

Symposium

Hydrotraces of Social Justice in Times of Climate Crisis

Program & Book of Abstracts

Ca' Foscari
University
of Venice

THE NEW
INSTITUTE

Centre for Environmental
Humanities (NICHE)
at Ca' Foscari
University of Venice

OCEAN SPACE
Chiesa di San Lorenzo

T Thyssen-Bornemisza
B Art Contemporary
A Academy

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EUROPEAN COOPERATION
IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Co-funded by the
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TRACTS COST Action (20134) on "Traces
as Research Agenda for Climate Change,
Technology Studies, and Social Justice"

GENERAL INFORMATION

Event Dates:

4–5 September 2025

Event Locations:

Malcanton Marcorà | Sala Morelli / ground floor | Dorsoduro 3484/D, Calle Contarini | Venice

Ca' Dolfin | Aula Magna Silvio Trentin / first floor | Dorsoduro 3859/A | Venice

Ca' Bottacin | Aula A & B + garden | Calle Crosera, Dorsoduro 3911 | Venice

Ocean Space | Campo S. Lorenzo | Venice

Event Organisers:

Alberto Berzosa | Universidad Autónoma de Madrid | TRACTS WG3 co-leader

Magdalena Buchczyk | Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin | TRACTS Chair

Petr Gibas | Masaryk University, Brno | TRACTS WG3 co-leader

Sanja Horvatinčić | Institute of Art History, Zagreb | TRACTS WG2 co-leader

Karolína Pauknerová | Charles University, Prague | TRACTS WG2 co-leader



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Symposium

Hydrotraces of Social Justice in Times of Climate Crisis

The symposium is organized by the COST Action “Trace as a Research Agenda for Climate Change, Technology Studies, and Social Justice” (TRACTS), Working Groups on Traces and Social Justice (WG2) and Traces and Climate Change (WG3), in collaboration with the Centre for Environmental Humanities (NICHE) at Università Ca’ Foscari Venezia. The aim is to offer a platform for interdisciplinary exploration and dialogue, bringing together scholars, practitioners, and artists to critically examine the intersections of social justice and the climate crisis.

Over the past three years, the TRACTS COST Action has nurtured transdisciplinary conversations on trace through workshops, seminars, training schools, and collaborative sessions. These activities have examined ethical frameworks, methodological innovations, and hybrid epistemologies across climate change and social justice research. Building on this groundwork, the symposium reflects on the knowledge and connections formed within TRACTS while advancing critical discussions on climate justice.

Focus and Themes

The symposium positions water as a vital lens through which to examine the entanglements of climate change and social justice. As an element that connects bodies and boundaries, water flows through histories of control, resistance, and survival. It also generates new methodological possibilities, inviting interdisciplinary approaches to knowledge production. By foregrounding water, the symposium seeks to deepen our understanding of its role in shaping social struggles, artistic practices, and activist engagements.

The symposium is structured around five thematic sessions that collectively trace water's multifaceted role in contemporary climate and social justice challenges. **Landscape** examines hydroperformativity and the temporality of water crises in post-industrial contexts, exploring how communities navigate water-related challenges across different scales and temporalities. **Toxic Materialities** investigates the contamination of water systems through industrial processes, from film photography's environmental impact to agricultural extractivism and critical mineral supply chains. **Water Justice Movements** foregrounds grassroots resistance and activism, examining water protests, Afro-Indigenous struggles, and community-led restoration efforts that challenge extractivist logics. **Water and Memory** explores the relationship between hydric and spiritual sovereignty, investigating how water serves as a repository of cultural memory and a site for healing historical trauma. Finally, **Tracing Histories and Futures through Waterscapes** considers ethnographic approaches to the sea and how attention to watery matters can help rethink terrestrial imaginaries that have long shaped anthropology and history.

Participants will explore weaponized and regulated landscapes, imaginaries of post-dam futures, the rights of nature, and the entwinement of feminism, sisterhood, and radical heritage. Contributions reflect

Working Groups 2 & 3: Traces and Social Justice | Traces and Climate Change

on environmental conflicts involving rivers and dams, and propose water-inspired methodologies for tracing histories, practices, and narratives of justice.

Through these discussions, the symposium aims to bring resistant and radical practices into conversation, interrogate European borders and colonial histories, and engage memories of social movements and extractivist violence in relation to the urgent demands of the climate crisis.

