer, black-boxing social relations, gender relations, relations between generations, relations between insiders and outsiders and so on into the notion of Klaksvík as a institutionalized actor, governed by 'norms and rules of conduct and good behaviour' (Hovgaard 2001: 236). However, restructuring has also meant that new diversities are accepted, and former rebels, that move away, come back and become important 'glocals' that 'build bridges between the locals and the mobiles in social action' (Hovgaard 2001: 242). Therefore in spite of the surprising continuity of leadership in Klaksvík, transformations are ongoing in everyday life to an extent, where the locality is formed by territorial bridging rather than territorial bonding.

Comparing the evidence from Klaksvík with the three dimensions of municipalities presented in the introduction to this chapter, it is obvious that although the municipality of Klaksvík does perform both a polity entity and responsibilities defined by territorial borders, Klaksvík is first and foremost performed by the way local people inhabit place. Place is performed by way of first Klaksvík's rather distinct material location in the *eide*, a valley between two fjords and high mountains. Second, family and other networks persist to perform various forms of overlapping communities, but thirdly these do all more or less act with reference to the same narrative about sense of place, local tradition etc. Traditions and attachment to place are transformed and translated, internationalisation of fisheries is getting deeper, people relate to many places and traditions become reflexive, but people, firms, associations and the municipality continue to perform the materiality, the community and the narrative of the place of Klaksvík. Municipal policies are becoming more diverse, direct intervention in business life is diminishing, while infrastructures for innovation, welfare, cultural events and the experience of the environment are new foci. This trend is a trend, also in Iceland (Skaptadóttir and Jóhannesson 2004: 63, 85), and the following case is an example, rather different from Klaksvík, of this.

Territorial bridging Storfjord on the move

Storfjord in Northern Norway can hardly be said to be a clearly localized entity. It is a municipality consisting of scattered settlements and three partly contrasting villages located around the head of the beautiful Lyngen Fjord (see also chapter 4, **CROSS-CHECK**). The population is stable, around 1900 inhabitants, and the case has a specific interest inasmuch as half of the women are newcomers (Aure 2001). Furthermore, the locality has at least three distinct ethnic groups: the Norwegians, the Sámi (Lapps) and the Kven (Finns). It is also a border locality, bordering on both Sweden and Finland.

The case of Storfjord is quite the opposite of the strong informal social embeddedness in Klaksvík. With respect to innovation, we find no development of big business, cornerstones or the like. The major 'cornerstone' is the public sector, where negotiations in the 1970s at the local, regional and national levels resulted in the placing of a major regional public laundry in the municipality. The location of laundry was decided as compensation for a hydro-electric development project, but only after the initiative by local political representatives (Aarsæther, Riabova and Børenholdt 2004: 145). Furthermore a rehabilitation centre for heart and lung diseases was located, because of the climate. The centre is based in nation-wide voluntary association. There is also a missionary school, which is a branch of a US association. The hydro-electric developers also pay a tax to provide capital for two funding schemes for small-scale business and for fishing and farming.

Historically, small-scale agriculture has been the major economic sector. Although it exists, agriculture is not a leading sector; many households combine activities and incomes from several sources including agriculture on the farms where they live. These combinations may include jobs in international firms where people either commute on a weekly basis along the major North Norwegian highway which runs through the municipality or are connected through IT networks, or they may combine these approaches. The highway running through the fjord scenery and the 'Alpine' Lyngen Mountains also facilitate tourist businesses in the form of hotels, camping sites etc. Municipal public services are of high quality, and public-sector jobs are shared by many people as part-time jobs. Thus more people have access to stable incomes from the public sector (Aure 2001). Meanwhile, Storfjord is also the southernmost municipality in the part of North Norway that has certain state-regulated tax allowances and other advantages which attract young people. It will already be clear from this that coping processes in Storfjord have a great deal to do with both local networking and institutionalised welfare arrangement, and that these two aspects work very much in concert. Government policies can indeed facilitate civil society in the form of local networks if the actors in these networks know how to utilize the possibilities of funding and regulation by government bodies (see Woolcock 1998: 157).

Interestingly, one finds no strong identification with Storfjord as such. Local identities are connected to the homes and small villages where some of the inhabitants grew up (Aure 2001). Other identities are religious, and there are conflicts between different religious communities. Villages also struggle over the allocation of public services, and the result has been a decentralized service system which also provides local service jobs to each of the villages. Many strategies and identities are formed at the household level. Marit Aure in her study showed how a number of households deliberately chose to locate in Storfjord because of the environment (climate and scenery) and of possibilities of getting public sector service jobs for the female part. There are rather many people that moved in from bigger places and from abroad. The combination of an attractive environment, the public service sector and road connections localise people, but it is also clear that the female part of households some time get stuck in the division of labour/mobility, where it is the husband that commutes (Aure 2001).

