



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CIRCUMPOLAR SOCIOCULTURAL ISSUES

**IICO** INTERNATIONAL CIRCUMPOLAR OBSERVATORY

ARCTIC & ANTARCTIC OBSERVATORY  
OF SOUTHERN & NORTHERN SOCIETIES AND CULTURES

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## INTERNATIONAL ONLINE WORKSHOP ON CIRCUMPOLAR SOCIOCULTURAL ISSUES

**December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**Time: Buenos Aires: 11:00-14:00**

**Québec: 9:00-12:00**

**Reykjavík: 14:00-17:00**

**Paris: 15:00-18:00**

**Rovaniemi: 16:00-19:00**

**Moscow: 17:00-20:00**



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## PROGRAM

**11:00-12:00 (BA time)**

**11:00-11:10 Introduction:** Enrique del Acebo Ibáñez, Daniel Chartier, Helgi Gunnlaugsson, Jan Borm

**11:10-11:20 Daniel Chartier** (Full professor at the Université du Québec à Montréal, Research Chair on Images of the North, Winter and the Arctic, and director of the International Laboratory for Comparative Multidisciplinary Study of Representations of the North. In recent years he has published books and articles on the representation of the North, the Arctic and Winter, Québec, Inuit and Nordic cultures, cultural pluralism): ***“Perceptions of Darkness in the North”***.

*Abstract:* Defining darkness can be an impossible exercise to explain absence, nothingness, and the absolute all at once. Darkness falls within a system of symbolic values where colours are ascribed to meanings that are related to one another. The relationship between darkness and the North is as ancient as that between the North and whiteness. The circumpolar day-night cycle, alternating between summer and winter, introduces the idea of a duality, between blinding brightness and everlasting night. The objective of this presentation is to look at the phenomena of Darkness in the North and its implications and perception in cultural and social representations.

**11:20-11:30 Alexandre Delangle** (Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, France): ***“Boots in the snow: Vilhjalmur Stefansson and the expansive defense of Arctic America”***.

*Abstract:* This article is dedicated to the role played by Arctic ethnologist, explorer and writer Vilhjalmur Stefansson (1879-1962), during World War II. He was hired as a military advisor when the United States Army senior officers expected a Japanese invasion of Alaska, setting the strategic planning to another geographic environment often discarded, if not unknown hitherto. Focusing on the author's contribution to strategic polar literature – both public writings in journal articles and books, and private correspondence exchanged with several actors of national defense, such as the U.S. Coast Guard and Department of War. This article also discusses how the global conflict acted as a turning point for Stefansson's career. From his attempts to convince the American civilian society it had the required skill set to settle the Arctic in the 1920s, the appointed advisor mobilized his respected technical polar knowledge to eventually pioneer the American Arctic's militarization. Under the ambitious vision of a united western hemisphere, Stefansson invested his efforts into the establishment of flight lanes and into the deployment of boots on the snowy ground.

**11:30-11:40 Jan Borm** (Université of Versailles, Paris-Saclay, France. Full Professor in British Literature and Co-Director of the Master-2 in Arctic Studies at the University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (UVSQ). Author of the portrait *Jean Malaurie, un homme singulier*, Paris: 2005, and co-editor of ten collective volumes including *Le froid. Adaptation, production, effets, représentations*, Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2018, co-edited with Daniel Chartier. A specialist of travel literature and writings about the Arctic): ***“To seek out these poor sheep wandering in a land of darkness” (Hans Egede, in English, French and German texts from the 18<sup>th</sup> century until today)***.

*Abstract:* In September 2019, the *Guardian* newspaper reported that a planned stop of the replica of Captain Cook's ship HMS Endeavour named "Tuia 250" at the Māori village Mangonui, in New Zealand's North Island, had to be cancelled due to objections from the indigenous community. Anahera Herbert-Graves, "head of the Northland's NgātiKahu iwi, or tribe", as the article indicates, is quoted as having stated that Cook "didn't discover anything down here", adding "we object to Tuia 250 using euphemisms like 'encounters' and 'meetings' to disguise what were actually invasions." Whatever the case may be, there is no doubt that colonial "encounters" have come under close scrutiny in postcolonial readings and that Hans Egede's legacy has also been re-examined in more recent times in a different light compared to earlier periods following his mission in Greenland. This presentation discusses the reception of his work in English, French and German from the 18<sup>th</sup> century until the present day. It was published as a book chapter with the same title in the collective volume *Troogsamfundi Grønland. I 300 året for Hans Egedesankomst*, edited by Åge Rydstrøm-Poulsen, Gitte Adler Reimer and Annemette Nyborg Lauritsen, Aarhus: Aarhus University, 2021, pp. 343-358.