Alberto Berzosa | Magdalena Buchczyk | Petr Gibas | Sanja Horvatinčić | Karolína Pauknerová



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OCEAN SPACE

Chiesa di San Lorenzo



TRACTS COST Action (20134) on "Traces
as Research Agenda for Climate Change,
Technology Studies, and Social Justice"

Thyssen-Bornemisza
Art Contemporary
Academy



Working Groups 2 & 3: Traces and Social Justice | Traces and Climate Change

Hydrotraces of Social Justice in Times of Climate Crisis Venice Symposium Schedule		
TIME	THURSDAY, 4.09.2023	FRIDAY, 5.09.2023 Symposium Day
09:00		Registration & Welcome 09:00 – 09:30 Ca' Bottaccin
09:30		Participatory Ritual: "How to Heal..." Graham Bell Tornado (La Errería - [House of Bent]) Introduction by Alberto Berzosa 09:30 – 10:00
10:00		Session 1: Landscape Room 1 / Aula B Moderator/Discussant: Petr Gibas 10:00 – 11:30
10:30		Coffee & Pastries Break 11:30 – 12:00
11:30		Parallel Session 2: Toxic Materialities Room 1 / Aula B Moderator: Karolína Paukerová Discussant: Giovanbattista Tusa 12:00 – 13:30
12:00		Parallel Session 3: Water Justice Movements Room 2 / Aula B Moderator: Sanja Horvatinčić Discussant: Jasmina Husanović 12:00 – 13:30
12:30		
13:30		Lunch Break 13:30 – 14:30 (Ca' Bottaccin garden aperitivo)
14:00	Symposium Kick-off Ocean Space Introduction by organizers: Magdalena Buchczyk, Petr Gibas, Sanja Horvatinčić, Karolína Paukerová, Alberto Berzosa Exhibition visit with Graziano Meneghin & Ilaria Patano 14:00 – 15:30	
14:30		Parallel Session 4: Water and Memory Room 1 / Aula B Moderator: Alberto Berzosa Discussant: Lee Douglas 14:30 – 16:00
		Parallel Session 5: EASA/SEAS Panel Room 2 / Aula B Moderator: Veronica Ferreri Discussant: TBD 14:30 – 16:00
15:30		
16:30	Keynote Lecture Ca' Dolfin - Aula Magna Silvio Trentin Jaime Vindel: "The Dream of Water Produces Monsters" Introduction by Francesca Tarocco + Alberto Berzosa and Lee Douglas 16:30 – 18:30	
17:00		
18:00		
Evening	Drinks & Dinner (self-paid)	Drinks & Dinner (self-paid)

