

# PROGRAM / PROGRAMME / SKRÁ

TÓRSHAVN, 2022.11.30-2022.12.01

INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCE

SILENCE  
AND  
VIOLENCE  
  
IN THE NORTH



COLLOQUE  
INTERNATIONAL

SILENCE  
ET  
VIOLENCE  
  
DANS LE NORD



INNBJÓÐING TIL  
ALTJÓÐA RÁÐSTEVNU Á  
FRÓÐSKAPARSETRINUM

TØGN OG  
HARÐSKAPUR  
Í NORÐRI



IMAGINAIRE  
NORD

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH, 2022**

**LE MERCREDI 30 NOVEMBRE 2022**

**MIKUDAG, 30. NOVEMBER 2022**

**9h30 REGISTRATION / INSCRIPTION / INNSKRIVING**

**Hotel Brandan, Oknarvegur 2, Tórshavn**

**10h WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION / MOT DE BIENVENUE ET INTRODUCTION /  
VÆLKOMIN OG INNGANGUR**

**Malan Marnersdóttir (Fróðskaparsetur Føroya) and Daniel Chartier (Université du Québec à Montréal)**

**10h30 SILENCE AS A COMPONENT OF THE NORTH / LE SILENCE COMME SIGNE DU NORD /  
TØGN SUM EYÐKENNI FYRI NORÐRIÐ**

**Daniel Chartier (Université du Québec à Montréal)**

**Silence, one of the main components of the imagined North**

**Le silence, un signe de l'imaginaire du Nord**

**Tøgn, eitt eyðkenni fyri tað ímyndaða norður.**

As it can be observed in the different cultural genres that summon it, the imagined North, the imagined Winter and the imagined Cold unfold in a system of signs that forms a coherent whole posing a variable relationship with reality. Some cultural forms – novel, travelogue, cinema, part of the visual arts – evoke this imagined North through figuration or description, while others – poetry, abstract art and music – rather use it as a semantic structure that allows to free the work from any reference to geography or climate. This imagined North values not sound, but silence. The objective of this conference is to study, in a representative corpus of works from different cultures linked to the imagined North, Winter and the Arctic, what role sound plays in this system of signs, so as to propose a typology of silence for the cold world, as posed by literature.

**Daniel Chartier** is Full Professor at the Université du Québec à Montréal, and director of the International Laboratory for Research on Images of the North, Winter and the Arctic. In recent years, he has published and directed some forty books and a hundred articles on the representation of the North, the Arctic and Winter, Québec, Inuit, First Nations and Nordic cultures, cultural pluralism, including *The End of Iceland's Innocence* (2010), *Le lieu du Nord* (2015) a multilingual essay in 16 editions (including Faroese) on *What is the 'Imagined North'? Ethical principles* (2018), a collective essay on *Darkness. The Dynamics of Darkness in the North* (2020) and on *The Northern Forest* (2022). He has been Research Chair on Québec Studies at the Sorbonne Nouvelle and Research on Images of the North, Winter and the Arctic at the Université du Québec à Montréal. His current projects are on Winter as a socio-cultural phenomenon; Inuit literatures; and Arctic symbolic geographies. He is director of 4 book series on the North at the Québec University Press. His work has led to many public and academic interventions in universities such as Lund, Paris Sorbonne, Helsinki, Stockholm, Iceland, Greenland, Buenos Aires, Fribourg, Hokkaido, Groningen and Yale.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH, 2022

LE MERCREDI 30 NOVEMBRE 2022

MIKUDAG, 30. NOVEMBER 2022

11h ETHNOGRAPHIC OBSERVATIONS / OBSERVATIONS ETHNOGRAPHIQUES /  
ETNOGRAFISKAR EYGLEIÐINGAR

Jan Borm (Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines)

ZOOM

From sidereal silence to what is left unsaid in Jean Malaurie's memoir  
*De la pierre à l'âme (From Stone to Soul, 2022)*

Du silence sidéral aux non-dits dans le nouveau récit de Jean Malaurie, *De la pierre à l'âme (2022)*

Tögn og tað ósagda í nýggjari frásøgn hjá Jean Malaurie *De la pierre à l'âme* – Steinurin í sálini.

