



WP 17

Agenda Item: 4.4.2

Person Responsible: C. Lüdecke

XXXIII SCAR Delegates Meeting

Auckland, New Zealand, 1-3rd September 2014

**SCAR History Group
2013-2014**

Executive Summary

Title: History Expert Group

Authors: Cornelia Lüdecke

Introduction/ Background:

The Expert Group was founded as an Action Group in 2004. Since the first workshop in Germany in 2005 the Group has flourished and membership of the Expert Group has steadily increased, as has the geographical and disciplinary diversity of the participants. The Group's meetings continue to serve as a valuable discussion space for junior and senior members alike. Meetings have been held across four continents (Africa, Europe, North America, South America), permitting the core group of academic historians to be joined by local researchers who would likely not otherwise have joined the Group. The SCAR Expert Group provides a unique and irreplaceable site for scholars to exchange ideas and develop historical research related to the Antarctic. Collaborative research projects undertaken by some of the group members demonstrate the group's dynamism.

Important Issues or Factors:

The History EG and the Social Sciences AG organized a first joint workshop on „The past, present and future of human connections to the Antarctic“ at the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge (UK) from 1-5 July 2013. 52 participants from 16 countries presented the results of their recent research in 39 oral papers. The workshop was very successful and both groups shared their ideas during the discussions, which unveiled a remarkable overlap in historical and social aspects of Antarctic research. In the end the participants suggested to continue with these joint workshops.

Additionally, Cornelia Lüdecke represented the History EG at the SCAR Antarctic and Southern Ocean Horizon Scan from 20-23 April 2014 in Queenstown (New Zealand).

Recommendations/Actions and Justification:

We wish to continue the SCAR History Expert Group in its current form and to continue our collaboration with Social Sciences Action Group.

Expected Benefits/Outcomes:

The current high level of publications by Group members will continue, both individually and through collective forums such as special journal issues and a planned edited volume on “Antarctica – A Continent for the Humanities”, edited by three members of the History Expert Group.

Partners:

The SCAR Social Sciences Action Group as well as the history group of the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC).

Budget Implications:

US\$ 5.000 as support of the next SCAR History Expert Group's conference in Tromsø, Norway, in 2015 for travel support for PhD students and scholars of low income.

History Expert Group

1. Chief Officers

Cornelia Lüdecke

2. Major Future Initiatives and Actions

The next joint meeting of the History EG and the Social Sciences AG will take place during the SCAR OSC in Auckland (New Zealand), 25-28 August 2014. In Session 34 (S 34), "The Presence of the Past and Methods and Innovations in Polar Social Sciences" on Thursday, 28th Aug. 2014, we will have six oral presentations including the Lewander Lecture on "The Macquarie Island penguin-harvesting controversy: Science, celebrity and media in a subantarctic wildlife campaign" by Elizabeth Leane. The latter also connects to the increasingly topical theme of science and literature that has also been further pursued in a workshop on "Antarctic humanities" held in Stockholm on 8 September 2013 (see below). During the meeting in Auckland we will plan for the workshop next year.

3. Major Activities and Significant Progress

**SCAR History Expert Group and Social Sciences Action Group Workshop:
'Past, present and future of human connections to the Antarctic'**
(1–5 July 2013, Cambridge, United Kingdom)

This was the first joint workshop of the History Expert Group and Social Sciences Action Group of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR). All participants were delighted to meet in Cambridge, home of the British Antarctic Survey and the Scott Polar Research Institute, each a major centre of polar research and a rich site of Antarctic history. Thirty-six papers were delivered by a wide array of scholars in history, the humanities and social sciences. Papers covered not only well-advanced research, but also thoughtful provocations and new directions of potential and planned research.