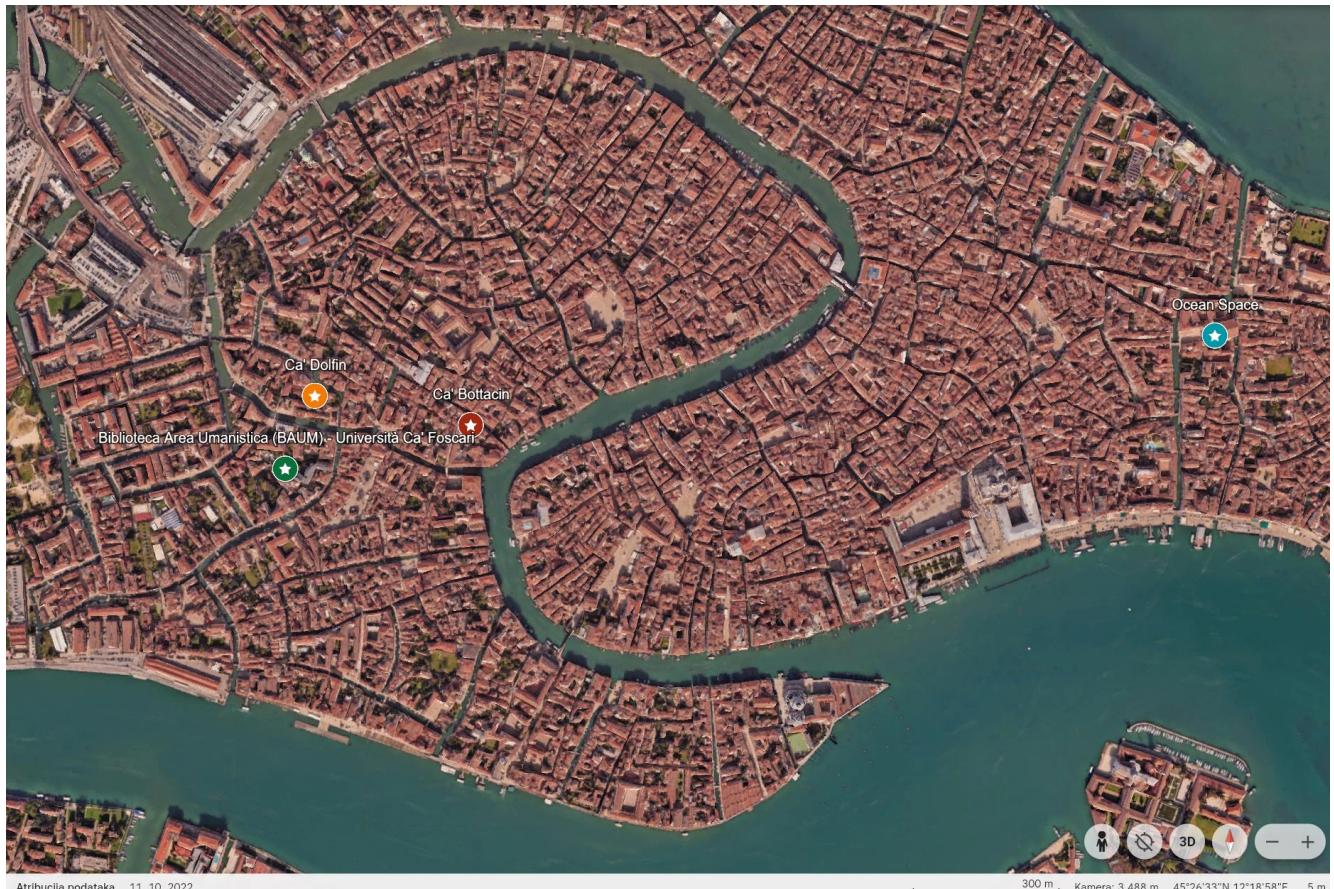
Background Colors = Venues

	Malcanton Marcorà
	Ocean Space
	Ca' Dolfin
	Ca' Bottaccin

Text Colors = Activity Types

- Management Committee
- Breaks & Social Events
- Sessions, Keynotes & Parallel Sessions
- Performances

Map of Locations



Locations

Malcanton Marcorà (Sala Morelli / Ground floor + courtyard), Dorsoduro 3484/D, Calle Contarini, Venice

Ocean Space, Campo S. Lorenzo, Venice

Ca' Dolfin (Aula Magna Silvio Trentin / first floor), Dorsoduro 3859/A, Venice

Ca' Bottacin (Aula A & B + courtyard), Calle Crosera, Dorsoduro 3911, Venice



PROGRAM

4 September | Day 1

Symposium Kick-Off Location:

► [Ocean Space, Campo S. Lorenzo, Venice](#)

14:00 - 15:30

Introduction by organizers:

Magdalena Buchczyk, Petr Gibas, Sanja Horvatinčić, Karolína Pauknerová, Alberto Berzosa

Exhibition visit

Introduction by Graziano Meneghin (Ocean Space)

Guided tour by Ilaria Patano (Ocean Space)

Keynote Lecture Location:

► [Ca' Dolfin \(Aula Magna Silvio Trentin / first floor\), Dorsoduro 3859/A, Venice](#)

16:30 - 18:30

Keynote Lecture

Jaime Vindel (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cinéticas): The Dream of Water Produces Monsters. Enlightenment, Hydraulic Capitalism, and Imaginaries of Power in Contemporary Spain

Introduction by Francesca Tarocco (NICHE) + Alberto Berzosa and Lee Douglas (TRACTS)

Drinks & Dinner (self-paid; Campo San Stin)

PROGRAM

5 September | Day 2

SYMPOSIUM

Hydrotraces of Social Justice in Times of Climate Crisis

Symposium Location:

► [Ca' Bottacin \(Aula A & B + courtyard\), Calle Crosera, Dorsoduro 3911, Venice](#)

09:00–09:30

Registration & Welcome

09:30–10:00

Participatory Ritual: “How to Heal...”, by Graham Bell Tornado (La Errería - [House of Bent])
Introduction by Alberto Berzosa (TRACTS)

Introduction to Workshop

10:00–11:30

Session 1: Landscape (Room 1 / Aula B)

Moderator/discussant: Petr Gibas (Masaryk University, Brno)

Hydroperformativity and the Temporality of Water Crises in a Post-Industrial Landscape: A Blue Anthropological Perspective

Malgorzata Owczarska (University of Warsaw)