**11:40-11:50 Olga Lavrenova** (Institute of Scientific Information on Human Science -INION RAS-, National University of Science and Technology –MISIS-, Russia. Geographer, Philosopher, Historian. DSc Philosophy, PhD Geography. Honorary member of the Russian Academy of Arts. Honorary member of the Russian Academy of Arts. Professor of National University of Science and Technology (MISIS) and of the GTR Film and Television School. President of the International Association for Semiotic of Space and Time. Fulbright grantee, 2021): "***Siberian and Northern Russian roads in the YouTube***".

*Abstract:* YouTube video hosting presents different levels of documentary filming. These are both professional non-game tapes and randomly filmed events. Russian circumpolar landscapes and landscapes of Siberia are also presented on YouTube, in particular, the roads of the North. They appear as a symbol of the strength of the spirit of heavy trucks drivers who are able to overcome conditions of complete off-road, roads without roads - swamp and mud. A feature of Russia is the use of winter roads, roads that partially run through frozen rivers. The failures of cars under the ice is a separate topic on YouTube, which has meanings of both hopelessness and heroism, and serious danger to the environment. In addition, YouTube presents a professional documentary about the life of the indigenous peoples of the North, where the theme of movement and the conquest of space turns into the theme of nomads using traditional reindeer-drawn transport. This is another facet of the cultural landscapes of the North, another culture forming its own pattern of trails without roads. These two cultures exist almost in parallel, but sometimes intersect, creating points of tension.

**11 :50-12 :00 : Discussion**

**12:00-13:00 (BA time)**

**12:00-12:10 Laura Perez-Gauvreau** (Centre de recherche interuniversitaire sur la littérature et la culture québécoises, CRILCQ. Graduate student in literary studies at Université du Québec à Montréal (UQÀM), Montréal, Canada): "***Nature and Individuality in Joséphine Bacon's Un thé dans la toundra/Nipishapui nete mushuat (2013) and Leonel Lienlaf's Se ha despertado el ave de mi corazón/Nepey ñi güñün piuke (1989)***".

*Abstract:* In my presentation, I will explain my master's thesis in which I compare the relationship between representations of nature and individuality in two collections of poems written by indigenous authors: *Un thé dans la toundra/Nipishapui nete mushuat* (2013) by Joséphine Bacon, Innu from Quebec, and *Se ha despertado el ave de mi corazón/Nepey ñi güñün piuke* (1989) by Leonel Lienlaf, Mapuche from Chile. We hypothesize that there is a tension between the evocation of nature and individuality in Bacon's and Lienlaf's collections, in relation to concepts specific to Innu and Mapuche languages and cultures that happen to be comparable, despite the distance and the distinct history of the peoples of these two poets. This analysis will provide a first link between Innu and Mapuche literature, a link that will allow for a richer understanding of these cultures that inhabit the two poles of America.

**12:10-12:25 Anna Stammer-Gossmann** (Social Anthropology, University Senior Researcher, Coordinator of the Arctic Studies Programme, University of Lapland, Documentary maker): ***“Uses of Cold in Finnish Lapland and Siberia”***.

*Abstract:* Although a whole set of positive traits is assigned to 'warmth' and 'cold' is often perceived as a burden, for Arctic residents 'cold' has provided opportunities to 'enact', experiment with and relate to it in many ways. Several economic sectors in Finnish Lapland and Republic of Sakha Yakutia are very much focused on winter season – tourism, roads building, construction, reindeer herding, transport, snow and ice 'producing' technologies, to name a few. Cold environment is conceptualized at a range of scales concerning the meanings and uses in relation to economic activities, regulations, mobility and risks. Mundane materiality of snow-ice cycles provides to Arctic inhabitants means to different |ends not only as physical conduit of economic but also social realms, cultural and emotional states of being. Cold has gained a new quality in the context of environmental changes and has generated increased awareness about 'frozen assets' of the region. Proposed paper aims to provide an insight into multiple forms of uses of cold in the Arctic, processes of 'turning' cold into a valuable symbolic and economic resource, and creating a vision for winter in the context of a double exposure: environmental changes and COVID-19 crisis. In doing so, the paper will focus on the understanding how physical properties of coldscape are experienced, used and interpreted among northern residents in a variety of social settings and different frameworks.

