

## 34. Relationships of no small significance: Invisibility, animals, and the Domus.

### 16229 - 'What happens to one part impacts the other parts': Invisible Entanglements in the St'át'imc Salish Fishing Way of Life

Presentation type: Oral presentation

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Much of the Interior Salish fauna have been and are frequently seen to be icons of a wild, rugged, uncultivated and uncontrolled landscape (yet to be developed, managed and cultivated). In contrast to such colonialist 'enlightenment view' of the world, St'át'imc Salish communities living around the Fraser River have and continue to defend and maintain considerate, cultured and controlled social relationships with the animals that constitute their 'domus' and that ensure a good 'quality of life' (T'aks ta amha swa7). In gracious attempts to explain these complex relationships to non-St'át'imc peoples sharing the land, Elders frequently clarify that living in and off the Fraser River Valley is really more akin to living on a large 'farm', 'garden' or a 'ranch' that requires skilled labour, balanced relationships of mutual reliance and stewardship and that is school, church and grocery store all at once. However, unlike a variety of influential scientific, ethnographic, popular and policy accounts have tried to posit over time, fish, especially salmon, while locally considered to be the 'top food', 'king' and simply 'life', must not be radically ranked on a hierarchy of 'frequency and amount of use' and be conceptually and practically disconnected from other land-based activities and animals such as deer, moose, beaver, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, bears and others, both historically and presently. In combination with large-scale industrial development and related habitat destruction, this view has led to the imbrication and rendering invisible of healthy key connections in the valley between, for example, St'át'imc-moose-beavers-fish-red willow and been replaced by a now contested hegemonic and essentializing narrative about (just) 'St'át'imc and fish'. Thus, this paper will highlight some key St'át'imc arguments about how this intrinsic interconnectedness has and continues to be formed, understood, practiced and advocated and the ways it critically questions some of the non-St'át'imc ways of knowing and relating to both, people and the land in this area. It will (re-)situate fishing historically and presently in its social context as important but largely misunderstood element of a local economy that has only through its complex social entanglements made possible long-standing continuities as well as new(er) relationships such as that between St'át'imc and Canadian fur traders and European markets. To do so, it will revisit an instructive older anthropological account of the St'át'imc domus that adequately highlights some of the social complexity, integration of all life-giving elements and achievement of a good the 'quality of life' that can only be secured in keeping respectfully with a myriad of balanced and reciprocal relationships based on the profound ontological understanding by many St'át'imc land users (2004) that 'what happens to one part impacts the other parts'

## 16218 - How reindeer domesticated man the hunter? The role of animal will and behavior in the "Reindeer Revolution" of Eurasian Arctic

Presentation type: Oral presentation

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Mainstream theories of domestication emergence consider that the central factor of this complex process is a human intent: people decided to modify their relationships with plants, animals and their environment (Zeder 2009). We want to challenge this conception with the case of the Eurasian Arctic, one of the best documented situations of shift from hunting economy to pastoralism. In Eurasian Arctic, indigenous populations were hunter-gatherers with small herds of domestic reindeer used for transport. Around 18th century, modes of subsistence of these populations shifted to specialized pastoralism, with large reindeer herds used for meat production. Explanatory models of the advent of pastoralism place human strategies at the center of the mechanism to solve problems, whether they would be economical (Ingold 1980), ecologico-political (Krupnik 1993) or cosmological (Willerslev et al.2015). However, historical evidence shows that Arctic hunters did not plan nor acknowledged that they were becoming pastoralists. They rather were interested in becoming better hunters and warriors. Relying on ethnographic data from modern taiga hunters using transport reindeer, Tozhu (Southern Siberia) and Tompo Even (Iakutia), we analyze the effects of herd size on reindeer behavior and its consequences for herd management and nomadic routes. We propose a new model of the advent of pastoralism in Arctic which is not anthropocentric but takes into account animal desires, memories and agencies, as well as landscape transformations in adaptation to herds and humans' presence. We also explain why hunters did not intend, though eventually accepted, to be pastoralists.