Place evaluations are clearly shown in a number of school essays produced for the MOST CCPP School essays project. One female teen-ager from the village of Skibotn in Storfjord wrote:

Skibotn is located in Troms county Norway. It is a rather fine place to live. We have a nice climate, and therefore the University of Tromsø has located its Northern Light Observatory here, and we have a rehabilitation centre for those with a heart and lung disease. We have nice weather in the

summer. Fine nature and lots of snow in winter. In leisure time we have lots to do. There is the club every Tuesday, and every second Friday and Saturday.... We do also have aerobic every Tuesday and Thursday, but that is really boring, because we train with oldies (adults). We have two shops, two kiosks and many camping sites. That's fine because we meet and get to know a lot of people from other places...¹

A male teen-ager wrote less engaged:

Skibotn is located in Storfjord municipality in Troms county. It is a little boring here, because there are few offers in leisure time. The old people are very well, because it is so calm here. The positive here is: many friends, home, soccer fields, the community house, shops, club. And proximate to travel to other places, for example: Tromsø, Kilpis in Finland, Hatteng, etc. There is much good weather here. There is a bit little to do, because the thing that are, happen only from time to time.²

Together, these two teen-age statements illustrate a narrative of the attractive but calm rural life, chosen by their parents. Activities organised by voluntary organisations in combination with municipal authorities, such as also music school and the like, form the stage of local life, together with the environment. Locals project based on initiatives from for example one village produce additional activity, meetings and encounters.

The Skibotn marketplace revival is an example of this (Nyseth and Aarsæther 2004: 228-9): Until the 1950s Skibotn, located near to Sweden, and Finland and in the Sami area, hosted seasonal international markets and religious gatherings. But in the 1980s, new initiatives came up again. A border garrison of the Norwegian army was to be closed, and again local people went into negotiations of compensation for the loss of the military presence. And they succeed in making the military but also other sponsors co-fund the construction of a community sports hall in Skibotn. The Skiboth Hall could then be used for 1990s Skibotn village development association revival of the annual market. Via a diversity of contacts, they succeeded in making the market event 'an important North Calotte trans-national arena', also including participants from Russia, with as much as around 5000 paying visitors and 500 local volunteers (Nyseth and Aarsæther 2004: 228-9).

This innovation was not a municipal performance; it was rather performed by one of the three villages and by particular politicians from one of the municipal lists. To some extent, the project was performed in competition with other villages, and it was never clearly supported by municipal authorities, often ridden by conflicts between villages and religious congregations. In spite of this, it is an example of how inhabitants produce new forms of sociality and society from below, becoming part of the play on the welfare municipal arena. There are many such events, for example the Riddu-Riddu indigenous people's festival in the neighbouring Kåfjord municipality, also attracting people on the global indigenous arena (Nyseth and Aarsæther 2004: 233-236, Nyseth and Pedersen 2004). Events are less productive in the sense of job creation, but they produce new societal encounters and contact, but also reciprocity and association, combining mobile bonding and territorial bridging (see figure 7.1). Festivals and other local events are crucial ways in which people can rethink, translate and perform the localities they inhabit with a potentially global reach (Aarsæther 2004: 252). They are meeting places both between local inhabitants and between local inhabitants and people from other places (see also chapter 5 on fish festivals).

Meanwhile, the municipality and the parish council work to a common agenda where issues are fought out and solutions found. It may be precisely 'the ability to live with conflicts' (Aure 2001) that

¹ Statistics and samples of Essays, MOST CCPP Mananement of Social Transformations, a Circumpolar Coping Processes Project, Schoolessay meeting, Roskilde, 23-24 September 1999, p. 48. My translation from Norwegian.

² As note 1, p. 45.

explains the potential of Storfjord. It seems that this ability is also conditional on the acceptance of the common political identity and agenda of the municipality. This is no coincidence, since municipalities are a central element in the Nordic welfare states, especially in public service provision, the infrastructure and as a conduit for funding from national initiatives, where many local applicants compete for such funding. It is this mediation of local networking and state regulation at the municipal level that makes locality a political unit in the still relatively strong welfare state of Norway. And it is through this mediation that the reflexive play of different strategies can take place. Of course some forms of political identity related to the welfare state and northern Norway have produced a kind of 'we' community, but there are no strong bonding ties at the local level. Storfjord is a case that illustrates the diversity of the late modern "reflexive North" (Aarsæther and Bærenholdt 2001).