**12:25-12:35 Ivanna Knysh** (Master in Arctic Studies and Ph.D. candidate at the UVSQ/Université Paris-Saclay, France): ***“The perception of Biodiversity in different parts of the Arctic discussed by Sara Wheeler in ‘The Magnetic North’ (2009)”***.

*Abstract:* The notes of the first travelers include a description of the life and customs of the indigenous people, the discovery of new territories and their geographical features, the primordial nature untouched yet by the human land. Subsequently, these notes began to turn into travel texts. Expeditors described their emotions and feelings, exploits and failures, every spent day in new endless spaces. These travelogues and notes from the field are a powerful theoretical base of information, a source of knowledge and experience which is growing every year. In this paper, I will discuss Sara Wheeler's circumpolar account "The Magnetic North" (2009) focusing on her perception of biodiversity in different parts of the Arctic. Her descriptions of biodiversity in different regions of the Arctic will be analyzed in view of her rhetorical strategy.

**12:35-12:45 Helgi Gunnlaugsson** (Ph.D. in Sociology, Professor of Sociology at University of Iceland, Vice-president of IACSI, Int'l Association of Circumpolar Socio-cultural Issues His main research interests include Criminology, Penal policies and the problem of alcohol and drugs in society): ***“Nordic Drug Legislations”***.

*Abstract:* In November of this year Stockholm University Press publishes a new book on Nordic drug legislations, under the title *Retreat or Entrenchment? Drug Policies in the Nordic Countries at a Crossroads* edited by Henrik Tham. In this presentation one of the authors, Professor Dr Helgi Gunnlaugsson describes the research project behind this book and presents some of the key findings.

**12:45-13:00: Discussion**

**13:00-14:00 (BA time)**

**13:00-13:15 Verena M. Schindler** (Co-Chair of the Study Group on Environmental Colour Design of the International Colour Association. Art and architectural historian. She has worked at the *Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture* and the *Department of Architecture at ETH Zurich*. She has been affiliated with *Atelier Cler Etudes Chromatiques* in Paris and was guest researcher at *VorAnker* in Vienna): ***“The colours of the Magallanes Region in Chile”***.

*Abstract:* The Region of Magallanes in Chile is located at the very south of the country. It is a large area with 80% of its population living in the capital city of Punta Arenas. One of the main economic activities is tourism. The landscape dramatically varies. It ranges from an urbanized environment at the border of the Strait of Magallanes to grasslands, scrublands, steppe, wetlands, forest to snow and glaciers of the Andes. Earth, vegetation, water, sky and wind are the fundamental constituents of Chile's largest region. In this respect, this study explores the colours of the natural environments and how the man-made environments interact and adapt to those of Nature. In particular, the colours from Punta Arenas to Torres del Paine will be explored. The colours of the buildings in the city centre are mostly in greyish, in the range of rather neutral tones, while the colours of the houses vary from vivid colours to the colours of the local building materials such as wood. The colours of the vegetation vary from a light green and dark green to different shades of yellow and red, while the colours of the flowers are vivid and saturated. Although the flowers appear in small quantities, they provide an absolutely amazing contrast to an otherwise rather monotonous landscape. The colours of the water surfaces vary from grey, blue, to different shades of turquoise, while the colours of the ice are the most astonishing ones. This project investigates the colours of the Magallanes Region not only to categorize them into different colour families but also to grasp the incredible richness of the colours in a windy, cold and rather unfriendly environment. Goethe's view that "the manifestation of a phenomenon is not detached from the observer" [1], the phenomenological approach of Maurice Merleau-Ponty [2,] and James J. Gibson's perception of the visual world [3] are all concepts describing how we perceive the world. Alexander von Humboldt wrote: "Everywhere, even near the iced poles, the air is filled with the song of birds and the buzzing of insects". In this sense, everywhere is colour.