Silence plays a central role in Jean Malaurie's most recent book, *De la pierre à l'âme (From Stone to Soul)*, published by Plon in October 2022. As the co-editor of this book presented by the publisher as an "autobiography" (*Mémoires*), I had the privilege of accessing the manuscript in which one can find up to a hundred references to the word "silence" and even more if one includes occurrences of the term in the plural. Such an elevated number clearly indicates the importance of this notion in a book that will no doubt leave a strong imprint. There is no need to introduce Jean Malaurie at length anymore, the French anthropo-geographer as he defines himself, is a specialist of circumpolar studies born in Germany in 1922 and the author of the classic account *The Last Kings of Thule* (1955), the most widely distributed book about Greenland in the world with over twenty translations including two English editions. Basing myself on a number of close readings, I will discuss the functioning of silence(s) in this thought-provoking text in three ways: first of all, the silence the author was seeking for in the Far North to find inner peace, secondly, the many things ethnographers tend to leave unsaid and, thirdly, the difficult question of what the Inuit would not speak to Malaurie about during his prolonged stay in North-West Greenland in 1950-51 or later, especially as far as their own private life or intimacy is concerned and what Malaurie calls their "vertical thought". This will bring us to the core of what is at stake in representing First Nations according to the author: how to produce an accurate likening of their culture and history while respecting their identity and rights.

Jan Borm is Full Professor at UVSQ/University of Paris-Saclay where he is also Director of the Malaurie Institute of Arctic Research Monaco-UVSQ ([www.miarctic.org](http://www.miarctic.org)). He has published widely on travel literature and the representation of the Arctic and has co-edited more than ten collective volumes including the issue dedicated to Malaurie of the prestigious French review *Cahier de l'Herne* (2021) and, with Daniel Chartier, the conference volume *Le Froid (Cold, 2018)*. Jan Borm is UArctic Chair in Arctic Humanities for the period 2022-27 and is currently participating in the NICH-ARCTIC project coordinated by Anne de Vernal at the University of Québec in Montréal.

11h30 ART AND SILENCE / ART ET SILENCE / LIST OG TØGN

Paul Landon (Université du Québec à Montréal)

Listening stations: mapping silence in the North. Notes for an artwork by Paul Landon

Stations d'écoute : cartographier le silence dans le Nord

Kortleggja tögna í Norðri – miðlar og list hjá Paul Landon.

In 2019, I presented the paper "Lost in the barrens" at the Arctic Arts Summit in Rovaniemi, in which I looked at how modernist media art practices have made use of the northern landscape as a kind of blank slate, or tabula rasa onto which apparatuses of perception could be erected and abstract structures of vision and repetition could be played out. With "Listening stations: mapping silence in the north," I develop on the idea of northern sparseness as a culturally and historically muted space but also as a space onto which a terrifying technological potential for violence could be inscribed. The paper is a proposition for an artwork that considers the north as a modernist myth, as an unknown territory misinterpreted as immense, empty, and silent. My project is for an artwork that would take the form of an abstract drawing installation including a reinterpretation of a map of the DEW (Distant Early Warning) line in Canada's north. It would be constituted of a drawing (based on a circumpolar mapping of radio silence) and an architectural installation (inspired by the form and function of military listening stations). This work will at once refer to military (colonialist) mapping processes and to modernist art forms that refer to spaces of emptiness and silence. I reconsider the defunct radar stations of the DEW line as the "ruins in reverse" that the American sculptor Robert Smithson identified to when imagining his earthworks in the wastelands of the industrial American landscape.

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The paper will be a series of notes and sketches that inform my process in the development of the artwork. These will include reflections on the mapping of vast, sparsely populated regions, on projecting silence onto the unknown and the unknowing, on modern artists' concepts of the empty and silent landscape, and on colonial and military apparatuses of subjugation through silencing.

In his research and visual art practice, **Paul Landon** explores the neglected and overlooked spaces of modernity. His explorations are transcribed through individual processes of mediatisation: of recording, editing, archiving and reconstruction. Landon's work is structured through the uncompromising physicality of modern architecture and landscape, positing these as sites inscribed with forgotten promise and effaced monumentality. Landon graduated from The Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax, Canada and from the Jan van Eyck Academie in the Netherlands. He completed a Doctorate in Fine Arts at the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki. Paul Landon lives and works in Montreal, where he is a professor of Media Arts at the École des arts visuels et médiatiques of UQAM.

**12h LUNCH / MIÐMÁLI**

**13h SILENCE IN LITERATURE I / LE SILENCE DANS LA LITTÉRATURE I / TØGN Í BÓKMENTUM I**

**Piet Lincken (artist and translator)**

**A poetry of 'withdrawal': when withdrawing from the noise of the world is a moral form of 'resistance'.  
W. Heinesen, E. Södergran, K. Boye, G. Gunnarsson, S. Claussen**

**Une poésie du « retrait » : lorsque se retirer du bruit du monde est une forme morale de 'résistance'. W.  
Heinesen, E. Södergran, K. Boye, G. Gunnarsson, S. Claussen**

**Afturtøkyrking: At taka seg burtur úr heimsins gangi sum eitt slag av moralskari 'mótstöðu'. W.  
Heinesen, E. Södergran, K. Boye, G. Gunnarsson, S. Claussen**

Instead of opposing silence to a destructive violence, I will show the links between the silence, seen as withdrawal, shelter, a quest for solitude, etc. and a violence that the poet tries to transfigure (including his own inner violence). Or like a moral form of "resistance" (being an "outcast", someone who excludes himself or gets excluded from society, could be seen as a "positive value" that questions societal and collective violence).

As examples, I will comment on the poetry of some Nordic writers I translate into French : William Heinesen (1900-1991), Danish writing in the Faroe Islands; Edith Södergran (1892-1923), Swedish speaker from Finland; Karin Boye (1900-1941), Sweden; Gunnar Gunnarsson (1889-1975), Iceland; Sophus Claussen (1865-1931), Denmark.

**Piet Lincken** (Belgium-Sweden, born in Normandy) is poet, writer, translator from Nordic languages into French, visual artist, composer, and professional pianist/organist. He frequently lives in Denmark. He gives literary and artistic workshops and collaborates with artists and musicians.

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH, 2022**

**LE MERCREDI 30 NOVEMBRE 2022**

**MIKUDAG, 30. NOVEMBER 2022**

**Henning Howlid Wærp (UiT – The Arctic University of Norway)**

**The sound of animal societies in Arctic. Otto Sverdrup's  
*New Land. Four Years in the Arctic Regions* (1903)**

**Le son des sociétés animales de l'Arctique.  
*New Land. Four Years in the Arctic Regions* (1903), d'Otto Sverdrup**

**Djóralljóð í Arktis í bókini  
*New Land. Four Years in the Arctic Regions* (1903) eftir norska hævundin Otto Sverdrup**

This illustrated account of Polar exploration was originally published in Norway in 1903, and in English translation in 1904. It tells the story of the four years spent by Otto Sverdrup (1854-1930) and his crew in surveying and charting the seas and coastlines of the Arctic. In June 1898, Sverdrup took the ship *Fram* and a crew including several scientists to Ellesmere Island in the Canadian Arctic, where they overwintered for four years. In the now classic book *Arctic Dreams* (1986) Barry Lopez dismisses previous conceptions of the North American Arctic as an empty space awaiting colonization and modernization. Lopez wants to give the reader a deeper understanding of the land itself; a true image of the Arctic can emerge only when a sensibility toward indigenous people and animals and the way they conduct their lives is coupled with an acknowledgement of the particularities of the Arctic ecosystems. In my paper I will discuss Otto Sverdrup's encounters with Arctic animals, how the sounds of the animals are experienced to be a part of the landscape. The animal societies have their own voice, Sverdrup discovers. In that respect the common concept of the silent Arctic is questioned.

**Henning Howlid Wærp** is Professor of Nordic literature at Norway's Arctic University (UiT) in Tromsø. He is a specialist on novelist Knut Hamsun and has published several essays on novels, poetry and the links between environment and literature. Himself a poet, he's as well a poetry critic for the *Aftenposten*, Norway's main newspaper.

**14h**

**SIGHTSEEING IN TÓRSHAVN/ VISITE GUIDÉE DE TÓRSHAVN /**

The National Gallery, Old Bookshop and the old town on Reyn by the author William Heinesen  
La galerie nationale, une vieille librairie, et la vieille ville dans Reyn par l'auteur William Heinesen  
Listasavn. H.N. Jacobsens Bókahandil og út á Reyn.

Dinner at Katrina Christiansen

Dîner chez Katrina Christiansen

**Bergur D. Hansen (Fróðskaparsetur Føroya)**

**Mental disease and silence in the Far North**  
**Maladie mentale et silence dans le Grand Nord**  
**Sálarsjúka og tøgn í norðasta Norði**

A theme in descriptions of the Far North and Arctic is the fresh and clean air and its potential healing powers – a reflection of health discourses especially in the 19th and beginning of the 20th century and still to this day, and a response to urbanization in other parts of Europe to the south (Spring 2020).

In 2012, the Faroese author and filmmaker Katrin Ottarsdóttir published her first collection of poetry, *Eru koparrør í himmiríki* (Eng. *Are There Copper Pipes In Heaven*, 2019). The poems form a narrative of a young girl growing up with a mother with mental disease. The setting of the poems is almost without exception in the interior of a house. Doors and keys are important to prevent the world from entering (hiding and silencing the disease). Hitting the copper pipes in the house becomes a violent way of communication.

The lack of technological development and urbanization in large parts of the Far North up until the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century meant that inhabitants with mental diseases were sent away (to the south, the European mainland), in the Faroe Islands to Denmark until 1969. Mental disease was in a way non-existent in the islands, locked away, silenced. Ironically, travellers from urbanized parts of Europe at the same time wrote about the Arctic/Far North as a place of potential physical and mental healing.

In *Eru koparrør í himmiríki* feelings of shame and anger are mixed with regret, sarcasm and irony as the narrating self looks back at the young girl in the poems. Experiences turn into “ugly feelings” (Nagi 2005), i.e. non-cathartic feelings like anxiety, irritation etc. In 2014, Katrin Ottarsdóttir made a film, *Ludo*, based on the same stories as the poems.

The paper will focus especially on the poems, including mental disease and silence, in the context presented above.

**Bergur D. Hansen** is Dean and Associate Professor of Literature at the Faculty of Language and Literature (Føroyamálsdeildin). He started teaching Literary Analysis and Method as a part time teacher in 2007 and was made Assistant Professor in 2012. He was Prorector for Education and Quality 2020-2022.

**Paula Gaard (Fróðskaparsetur Føroya)**

**Silence and verbal violence in Faroese literary criticism**  
**Silence et violence verbale dans la critique littéraire féroïenne**  
**Tøgn og málsligur harðskapur í føroyskum bókmentaummælum**

The presentation questions what impact the silence of the North as a value of moral imposition on one hand and verbal violence on the other hand has had on Faroese literary criticism and consequently Faroese literature.

**Paula Gaard** holds a Ph.D. in Faroese literary criticism and works as Assistant Professor at the University of the Faroe Island.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1ST, 2022

LE JEUDI 1ER DÉCEMBRE 2022

HÓGSDAG 1. DESEMBER 2022

Frédérique Toudoire-Surlapierre (Université Paris-Sorbonne)

**“Silence is against us”. Violence and insularity in the novels of N Korneliussen and J Nielsen**

**« Le silence oblitère tout » : violence et insularité dans les récits de Niviaq Korneliussen et Jóanes Nielsen**

**“Tøgnin er ímóti okkum”. Harðskapur og avbyrgdleiki í skalsøgum eftir N.Korneliussen og J. Nielsen**

If the links between silence and violence have already been identified and evaluated, more precisely in Nordic Island spaces, they have undergone notable changes in recent years. Although the "law of silence" has been one of the operating methods of certain Nordic island spaces such as Iceland, the Faroe Islands, Svalbard or even Greenland, it is currently being broken by a liberation movement speech that finds different forms of expression and in literature. The respective publication of *Glansbílætasmálararnir* in 2005 by the Faroese writer Jóanes Nielsen or that of the Greenlandic writer Niviaq Korneliussen, *Blomsterdalen* in 2020 are no strangers to that evolution. These two stories can be read on both sides as the expression of a freedom of speech aimed at breaking the law of silence, particularly in relation to certain taboos of these societies, whether the problem of suicide in Greenland or subjects such as homosexuality, masculinity and aids in the Faroe Islands. This liberation of speech finds echoes through written forms that deploy violence in different forms: violence is not only a subject, it is also expressed verbally, finding community, identity, psychological, social, symbolic, highlighting new connections between insularity and native claim. Nordic insular literature thus makes itself heard: the repercussions of these texts as well as their circulation and the translation circuits (in Scandinavia, Canada and Europe) show that it is becoming internationally audible.

Frédérique Toudoire-Surlapierre is professor of Nordic literature and civilizations at the University of Paris-Sorbonne (France). Specialist in Scandinavian literature (The Nordic imaginary) in comparative and cultural studies approaches, she is currently working on the Nordic Noir, as well as Nordic island spaces in a Blue humanities way, and also the question of gender, minorities and Indigenous claims.