The Landscapes of Honor: Bay of Portmán (2025) project

Pedro Ortúñoz Mengual (Universidad de Murcia)

Who Would Dare to Swim in the Black Waters of the White River? Post-Industrial Landscapes, Artistic Perspectives, and Social Injustice in North Bohemia

Sasha Baydal (Beyond the Post-Soviet)

Performance: MINE SONGS: SOUNDING AN ALTERED LANDSCAPE

Sara Pajunen (interdependent artist)

11:30–12:00

Coffee & Pastries Break (Courtyard Ca' Bottacin)

12:00–13:30

Parallel Session 2: Toxic Materialities (Room 1 / Aula B)

Moderator: Karolína Pauknerová (Charles University, Prague)

Discussant: Giovanbattista Tusa (Nova Institute of Philosophy (IFILNOVA) at Nova University of Lisbon)

Ecologies of Film: Cadmium, Kodak, and Contaminated Waters

Alice Cazenave (Goldsmiths, University of London)

Agriculture 4.0 in Southern Spain: Plastic Climate, Plastic Workers, Plastic Water

Loreto García Saiz (independent researcher)

Toxic Flows: Tracing the Legacies of Critical Minerals and Supply Chain Dispossession

Elena Longhin (TU Delft, NICHE Ca' Foscari)

Scaling Otherwise through Acidophilic Architectures

Tomás Usón (Humboldt University of Berlin) and Nieves Usón (Independent artist)

Mapping socio-ecological relations in a Nile river island in Cairo, Egypt

Emanuele Fantini (IHE Delft Institute for Water Education) & Roger Anis (artist in residence at IHE Delft)

Working Groups 2 & 3: Traces and Social Justice | Traces and Climate Change

12:00–13:30

Parallel Session 3: *Water Justice Movements* (Room 2 / Aula B)

Moderator: Sanja Horvatinčić (Institute of Art History, Zagreb)

Discussant: Jasmina Husanović (University of Tuzla)

Water Protests in Iran

Zahra Babaei (Philipps-Universität Marburg)

The River is (R)existence: River Restoration, Pollution, and the Ecology of Resistances in the Alviela River Basin

Susana Batel (ISCTE – Instituto Universitario de Lisboa)

Terra Creativa and the Mountains of the Silenced Water

María Bella (independent researcher, curator, and cultural producer)

13:30–14:30

Lunch Break (Ca' Bottacin garden aperitivo)

14:30–16:00

Parallel Session 4: *Water and Memory* (Room 1 / Aula B)

Moderator: Alberto Berzosa (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Discussant: Lee Douglas (Goldsmiths, University of London)

The Relationship Between Hydric Sovereignty and Spiritual Sovereignty

Juan Pablo Pacheco Bejarano (Independent artist, writer and educator)

Water Imaginaries and Environmental Coloniality in Francoist Spain

Carmen Martín-Luquero (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas)

SOI_School of Imagination: Indigenous Fishing Communities of the Indian Ocean

Behzad Khosravi Noori (Independent artist, writer, educator, playground maker, and necromancer)

Documents of Dystopian: Recycled Cinema as Critical Ecology

Virginia Villaplana Ruiz (Universidad de Murcia)

14:30–16:00

Parallel Session 5: *Tracing Histories and Futures through Waterscapes* / Hybrid (Room 2 / Aula B)

Panel in collaboration with EASA Network of an Anthropology of History and Heritage (NAoHH)

Moderators: Veronica Ferreri (Ca Foscari) and Helen Cornish (Goldsmiths, University of London)

At the Ocean's Edge: Remembering the Spirits/Finding the Ancestors in a South African Seaside Town

Dominique Santos (Rhodes University)

Leaving with Sand: The Sand of Sardinian Beaches, Between Erosion and Tourist Imagination

Cecilia Paradiso (La Rochelle University)

Post-Conflict Waterscapes: Managing Cultural Heritage and/or Environmental Hazards

Sven Bergmann (German Maritime Museum – Leibniz Institute for Maritime History in Bremerhaven)

Activist and Artistic Methods Opposing Logics of Control

Valentina Zagaria (University of Manchester)

Drinks & Dinner (Self-paid, meeting point in the Campo San Stin area)



SYMPOSIUM

Hydrotraces of Social Justice in Times of Climate Crisis

ABSTRACTS & BIOS

KEYNOTE LECTURE:

The Dream of Water Produces Monsters. Enlightenment, Hydraulic Capitalism, and Imaginaries of Power in Contemporary Spain / Jaime Vindel

Based on a comparative analysis with contributions from Italian environmental history, this presentation will explore the relationship between modernization processes and water imaginaries in contemporary Spain, taking as a case study the modern history of Manzanares river, located in the province of Madrid. It will do so by focusing on four specific moments.