**13:15-13:25 Enrique del Acebo Ibáñez** (Full Professor and researcher at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Salvador, Argentina. Master and Doctor in Sociology at the Complutensis University of Madrid. Visiting Guest Professor at the University of Iceland -2015-2025. Director of CICLOP, IADCOM-FCE-University of Buenos Aires, Argentina. Fulbright Professor, NJ, 1993-94. President of IACSI, Int'l Association of Circumpolar Socio-cultural Issues. Editor-in-chief of the *Arctic & Antarctic-International Journal on Cirumpolar Sociocultural Issues*. Film maker): ***“Inhabiting the extreme South”***.

*Abstract:* The "extreme" is a hyper-connoted but not well-defined word. A reductionist conception of the environment as a mere "ecological system" (environmentalism) influences the answer given to the question about what the "extreme" is. It is a phenomenon containing negative conditions that are difficult to survive for most known life forms; the Northern and Southern circumpolar regions are clear examples. But "extreme" is also the result of the dialectic between the *homo viator* and the *stabilitas loci*, in terms of internalization of the extreme environment -natural or constructed- in the everyday life, and the exteriorization of the landscape of the soul of such a subject and local community. In sum, it emerges the interdependence and dialectics between the Subject's and the Socio-cultural worlds. Confines, radicality, memory, uncertainty, silence, reflexivity are dimensions to be considered when analyzing the "extreme", because this phenomenon not only deals with the environmental, geographic and climatologic features but also with socio-cultural, anthropological, political & power relations, and socio-economic variables. The territory of the Antarctica and the human presence there represent a *total and complex phenomenon*: multidimensional and interconnected. The different ways of dwelling and working in the Antarctica imply a dynamic process of continuous production of new geo-cultural images, texts and discourses. To live and work in the Antarctica suppose a life strategy, conditioned by the *extreme cold*, the *isolation* and the *inaccessibility*. A creative strategy to dwell and work in the Antarctica implies to develop and build a new trajectory of extreme southern identity in terms of territory, geographic and cultural features. To dwell and work in the Antarctica deal with adaptation, everyday life social practices, and representations of reality, where the extreme cold is a restriction but also an opportunity and challenge to conciliate tradition, innovation, as well as creativity. The emergent concept of *Antarctic social identity* deals with a sort of *emotional geography*, like a *founding representational myth*, linked to the "historic missions". Consequently, the Antarctica works as a metaphor of purity, wilderness and virginity, being still nowadays the *Terra Incognita Australis*, a sort of metaphysic sanctuary, a pristine confine of the planet.

**13:25-13:35 Albina Lara** (Doctoral Degree in Geography from the National University of Cuyo, Argentina, a Master Degree in Urban Planning from the University of California Los Angeles, USA. More than twenty five years of teaching experience, graduate and undergraduate, in Argentina and in Ghana, Africa. She has also experience in international organizations, consultant firms, government institutions and NGOs):  
***"Patagonia: Territorial perceptions of a Circumpolar space"***.

*Abstract.* This presentation aims to present some reflections for the understanding of the Patagonian environment, as an integral and unique space. These reflections are based on the idea that a large part of the constructed images of Patagonia, in some way, prevent a genuine approach to the Patagonian environment, due to the distortion and/or impoverishment in which they incur. Patagonia has been an imagined territory over which, many times, limiting and stereotyped characteristics have been imposed. Without any doubt, Patagonia has been a territory that raises questions due to its difficulty in being apprehended. This, in turn, produces concern because, in general, human beings prefer to have certainties that provide the illusion of control over what they "understand" or are capable of categorizing. Patagonia is elusive to glances of control and resists categorization and much more labels. Many of the perceptions of Patagonia have the stamp of otherness, which for some scholars was built mainly by "outsiders" and, at times, incorporated by non-outsiders, in traits that have remained as part of Patagonian stereotypes. These perceptions impoverish the characterization of the territory since, erroneous or not, they leave out key territorial components. This presentation shows that this singular space confronts us with the challenge of being able to perceive something different from what we are used to and, in such a way, approach this complex territory. The presentation concludes that the challenge is to give Patagonia a new significance as a lived territory and banish the Patagonia armed with quotes and stereotypes that take it back to represent "territorial characters" rather than territorial realities to live in and care for.

**13:35-13:50: Discussion**

**13:50-14:00 : Concluding Remarks (IACSI-ICO)**



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