

Indigenous thinking, landbased knowledge. Open workshop at Södertörn University, Thursday 8 Feb (13-17) in room PA238.

Indigenous thinking has traditionally been excluded from western universities as a part of the ongoing, colonial epistemicide. Yet in many ways, indigenous thinking and practice may hold keys for a richer, more sustainable way of life and understanding of the world. As a follow up to the venture into indigenous thinking in a recent course in philosophy here at Södertörn, we now invite you to participate in a workshop with leading scholars on Indigenous Studies from Canada, Sweden and Australia on indigenous thinking and landbased knowledge. The event is hosted by the research project *Decolonizing Phenomenologies* and the Department of Philosophy.

Contact: nicholas.smith@sh.se (070-468 69 20) This event is open to all, but please let me know if you want to come via email well in advance.

•13.00-14.00

Adam Gaudry & Elaine Alexie, “Land-based Learning in Teet’it Zheh: Thinking About and Practicing Community-Engaged Research in the Canadian Arctic”

Abstract: This presentation explores the mechanics of building meaningful partnerships between university programs and Indigenous communities using the example of the collaborative research project, Land-based Learning in Teet’it Zheh. The project is working with the Teet’it Gwich’in people in Fort McPherson, Northwest Territories, Canada to develop a “bush camp school” that will allow Gwich’in youth to reconnect to the land-based practices of their parents and grandparents. In addition to these practical skills, the camp will utilize Indigenous studies pedagogies to teach youth a decolonial history of Canadian colonialism, particularly as it has impacted their community. As late as the 1990s, the summer bush camp was the centre of communal life for Teet’it Gwich’in a practice that has declined over the past 25 years, influenced by a variety of Canadian social policies introduced in the region. This partnership charts a new path forward, by bringing university and community intellectuals together to reimagine what immersive, critical, and decolonial land-based education looks like. By examining their own experiences in this land-based learning project, Gaudry and Alexie provide suggestions for both communities and academics who envision a similar kind of collaborative approach.

•14.00-14.15

break

•14.15-15.15

Frances Wyld, “Indigenous Knowledges From the Heart: Monsters Under the Water and Rocks You Can No Longer Climb”

Abstract: This talk is a focus on what Indigenous and folklore stories get listened to and what gets ignored. There are two complications within this thesis and that is the relegation of Indigenous myths as just folklore. Yet our myths were both a protection and projection of our knowledges built around the landscape where the stories were often a way to keep our people safe. Water monster stories were told to children around campfires to build a healthy respect for a sometimes-hostile environment. Alternatively, Aboriginal people have been asking tourists for decades not to climb the sacred rock named Uluru. Not only is it unsafe to climb but the rock itself has significant spiritual meaning to its custodians; you would not climb a basilica, so please do not climb this magnificent monolith. In 2017 the Australian government finally agreed to making this climb illegal by the year 2019, resulting in many ignorant people on social media declaring they will climb it before this time as part of a ‘bucket list’ experience. In 2017 another news item relating to Uluru made headlines: the ‘Uluru Statement, from the Heart’. The statement, which did have some

controversy attached, was written by Australian Aboriginal leaders who had met at Uluru to discuss how Aboriginal people would be included within the constitution of Australia. The meeting was related to a million-dollar campaign run by the government and interested sponsors titled 'Recognise'. The contentious campaign was wisely dropped but the Uluru statement driven by Aboriginal people (unlike the Recognise campaign) was also ignored. Aboriginal stories and statements should be listened too regardless of the tendency to relegate them to myth and folklore, for they have kept people safe for thousands of years. Uluru is a monolith within a UNESCO heritage site, it is our heart, please listen to it.

- 15.15-15.30 break

- 15.30-16.30

Madina Tlostanova, "Decolonizing Circassian Spatial Memories, or A Feetless Bird in a Vanished Forest Garden"

Abstract: The talk will focus on how coloniality of knowledge and of spatial and corporal memory are manifested in the indigenous context of Circassian culture in comparison with several other indigenous cultures in the world. The central complex phenomenon I will discuss is the Circassian forest-garden closely linked with the local druidic cosmological and ecosophical system, almost completely destroyed due to the Russian colonization. I will reflect on the possible ways of decolonization of Circassian land-based epistemologies in the situation of multiple (re)colonizations, genocide and epistemicide, and the predominantly diasporic existence of Circassian people for almost two hundred years. I will address a few positive examples of epistemic decoloniality and re-existence in contemporary Caucasus including educational and ecological projects, as well as art and fiction.

- 16.30-17.00

discussion

Biographies

Adam Gaudry, Ph.D. is Métis and an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Native Studies and Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta. Adam's research explores nineteenth-century Métis political thought, the Métis-Canada ["Manitoba Treaty"](#) of 1870, and Canada's outstanding obligations under the act. This project argues for the maintenance of a respectful and bilateral political relationship between the Métis Nation and the Canadian people as treaty partners. This work is being revised into a book for publication with the University of Manitoba Press. Adam received his Ph.D. from the Indigenous Governance Program at the University of Victoria, and both his MA in Sociology and BAH in Political Studies from Queen's University. He was a Henry Roe Cloud Fellow at Yale University and currently a co-investigator in the Métis Treaties Project. Adam's work has been published in *Native American and Indigenous Studies*, *Critical Ethnic Studies*, *The Wicazo Sa Review*, *aboriginal policy studies*, the *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, the *Osgoode Hall Law Journal*, and *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. He also has several chapters in edited collections on Métis identity, research ethics, and methodology.

Elaine Alexie, MA, Faculty of Native Studies, University of Alberta. Elaine is a member of the Teetl'it Gwich'in First Nation, Elaine Alexie was born in the Northwest Territories in North Canada and raised in her home community of Fort McPherson. She holds a Master of Arts in Political Science from the University of Victoria, and currently is the Northern Community Engagement Officer with the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta. One of her primary supportive roles is facilitating Northern Research Workshops for faculty and students; and works to build partnerships and relationships with northern communities. Her passions in life is being on the rivers in her ancestral lands of the Peel Watershed in the central Yukon territory, learning her peoples' material cultural practices, and spending time with her large extended Gwich'in family.

Dr **Frances Wyld** is a Martu woman (Aboriginal people of the Pilbara region of Australia), Doctor of Communication and Program Coordinator at the University of Adelaide. She teaches in the areas of Indigenous Knowledges, education, cultural studies and specialises in curriculum development and has written curriculum for the University of South Australia, Open Universities Australia and the University of Adelaide. Her doctorate title 'In the time of Lorikeets' uses autoethnography, storytelling and mythography to centre Indigenous Knowledges within an academic environment to establish an Indigenous worldview for ethical research and teaching. She takes great pride in her ongoing collaboration with Sámi academics and community persons. Her publications include both scholarly and creative writing elements and in 2018 Frances will add the study of trauma and grief at Flinders University to her repertoire. She lives in Adelaide, Australia with her son.

Madina Tlostanova is a decolonial thinker and writer, professor of postcolonial feminisms at Linköping University. She focuses on decolonial thought, non-Western feminism, postsocialist studies, contemporary art. Her most recent books include *Learning to Unlearn: Decolonial Reflection from Eurasia and the Americas* (co-authored with Walter D. Mignolo, Ohio State UP, 2012), *Postcolonialism and Postsocialism in Fiction and Art: Resistance and Re-existence* (Palgrave, 2017) and the forthcoming *What Does it Mean to be Post-Soviet? Decolonial Art from the Ruins of the Soviet Empire* (Duke University Press, 2018).