First, the projects of the 18th-century court Enlightenment, with the proposal of a decentralized industrialization model that encouraged the establishment of small factories along the artificial canal waterways, promoting irrigated agriculture and the repopulation of inland Spain. Secondly, the modernizing industrial processes of liberal sign of the first half of the 19th century, which drove the privatization of land ownership through expropriation laws, trying to impose the logic of political economy on natural resources against the persistence of feudal social relations. Third, the imaginaries of nature of Regeneracionismo, deployed in the transition between the 19th and 20th centuries, which insisted on fully harnessing the water reserves of national rivers so that public works—such as the construction of small hydroelectric plants, more efficient and economical than fossil energy—could drive plans promoting the production of a new nature, a new geography, and a new climate. Fourth, the presentation will examine how Francoism reinterpreted these imaginaries through the construction of large reservoirs, first as part of its autarkic policies and later in its liberalization efforts.

This approach followed a “political ecology” of water that bears many connections with the policies promoted by Italian fascism and the *miracolo economico* of the postwar period. Finally, the presentation will address proposals for a “new water culture” that have emerged as part of movements opposing the socio-environmental impacts of energy infrastructure development, shaping—both positively and negatively—current debates on the transition to renewable energy.

Jaime Vindel

European PhD in Art History and Master in Philosophy and Social Sciences. Tenured Scientist of the Institute of History of the Spanish National Research Council, where he is Head Researcher of the projects: "Fossil Aesthetics: a political ecology of art history, visual culture and cultural imaginaries of modernity" (PIE, ref. 202010E005), "Energy humanities. Energy and sociocultural imaginaries between the industrial revolutions and the ecosocial crisis" (PID2020-113272RA-I00, ENERGEHUM) and "(Post)fossil culture: socio-cultural imaginaries, global warming and energy transition (KULTUR(P)FOSSIL, CNS2023-143774)". He was coordinator of the "Cultural Ecologies" contents block of the Independent Studies Programme of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona (2017-2018 and 2019-2020 editions) and is the author of books such as *Cultura fósil. Arte, cultura*

y política entre la Revolución industrial y el calentamiento global (Akal, 2023) *Estética fósil. Imaginarios de la energía y crisis ecosocial* (Arcadia, 2020), *La Familia Lavapiés: arte, cultura e izquierda radical en la transición española* (La Bahía, 2019), *Transparente opacidad. Arte conceptual en los límites del lenguaje y la política* (Brumaria, 2015, 2016 and 2019) or *La vida por asalto: arte, política e historia en Argentina entre 1965 y 2001* (Brumaria, 2014) and has edited, among others, the volume *Visualidades críticas y ecologías culturales* (Brumaria, 2018) and (together with Jesús Carrillo) the number 8 of the collection *Desacuerdos. Sobre arte, políticas y esfera pública en el Estado español* (MACBA, 2014). He was part of the curatorial team of the exhibition "Losing the Human Form. A Seismic Image of the 1980s in Latin America", inaugurated at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in October 2012, whose catalogue he co-edited. He is a member of the Red Conceptualismos del Sur, a research platform on the artistic-political practices emerged in Latin America since the 1960s. With RedCSur he has edited and co-written the books *Desiventario: esquirlas de Tucumán Arde en el Archivo Graciela Carnevale* (Ocholibros, 2015) and *Archivo CADA. Astucia práctica y potencias de lo común* (Ocholibros, 2019).

ARTISTIC PROGRAM:

“Flowing Sisterhood Currents” — a performance by Mo Tomaszewska & Eliza Proszczuk

We invite you to join a shared action — focused on the relationship between the element of water and the architecture of Venice.

How was water understood in the past?

What was it like to live with it, to care for it?

What do old stories — from legends, myths, and everyday life — tell us, and how might they speak to us today?

Our gathering will be gentle, layered, flowing.

We'll immerse ourselves in the fabric of a place that speaks of fragility, collapse, and endurance.

We will also turn to the present: to flooded walls, polluted canals, sinking ground.

Together, we'll reflect on what has been passed down to us — and what we might choose to do with it. What future awaits this island, if we learn to listen to what the water has to say?