Territorial translation: Inhabiting municipal societies

To conclude, municipal authorities play both very distinct and rather tacit roles. On the one side municipal authorities, depending on rules and access to resources, can perform the roles of partner, supporter, gate-opener, legitimate networker, integrator, committer, or producer of orientation of 'local development' (Aarsæther, Riabova and Bærenholdt 2004: 152). On the other hand, municipalities are often only the back-stage organisational framework and territory for the performances of businesses, as we saw in Klaksvík, or voluntary organisations, as in the villages of Storfjord. However there are differences in how societies are produced: With the strong local presence of the Norwegian welfare state, municipalities like Storfjord perform as much more direct role as an actor by itself and as the territorialized arena for performing responsibilities for local citizenship. The role of the political entity is therefore more profound, when municipalities like Storfjord territorially bridge inhabitants and thereby transform them into municipal citizens. Societal construction in Storfjord is a question of an explicit political process of recognition of people citizens that are members of a redistributive association. Most inhabitants would not inhabit Storfjord, if these transformations were not enacted. For sure, people inhabit, identify, glorify, celebrate and find their re-creative ways through scenic environment, but most of them would never settle without the welfare state citizenship. It is the performance of the municipal authorities on behalf of the welfare state that territorialize the responsibilities crucial for making inhabiting Storfjord sense. In contrast, the narrative of Klaksvík's stubborn entrepreneurship and patriotism comes prior to the establishment of a Faroese system of welfare municipalities, and thus also prior to the firm institutional and territorial formation of Klaksvík as an actor. Indeed Klaksvík's history is also partly about the local construction of a welfare municipality, taking care of local inhabitants, but this has only to some degree been part of the production of Faroese society. Ironically, inhabiting places like Klaksvík now will increasingly depend on how well the boundaries of the traditional 'community' is transformed, translated and transcended. One of Bauman's central sentences is worth repeating in this context: '...the ostensibly shared 'communal' identities are after-effects or by-products of forever unfinished (and all the more feverish and ferocious for that reason) boundary drawing' (Bauman 2001: 17).

Coping with distance in the Nordic Atlantic opens new roads and tunnels of connectivity bypassing past boundaries. It also facilitates new encounters and reciprocities increasingly performed at a distance. Meanwhile, people still inhabit places. They choose, reconstruct, re-imagine, reshape and remember environments, houses, roads, and so on. An immense arsenal of innovative sub-politics is practiced by means of networking and constant reformulations of identifications or meanings. Welfare states may be under pressure, but in Iceland and especially in the Faroes welfare system are still under construction in connection with the amalgamation of

municipalities. Direct municipal intervention in industrial activities is more or less a past practice, while municipal actors concentrate on shaping infrastructures, services and environments for the initiatives of private business and voluntary associations. With increased mobilities, the role of municipal responsibilities for local citizens and the places they live is only getting more crucial. Municipalities set agendas, translate non-local relations into local, negotiated economies, and facilitate cultural performances for the sake of both local people and new 'experience' economic developments. But their most prominent role is that of bridging people, otherwise unconnected, by means of reference to territory and common places, while territories are also negotiated with the restructuring of municipalities. To what extent municipal actors can overcome social inequality and cultural distances by means of redistribution and negotiation depends to a large degree on rules and resources available. The enforcement of such rules and the use of resources is a matter of translation from the territorial (nation)-state. Therefore it is the crossing of the boundaries of the municipality as an organization, a territory or a place that release much of the energy, municipalities live from. And there are permanent power struggles between municipalities and governments, for example on the regulation of provision and payment for kindergartens (Aarsæther and Vabo 2002: 184-190).

Does it make sense, then, to conceive of municipal societies? There is no formal answer to this question. It is rather a concrete question of whether or not people, municipal actors, voluntary organisations, firms etc. cope with reference to and on behalf of local inhabitants. And it is question whether such practices manage to bridge social and cultural distances among inhabitants territorially. This chapter has shown, that the decisive 'sub-politics' is only to a limited extent for municipal authorities themselves to perform. If the various 'sub-politics' combine practical solution to local problems with sociality and democratic processes (Aarsæther and Vabo 2002: 190-191), municipalities become societies, alongside with of nation-states and mobile routes. 'Territory is not; it becomes, for territory itself is passive, and it is human beings and actions that give territory meaning' (Knight 1982: 517). The viability of a territorial municipal society is thus a matter of practices. If there is a crucial municipal action, arena or reference in the innovations, networking and meanings of people's coping to make viable livelihoods, municipal societies are produced. In other words: It makes sense to inhabit a municipal society, if it means to participate in common solutions. Like counties and provinces, municipalities can then be approached as societal institutions, but 'a "common" language is crucial for the operation of all institutions. Governmental agents use rhetoric persuasion, and appeal to popular ideas and identities to gain support, while people may routinely express their cultural identity and distinctiveness in territorial terms, even though at times the territorial dimension may be rather vague' (Häkli and Paasi 2003: 148). Municipal action and demarcation is a question of combining governmentability with the practices and meanings of peoples' inhabiting.

Welfare municipalities is one example of such, traditional rural parishes is another. Also Nordic Atlantic municipalities engaged in cross-sector innovations in response to the challenges of living a world of globalization and a still more or less colonial present do in fact act as societies. Territory for municipal societies is a means of translation. Flows and mobile networks of transport, fisheries, agriculture, food consumption, tourism, energy etc. are made into distinct outside forces that people construct common, territorial, agendas to cope with. Distances, physical, social and cultural combined, are thus translated into a common language of a challenges a local 'we' must cope with. Municipal societies are produced through such territorial translations.

But they are not alone. The following two chapters deal with nationalism, territorial-states, transnationalism and trans-regions.

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