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***The Melting Archive: The Arctic and the Archives' Others***

The Arctic is today posed on the cusp of two discourses: one of environmental conservationism, in which one wishes to keep the Arctic ice in its present state, the other of economic exploitation, producing scenarios of access to trade routes and petrochemical resources. Both come together in the image of the melting ice. The environmental discourse of the Arctic sees the Arctic as an archive of climate change history, of ways of life, and of genetic codes. Its more ecoactivist enunciators use strong images in order to sell their message, thereby giving global access to their symbolic resources and reproducing an economic logic of liquidity, signs as negotiable assets. Economic interests see the opening of the Arctic sea as a way of liquidizing assets in the face of climate change. In our paper we will examine the archaeology of the crisis of Arctic modernity, using connections between the first great modern economic depression beginning in the Panic of 1873, and the Austro-Hungarian Arctic Expedition of 1872-1874. We will trace the origins of modernity within Arctic discourse to three fields, the scientific, the journalistic, and the aesthetic. This will form the basis for our argument concerning the constitutive connections between archival conservation and the liquid modernity, its other which seems to threaten it with destruction.