## POST/Colonial Ports: Place and Nonplace in the Ecotone

**Conference: October 24 - 26, 2019**

**Concordia University, Montreal**  
**Milieux Institute:**  
**1515 St Catherine W., EV 11.45**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
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| 2:45 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. | Urban Redevelopment of the Port  
Chair: Pierre Gauthier, Urban Studies, Concordia University  
Re-Enchanting the Post-Industrial  
Kiwi Wood Mah, M. Arch Studio, McEwen School of Architecture, Laurentian University  
Graduate students: Chad McDonald, Daniel Everett, James Walker, Jennie Philpou, Kelly O’Connor, Kristin Aplang, Pascal Rocheleau, Sarah Cai, Sarah Fox, and Shiyan Pu. |
| 4:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. | Coffee Break                                                           |
| 4:30 p.m.– 5:30 p.m. | Keynote  
Introduction: JA Dyke, Professor English, Concordia University  
The Port of Santo Domingo: Tidal Debris, Metal Pollution, and the Perils of Poverty where the Caribbean Meets the Ozama  
Lisa Peruwiini-Gebert, Professor of Hispanic Studies on the Randolph Distinguished Professor Chair, and Director of Environmental Studies, Vassar College  
Respondent: Amanda Perry, Instructor, English, Concordia University |
| 2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. | Coffee Break                                                           |
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| 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. | Coffee                                                              |
| 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. | Port City and the Nation: Traveler Narratives and Literary Representations  
Chair: Judith Manzi/Burak, English, EMMA, Université Paul Valery  
French Atlantic Ports and American Commerce During the French Revolution  
Wayne Boock, Senior Researcher, University of Pennsylvania  
A Step into the Modern World: Revisiting Hugh MacLennan’s Bannerman Rising (1941)  
André Deslauriers, Associate Professor, University of Montreal  
The World in Sydney: Disruptive Repetition and Gail Jones’ Five Bells  
Kris Singh, Assistant Professor, English, Royal Military College of Canada |
| 10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. | Coffee Break                                                           |
| 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. | Post City and the Nation: Traveler Narratives and Literary Representations  
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| 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. | Lunch, Coffee, and Panels                                              |
| 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. | Crime in the Port City  
Chair: Yumna Siddiq, English, Middlebury College  
Peter Ackroyd’s Sensuous Detective Methods in Hawksmoor (1985)  
Ann Tso, PhD, English, McMaster University (2018)  
A dangerously promiscuous medley: Sex, Race, Labour, and Community in a Working-Class Port City  
Nadine Attewell, Associate Professor of English and Cultural Studies at McMaster University |
| 1:15 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. | Closing Remarks and Lunch                                              |
| 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. | Tour of Montreal (Sex Work Industry in a Port City) with Karen Herland |

concordia.ca/ecotones
INTRODUCTION

After conferences in Montpellier, Poitiers and La Réunion (France, 2015, 2016 and 2018), as well as Kollata (India, 2018) and Purchase (NY, USA, 2019), this is the 6th opus of this conference cycle in Montreal, Concordia University. An “ecotone” initially designates a transitional area between two ecosystems, for example between land and sea. The “Ecotones” program (2015-2020) is a cycle of conferences which aims to broaden this term traditionally used in geography and ecology and to broaden the concept by applying it to other disciplines in the social sciences and the humanities. An “ecotone” can thus also be understood as a cultural space of encounters, conflicts, and renewal between several communities. This interdisciplinary conference will more specifically focus on colonial and postcolonial port cities as ecotopic dialectics between places and non-places.

Commonly understood, a port is the site where ships’ passengers enter or exit, and cargo is loaded or unloaded. Thus, it represents the flow of people and exchange of goods, in the age of sail, as well as in the contemporary globalized world. The unbounded space of the port offers opportunities to explore “discontinuous histories” of port cities, and “its interfaces with the wider world” (Gibson 1993), as a site that decentres the nation through its slippery flows. In addition, port cities and “its interfaces with the wider world” (Gilroy 1993), as a site that represents the flow of data, is a portal to information. Nonplaces within cities are commonly perceived as liminal locations reduced to their function of transportation or commercial nodes, or as locations that churn the sense of individual empowerment. Port cities, however, are also placed. Cities such as Guangzhou in China, Shanghai, Dar es Salaam, Liverpool, Calcutta, Nantes, or Montreal among many others, may be viewed through longstanding geographic imaginaries, linguistic collectivities and/or colonial and postcolonial histories, suggesting an ongoing struggle over who claims the city (in Montreal’s case, unceded territory), and gestures towards political, social, or economic insecurities apparent in the spatial configurations of urban life, with implications that potentially destabilize national narratives. For example, as an island in the Saint Lawrence River, the city of Montreal is not only connected to multiple elsewhere through migration, but also through trade. The Saint Lawrence opens on to the Atlantic ocean through which flowed a long-standing trade in bauxite from towns in the Caribbean to Quebec (following circuits laid by imperialism). Thus, ports shape material channels of profit and power, as well as modes of resistance that occur around these networks of control.

Nonplaces may produce social flows and networks that are not only a defining feature of our “supermodernity”, but also in the longer duration of urban and semi-urban space, a matrix for identity formation, cultural transitions and environmental adaptation.

Nonplaces are often referred to as nonplaces – gateways subject to global forces that historically shaped trans-oceanic connections, expansion into hinterlands, and crossroads of historical and contemporary encounters. Nonplaces within cities are commonly perceived as liminal locations reduced to their function of transportation or commercial nodes, or as locations that churn the sense of individual empowerment. But artists, writers, critics and researchers have depicted them as multiple, paradoxical spaces, where new possibilities arise and new cultures emerge. Nonplaces may produce social flows and networks that are not only a defining feature of our “supermodernity”, but also in the longer duration of urban and semi-urban space, a matrix for identity formation, cultural transitions and environmental adaptation.

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Aesthetics and Architecture in the Hold

Charles Y. Wang, Concordia University

The Azulejo as Colonial Symbol of Power: A Deconstruction through Sugar and Art

Judith Misrahi-Barak, The New School

PORE/COLONIAL PORTS: PLACE AND NONPLACE IN THE ECOTONE

Jill Didur (English, Concordia University)

In this talk, I will examine the port city as a site that both constructions and disrupts the nation through its slippery flows. In addition, port cities and “its interfaces with the wider world” (Gilroy 1993), as a site that represents the flow of data, is a portal to information. Nonplaces within cities are commonly perceived as liminal locations reduced to their function of transportation or commercial nodes, or as locations that churn the sense of individual empowerment. Port cities, however, are also placed. Cities such as Guangzhou in China, Shanghai, Dar es Salaam, Liverpool, Calcutta, Nantes, or Montreal among many others, may be viewed through longstanding geographic imaginaries, linguistic collectivities and/or colonial and postcolonial histories, suggesting an ongoing struggle over who claims the city (in Montreal’s case, unceded territory), and gestures towards political, social, or economic insecurities apparent in the spatial configurations of urban life, with implications that potentially destabilize national narratives. For example, as an island in the Saint Lawrence River, the city of Montreal is not only connected to multiple elsewheres through migration, but also through trade. The Saint Lawrence opens on to the Atlantic ocean through which flowed a long-standing trade in bauxite from towns in the Caribbean to Quebec (following circuits laid by imperialism). Thus, ports shape material channels of profit and power, as well as modes of resistance that occur around these networks of control.

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