

Climate Change Leadership – Power, Politics and Culture 2015

Section 3: Literature Seminar – Mindsets and Justice

Purpose:

- critically relate to prerequisites, possibilities and limitations for a sustainable leadership within the climate field
- from an interdisciplinary, environmental historical perspective critically compare different explanatory models of how changes in the climate have influenced different historical and contemporary societies
- interpret different theoretical models concerning the emergence of the industrial society as a cause for anthropogenic climate change
- explain the connections between climate changes, conflicts, cooperations and geopolitical power relations
- critically review and analyze global power relations and apply an equity perspective on the climate change challenge

Literature:

- **Hulme, Mike (2009) *Why We Disagree about Climate Change: Understanding Controversy, Inaction and Opportunity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**
- **Articles on Studentportalen**

"There is no single perspective or vantage point from which this kaleidoscopic idea of climate change can be understood."

Mike Hulme shows that climate change is more than another field of study within the natural sciences. He demonstrates that how we view climate change is dependent on many different aspects of our own worldview, and our various hopes for the future. The book raises questions – which we have also talked about in sections II and III – about how we are to make collective decisions within society with the knowledge that discourses around climate change will invariably differ in diverse cultural, political, and social contexts.

During your reading of the book, please reflect over the following questions/arguments and be prepared to discuss different points at the in-class literature seminar:

- Assuming we all have differing views and conceptions of climate change, what kind of leadership do you think Hulme is asking for?
- What do you think Hulme would argue is the lowest common denominator in bringing about effective and radical action on climate change? What do you think this lowest common denominator could be?
- If science cannot answer the question of what causes climate change definitely or offer reliable statements of the likelihood of future climate phenomena then is the problem with science or our expectations of science?
- Hulme argues that climate change science is used as a proxy for much deeper conflicts between alternative visions of the future. Discuss.
- What kinds of social meanings and values do we assign to the climate? How do these affect the stories that we tell about climate change?
- What role do political and popular discourses play in the way that humans view climate change?

During the seminar each one of you will have to contribute by bringing up at least one new point to the discussion. Prepare for the seminar by reading the book, bringing in quotes you find relevant, and tying Hulme's arguments to other lectures and literature from the course. The concrete format of the seminar we will introduce to you on the day.