



Why are maritime ports (still) urban?

Par Dr Peter V Hall,

Associate Professor, Urban Studies Program, Associate Member, Geography
Simon Fraser University - Vancouver, Canada

Résumé

Despite ongoing transformations in the maritime transportation industry and the rise of global supply chain systems, most of the world's important container ports remain urban. Ports continue to occupy urban spaces, are embedded in localized knowledge systems, draw on urban labour markets and infrastructure and are subject to local politics and policy concerns. We identify contemporary geographic theories which help us understand the often increasingly urban attachment of core economic activities despite globalization. We explore how these theories may apply to port studies, highlighting both how they have been used by maritime scholars to this point and also why further development and application are warranted. We argue that a central concern of these geographic theories is the articulation of place- and sector-specific processes operating at a variety of spatial scales. This is in contrast to most maritime studies which continue to be dominated by perspectives which emphasize the global logic of the transportation industry and the analysis of space in generalized and abstract terms. We conclude that a re-appreciation in maritime studies of urban economic processes, informed by geographical theory, will provide policy-makers and others with more understanding of why deep connections between ports and urban places still matter.

[Presentation of paper co-authored with Wouter Jacobs, published in *Maritime Policy and Management*, 2012]

Biographie

Peter V Hall is Associate Professor of Urban Studies at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada, where he teaches courses in transport geography, economic development and research methods. He holds a doctorate in city and regional planning from the University of California at Berkeley, and he worked previously in the Economic Development Unit of the Durban Metropolitan Council. In 2010, he was a visiting scholar with SPLOTT. His research examines the connections between shipping and logistics chains, transport sector employment and the development of port cities. He is co-editor of "Integrating Seaports and Trade Corridors" (Ashgate, 2011) and the forthcoming "Cities, Regions and Flow" (Routledge, 2012). His research related to ports has been published in edited volumes and academic journals including *Maritime Policy and Management*, *Environment and Planning A*, *Urban Studies*, *Regional Studies*, *Journal of Urban Technology*, *GeoJournal*, and *Economic Geography*.