

Title:

Development of Mining Company Towns - Longyearbyen (Svalbard) as case study

Abstract:

Mining Company Towns were often founded in remote regions, because mining is absolutely dependant from the site, where coal or iron-ore are situated. Mostly their only purpose is provide living for miners as long as coal is exploited. Only in rare cases, as in the German Ruhrvalley, industrial clusters develop, so that this towns have a purpose after mining. Mostly the path of economic and urban development ends, when mining is finished.

A special example of these mining company towns is Longyearbyen on Svalbard/Spitzbergen. Founded in 1906 by an American engineer als Longyear-City, it was operated for nearly 100 years by the Norwegian SNSK. Mining will end in 2023. What will be the future of Longyearbyen after mining? Norwegian authorities try to find a new economic basis by tourism and science. Is this an option or shall the town be abandoned. Other points are the consequences of climate change and the importance of industrial heritage. I will research about that in my PhD-work at the Institute of Geography at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum.