



# Lecture Series in Social Anthropology

Full  
Semester  
2024

Tuesday 1 October 2024 | 4.15 p.m. | Room AND-4-06

## “Fluid Realities of the Wild” in Human-Animal Relations in Extreme Environments

**Prof. Florian Stammler (University of Lapland)**

Much of anthropology has theorised ways in which people live in a certain environment. More recently, the relational aspect of these ways has become increasingly analysed in what has been called more-than-human socialities. This paper aims to provoke discussions with a plea to bring people back to the centre of our enquiry: I shall focus on people’s culturally embedded practices and choices that determine more than ways of knowing the land and how an ecosystem works. In environments that are considered extreme from a climatic point of view, these ways are mostly centred on human-animal relations, for which there are numerous culturally specific variations across the globe. These variations have given rise to elaborate theoretical discussions on hunter-gatherer and pastoralist cultures, and partially related to domestication as a historical event, as cultural evolution or as continuous process. Even such apparently biological questions as whether an animal is considered domestic or wild, hunted, herded or farmed, killed or slaughtered needs to be qualified according to the specific lived experience of human-animal relationality. Human choices even influence the genome of those animals, as research carried out by anthropologists in partnership with geneticists has shown. I shall show with fieldwork from three different Arctic human-animal encounters how experiencing livelihoods in the field at the margin between the ‘domestic’ and the ‘wild’ in human-animal relations can throw new light on old debates about environmental determinism, domestication, pastoralism and hunter-gatherer modes of thought.

**Organization:**

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Entrance free of charge.

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