INGOLD T. 1980 : Hunters, pastoralists, and ranchers: reindeer economies and their transformations, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

KRUPNIK I. 1993 : Arctic adaptations : native whalers and reindeer herders of northern Eurasia, Hanover : Dartmouth College, 355 p.

WILLERSLEV R., VITEBSKY P., ALEKSEYEV A. 2015 : « Sacrifice as the ideal hunt : a cosmological explanation for the origin of reindeer domestication », *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 21, 1: 1-23.

ZEDER M. 2009 : « The Neolithic Macro-(R)evolution: Macroevolutionary Theory and the Study of Culture Change », *Journal of Archaeological Research*, 17, 1 : 1-63.

## **16191 - Feeding the Animals: Sharing and Caring between Gwich'in and Animals**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** *Loovers, Jan Peter Laurens, Un. Kingdom / Ver Königr.*

In December 2005, I commenced learning from and being taught by Teet'it Gwich'in. Stories that winter concerned the large amount of snow and the subsequent hardships for animals such as moose. In the years that have followed such affective concerns have been frequently expressed. The lives and movements of animals thus are a continuous concern for Gwich'in, both those in the vicinity as well as away from the community of Fort McPherson, Northwest Territories, Canada. In this paper I delve a little deeper into the feeding of animals both in the community and on the land. Crows and seagulls are often been fed as well as other birds, pieces of hunted animals are also left for wolves or bears, snow from trees are knocked off for animals. Whilst not arguing that all animals are domesticates, the notions of sharing and caring are integral in the relations between Gwich'in and those animals perceived "wild" within Euro-Canadian discourse. The notion of the Domus as a division between the wild and domesticated, then, becomes much muddier if not obsolete. Whilst there is extensive literature on animal gifts in relation to hunting luck, lesser literature exists on the feeding of animals in terms of sharing and caring in similar vein to other members of the household or so-called "Domus". Whilst not dismissing the relation notions of luck and animacy, I will provide therefore another account and explore these entanglements in life that are often kept invisible in literature.

## 16179 - Familiarity and Contempt in Human/Animal Ethnography

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** Anderson, David (University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, Un. Kingdom / Ver Königr.)

Post-humanism and the 'ontological turn' have directed attention towards the asymmetrical manner in which human interests govern the representation of animals, and indeed other actants and hybrids material or otherwise. While it is hard to deny that humanism has dominated ethnographic interpretations it is not always clear why what is familiar breeds contempt. This paper defends the metaphors of primacy, intimacy, and respect often attributed to hunter-gather accounts about their social worlds. It acknowledges that hunter-gatherer studies has produced a rather poor cannon of animal experience. Taking examples from around the circumpolar North, the paper tries to understand the relative lack of attention to the role of certain primary key social actors (Rangifer, Ursus, Canis) in classic ethnographies and wonders what an ethnography of the 'hunted and gathered' or 'domesticated' might look like. While their relationships with human and human-environmental hybrids are undoubtedly meshed, entangled and messy, it is not clear that squashing the profile of the human allows a better understanding Northern social interactions generally. It rather creates a lonely landscape where any experience is unknowable, unfamiliar, and therefore much more easily commodified and alienated. By working through metaphors of the familiar, emplacement, and of 'being at home', the paper argues that ethnography can more productively engage with the human, non-human, and all that is in between. To do so means that the author/ethnographer/field worker should be sceptical of neo-liberal symmetries.