12h LUNCH / MIÐMÁLI

13h30 SILENCE IN LITERATURE III / LE SILENCE DANS LA LITTÉRATURE III / TØGN Í BÓKMENTUM III

Diane Gauthier (Université du Québec à Montréal)

ZOOM

**The relay voices: between silence and testimonies of violence**

**Les voix relais : entre silence et témoignage de la violence**

**Røddir millum støðir – millum tøgn og vitnisburðir um harðskap**

Icelandic literature has long reflected the laconism of its people. Through its mastery of understatement and euphemism, the narrative style of its medieval sagas already bears witness to this cultural trait (Boyer, 1978). Iceland's insular and northern isolation as well as the whiteness of its territory, its purity and harmony that are associated with silence (Chartier, 2013) could explain this social and cultural particularity. So, what happens when a violent crime creates dissonance and breaks this silence? The detective novel, as a contemporary literary genre, could illustrate how this cultural singularity attributed to the Nordic peoples in general and the Icelanders in particular manifests itself today. We propose an analysis of Arnaldur Indriðason's novel *The Shadow District*, in which intermediary voices bear witness to the crime in place of the victims. By looking at these ghostly voices (Hart Nibbrig, 2008), acousmetre (Chion, 1993) and prosopopoeias (Clément, 2012) on one hand, and at the organisation of these voices in the structure of the text (Chenetier, 1992) on the other hand, we will see how these relay voices can prove to be a form that is conducive to giving a voice to the characters who are grappling with the "law of silence" surrounding the crime. The difficulty of speaking in the face of violence can be seen in the simple presence of these relay voices, which allow us to move, fragment by fragment, through the narrative. Therefore, like the wind that blows over Iceland which at the same time imposes silence and reveals in waves voices that persist in wanting to be heard, the relay voices, by their movement, transform an individual fact into a social fact.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1ST, 2022

LE JEUDI 1ER DÉCEMBRE 2022

HÓGSDAG 1. DESEMBER 2022

Diane Gauthier is a doctoral student in literary studies at the Université du Québec à Montréal and a member of the International Laboratory for Research on Images of the North, Winter and the Arctic. Her research focuses on the Icelandic detective novel, its reception and its influence on the representation of the Nordic world.

### Malan Marnersdóttir (Fróðskaparsetur Føroya)

Narrated silence

Le silence narré

At fortelja tøgñ

Narration involves language so how narrate silence? In one of the Faroese author Carl Jóhan Jensen's novels the main protagonist does not speak, he only tells from a position after life. In his latest work a demented lady speaks to or with a silent listener. One novel about a life in silence and a monologue with a silent interlocutor. In the paper I want to discuss how the silence in Jensen's narrative is Faroese and Northern or perhaps deals with silence as a universal subject matter.

**Malan Marnersdóttir** is a professor at the University of the Faroe Islands and a specialist in the literary and cultural history of her country. In Faroese, she has published two books on women's participation in the national movement at the end of the 19th century. Her doctoral thesis analyzes Faroese novels from 1970 to 2000 from the point of view of narrative discourse and transtextuality. In 2011 she published in cooperation with Professor Turið Sigurðardóttir the first volume of the *History of Faroese Literature*, the second volume of which will appear in 2022. She has published in Danish, English and French on women's literature of the 20th century and on the work of William Heinesen. She is also the author of several articles, notably on gender, post-colonialism in Faroese literature and on Faroese "taking land" in Greenland. In 2020 she published *Denmark and the New North Atlantic* under the direction of Professor Kirsten Thisted at the University of Copenhagen, Lecturer Ann-Sofie N. Gremaud at the University of Reykjavík and other authors from the Nordic countries (Aarhus universitetsforlag, Aarhus University).

15h

EXCURSION AND DINNER/ EXCURSION ET DÎNER / Útferð til Kirkjubøar

Cultural museum in Tórshavn and bus to Kirkjubø – sightseeing and dinner at the farm.  
Musée culturel à Tórshavn et autobus vers Kirkjubø – visite à dîner à la ferme.

This event is the 17<sup>th</sup> international conference organized by the International Laboratory for Research on Images of the North, Winter and the Arctic at the Université du Québec à Montréal.

The conference is co-organized by Malan Marnersdóttir (Fróðskaparsetur Føroya) and Daniel Chartier (Université du Québec à Montréal).

We thank the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Ministère québécois des Relations internationales et de la Francophonie, the Belmont Forum and the "NICH-Arctic" project, the Université du Québec à Montréal, Énergir, and the Centre de recherche interuniversitaire sur la littérature et la culture québécoises for their support in the organization of this conference.

[www.nord.uqam.ca](http://www.nord.uqam.ca)



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