Several research concerns emerged from the papers. One direction several papers pursued was to ask how historical and social sciences research might contribute to contemporary Antarctic affairs, whether specifically through the Antarctic Treaty System or more generally. Several papers covered the important question of values, taking their cue both from the specific details of Treaty instruments and from the concern of the Social Sciences Action Group, exploring the content of Antarctic values of specific groups (Juan Salazar), and asking how they might be defined and enacted (Sira Engelbertz and Rupert Summerson). Another group of papers investigated Antarctic heritage and tourism (Louise Brown, Aant Elzinga, Sherrie-Lee Evans, Bryan Lintott and David Picard). These papers were notable for their concern to emphasise human connections with Antarctica, past and present, and how contemporary and pressing demands for scientific work compete and contrast with heritage aspects. And Daniela Liggett asked workshop participants to consider their place in climate change research, both for Antarctica and more generally.

Another major concern was the investigation of Antarctic history as a part of world history. On this theme, several papers insisted on the importance of issues of global capitalism and modernity (Andres Zarankin) and Antarctica as a site of international and global conservation concerns (Alessandro Antonello). Adrian Howkins particularly challenged conference participants to think more critically about connections between the north and south polar regions.

A more traditional strand of papers, but still very necessary, was concerned with fine-grained analyses of stories and interpretations that have been taken for granted in Antarctic historiography, especially those stories of discovery that have been valorised, and those histories not adequately explored (Andrew Atkin, Cornelia Lüdecke, Rip Bulkeley and Erki Tammiksaar). Added to this were three fascinating papers on responses to Antarctica in literature, theatre and music (Hanne Nielsen, Elizabeth Leane and Carolyn Philpott).

Klaus Dodds (Royal Holloway, University of London) delivered a public lecture on contemporary British Antarctic politics, discussing the recent naming of Queen Victoria Land and the future prospects for British Antarctic policy. Victoria Nuviala (Instituto Multidisciplinario de Historia y Ciencias Humanas, Buenos Aires with co-author Ximena Senatore) delivered the Lewander Lecture, exploring new directions in understanding and telling the stories of Antarctic whalers in the twentieth century. Nuviala and Senatore's specific critique was that whaling histories have emphasised places and points, and this has continually reinforced the conception of an inhospitable, isolated and terrestrial Antarctic. They argued that our histories should emphasise lines of movement, to reorient our sense of Antarctica toward connection, movement, dynamism and the maritime world.

Masterfully hosted by the British Antarctic Survey, the workshop was a productive few days, which demonstrated the broad scope of humanities and social science research being done on Antarctica. Both the History Expert Group and the Social Sciences Action Group planned their themes for the 2014 Open Science Conference in Auckland, when they look forward to reconvening.

[Alessandro Antonello, School of History, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University]

Publications

Bulkeley, Rip, 2014, *Bellingshausen and the Russian Antarctic Expedition, of 1819-1821*. Palgrave MacMilan, New York, 276 pp.

Elzinga, Aant, 2013, Punta Arenas and Ushuaia: early explorers and the politics of memory in constructing Antarctic gateway cities, *The Polar Journal* (April 2013), Vol. 3, Issue 1, 227-256 (<http://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/SMhRrd3Y6PKahUnz6yIw/full>).

Drygalski, Erich von, 2013, *Zum Kontinent des eisigen Südens: Die erste deutsche Südpolarexpedition 1901-1903*. Herausgegeben von Cornelia Lüdecke, Edition Erdmann, marixverlag, Wiesbaden, 366 S.

Summerhayes, C. and C. Lüdecke, 2012, A German Contribution to South Atlantic Seabed Studies, 1938-39. *Polarforschung* 82 (2), 93-101, erschienen 2013. http://epic.awi.de/34230/1/Polarforschung_82-2_93-101.pdf

Planned book

A proposed volume with contributions of SCAR History EG members and other scholars will demonstrate that just as natural scientific research in the Antarctic has illuminated questions of global relevance – not least those related to climate change – historical research based on Antarctic material is increasingly relevant to broader historical narratives. A first workshop on “Antarctica - a Continent for Humanities” took place in Stockholm on 8 September 2013, where we discussed 12 papers. The workshop was supported by the Swedish Riksbanken Jubileumfond. The papers are presently in the review process.

4. Budgetary Implications

An annual budget of US\$ 5.000 will primarily be used to subsidize travel to the next SCAR History Expert Group's conference in Tromso, Norway, in 2015, thus enabling the broadest possible participation from junior scholars and those outside the United States and Western Europe.