

Abstract for Work-in-progress presentation Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> 2013 at IAS-STS

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My postdoc project is called *Local strategies to enhance adaptive capacity* and it is about energy transitions and emission reduction as part of climate change mitigation and adaptation in four Nordic municipalities and is a part of the project NordStar – Nordic Centre of Excellence. My work here at IAS-STS consists of two things mainly: writing of two articles about energy transitions in Reykjavik, Iceland, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, on one hand, and on the other preparations for the modelling at MIT, Boston, of possible future scenarios of energy transitions and emission reduction in four Nordic municipalities, where I will provide the qualitative social, cultural and political data from my fieldwork in four towns last spring. They are: Reykjavik, Trondheim in Norway, Sønderborg in Denmark and Växjö in Sweden. The article about Reykjavik is almost finished and I'm half way through the one on Sønderborg and Växjö. I also have in mind to write about Trondheim's Brøset-project but that'll have to wait until next year. Brøset is to be a whole residential area in the city, consisting of carbon-neutral and energy-producing houses; a totally new way of building and living in the Norwegian context, at least in terms of scale. The focus of the articles is thus: the Reykjavik case provides a historical example of a town which underwent two rapid and thorough energy transitions from dung, peat, wood, coal and oil to hydropower and geothermal lighting and heating of its entire housing body, now only with transport and communication left to change to renewables. The "only" is the hard part! The Sønderborg and Växjö cases are snapshots of municipalities in transition today and I focus on the successes they have had and the obstacles they are dealing with. The Brøset-Trondheim case is about planning the future and if ideas about utopia can help humans to plan for a sustainable future.