## **16154 - "We have a contract with them": Gwich'in articulations about helpful animals in their life world**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** *Wishart, Robert (University of Aberdeen, auchenblae, Un. Kingdom / Ver Königr.)*

Following from the research within the ERC Arctic Domus Project on Gwich'in sensibilities about work/partnerships with dogs, fish and caribou, this paper will explore a selection of other relationships that are often ignored in the anthropological and managerial literatures. While not arguing against the importance of large ungulates in the Gwich'in economy and ethological understandings, nor denying that these animals are positioned as central to their life world in Gwich'in discourse, attention will be placed on the almost daily observations made by Gwich'in about what the other, smaller co-inhabitants of their lands are communicating to them and how they predict, warn and direct decision making. However this is not a unidirectional process; Gwich'in are cognizant of the relational cultivation of these special 'contracts' and they warn of what could happen, and indeed has happened in the past if the deal is broken.

## 15981 - Human-animal-landscape relations on the move: playing chess and defending reindeer herds from predators in Zabaikal'e

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** Davydov, Vladimir (*Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (Kunstkamera) RAS, St. Petersburg, Russian Fed. / Rus Föd.*)

Domestication of reindeer takes place in the context of intensive movements. On the one hand reindeer herders move from place to place to save pastures. On the other hand, people and animals periodically return to the same places. Reindeer herding involves intensive walking. People walk many kilometers per day in order to see the herd and bring reindeer to the camp. At the same time temporal component of reindeer herders' practices was misrepresented in ethnographic literature. In many respect, anthropologists stressed an internal or embodied quality of animal temporality, e. g. 'cattle clock' (Evans-Pritchard) where domestic animals themselves know how and where to move. However, they often missed multiple external agents such as, for instance, predators. Temporality of animal's behaviour and ecology shapes predators', domestic animals' and people's movements and relations with the landscape.

Evenki reindeer herders are very skillful in reflecting domestic animals' and predators' movements. They constantly try to keep in their mind the direction where they can find reindeer and reflect places which might be visited by predators. This way of reflecting numerous moves of multiple agents can be compared with a chess play. Reindeer herding and playing chess have much in common. They both involve a strategic thinking where the course of events depends on people's practical decisions. It is not surprising that chess became a significant part of reindeer herders' leisure activities in-between different tasks. As I have observed in different regions, reindeer herders were very skillful chess players. Similarly to chess play, reindeer herding is a strategic activity which involves a kind of 'battle' or competition with the 'opponents', which are represented by predators. Therefore, reindeer herding is not a non-reflexive activity where people are totally dependent on external forces; rather it implies that people are agents of human-animal-landscape social interaction.

In my presentation I will focus on temporality of wild animals' movements and behaviour and discuss how Evenki reindeer herders adapt to those changes in Zabaikal'e. The closeness and remoteness of people and animals are not static; they are different during day time and nighttime. I will pay special attention on how predators' closeness and remoteness to domestic reindeer and people changes and explore the structures and ethno-ethological knowledge Evenkis employ to defend reindeer from predators.

## **15866 - Annual cycles of proximity in southern Siberian human-horse relations**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** *Oehler, Alexander (University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, Un. Kingdom / Ver Königr.)*

This paper draws on ethnographic and ethnohistorical data gathered on Soiot human-horse relations in the Saian Mountains of southern Siberia, collected between 2012 and 2014. The author challenges the horse's secure position as a fully domesticated species in this mountain region and argues that the role of the horse in the domus of the Saian region can only be understood in the context of a regionally shared history of reindeer herding. Contemporary Soiets, who traditionally are known as 'hunters who herd reindeer for transportation purposes,' have referred to their now diminishing reindeer herds as 'semi-domestic' animals, possessing a high degree of human-independent will power. Similarly, human-owned horses are seen to possess a strong sense of independence, spending approx. eight months out of the year fending for themselves in locations often far removed from human settlement. The paper draws on divergent local accounts of the dynamics involved in annual catch and release procedures, while examining the seasonal re-negotiation of intentions between riders and horses. At the heart of the 'semi-domestic' argument lies a suite of Soiot practices, tools, and structures purposed to harness and direct horse intentions in an annual rhythm between landscape, predators, and human users, and which attests to the relative severity of this ever recurring inter-special encounter of intentions.

Keywords: Domestication, horses, Soiets, catch and release, intentionality, southern Siberia