Mo Tomaszewska is a visual artist, performer, hydrofeminist. She graduated from the Faculty of Industrial Design in 2018, the Faculty of Intermedia in 2022, and from the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow. She studied painting and art history at the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, University of Leeds, England (2014). She was a participant of KEM School (2024). She was also a graduate of the one-year documentary theatre course, Teatr na Faktach, at the Jerzy Grotowski Institute (2023-24), where she realised a performative reading titled *Fluo ergo sum - I flow, therefore I am*. She was a participant of the international project Laboratory of Perception (2024). Her work focuses on performance art and activism, addressing social inequality, human rights, and ecology, particularly in the context of protecting aquatic ecosystems. As a member of the Rivers Sisters collective and the Save the Rivers Coalition she actively works for the protection of Polish rivers, streams, and wetlands, collaborating with environmental organizations, scientists, and institutions. In 2022, she carried out the

project I Give My Heart to the River - a solitary, month-long protest-performance kayaking along the Vistula River to the Baltic Sea, expressing opposition to the degradation of the queen of Polish rivers.

Eliza Proszczuk is a visual artist, academic lecturer, Doctor of Fine Arts, and researcher. She works with textiles, spatial objects, and collages, approaching art as a tool for social change and a space for emancipation. Her practice explores themes of memory, inheritance, and women's herstory. She graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw (Faculty of Painting, 2006) and the Post-Academy St. Joost in Breda and Den Bosch, where she earned an international Master of Arts degree (2009). In 2015, she completed her doctoral studies at her alma mater, presenting Girls from the Castle — an artistic research project developed in collaboration with female inmates of the Warsaw-Grochów Remand Centre. The project, which examines the idea of childhood as a cell and culture as a prison, was exhibited at the Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art (2014) and at CSW Kronika in Bytom (2022). Proszczuk's work merges academic inquiry with artistic practice, using creative processes to foster community, sisterhood, and empowerment. She collaborates with marginalized groups — including incarcerated women, rehabilitation center patients, and refugees — engaging them in art-based, therapeutic projects. Her artistic language is also shaped by the folk traditions of northeastern Poland, where she was born (Białystok), as she reconstructs and reinterprets women's crafts and suppressed narratives omitted from official histories. Since 2017, she has served as an assistant professor at the Faculty of Interior Design at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, where she co-leads the Studio of Textile in Architecture. Between 2011 and 2016, she worked as a teaching assistant at the Faculty of Media Art at the same institution. She is a two-time recipient of scholarships from the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, as well as from the ZAiKS Authors' Association. Inspired by Pier Paolo Pasolini's words — "Culture as prison, art as liberation" — she consistently creates spaces where art functions as a site for experimentation, healing, and social transformation.

"How to Heal..." -- a participatory ritual by Graham Bell Tornado (La Errería - [House of Bent]),

In 2008, I married the Venice Lagoon as part of the Love Art Laboratory's Blue Wedding to the Sea. Since then, my performance-based practice has consistently explored the intersections of feminist, environmental, and queer theory, with research on water as a central thread. This work spans from writing songs critiquing extractivist practices by multinational corporations to leading healing rituals with school groups and museum visitors, aimed at restoring the Albufera Lagoon and the rivers and waterways flooded during the recent Dana storms in Valencia. These actions are part of a participatory ritual cycle titled "How to Heal...", which has been performed over 50 times with diverse groups, adapting to each context. Alongside this, I have conducted personal healing rituals at springs and waterfalls across Spain and my native Scotland, rooted in the belief that societal healing must occur simultaneously on Guattari's three levels: psychological, social, and environmental.

Building on this, I intend to deepen my recent work focused on the causes of the floods that claimed 224 lives and caused extensive material damage—primarily the urbanization of the floodplain and the inadequate response to the meteorological event known as the "gota fría," an annual phenomenon that typically causes minimal harm. In April, I will conduct another healing ritual with members of Per L'Horta, a local environmentalist group advocating for the protection of agricultural land threatened by urban expansion. For the Venice conference, I propose to lead a participatory ritual in a public space that symbolically connects the waters of Valencia with those of the Venetian Lagoon, renewing our collective commitment to social and environmental justice.

Graham Bell Tornado is a transgender artist and investigator their work explores the connections between gender and ecology from a queer perspective, which culminated in their doctoral thesis in Artistic Production and Research- *Natural Hysteria: a queer response to ecocide* (UPV, Valencia, 2018, Extraordinary Award 2020) and the book Ecogender X (2019). Their experimental and transdisciplinary practice is based on performance and participation engaging critically with institutions and publics both in urban and rural contexts. Their performances and video art have been shown in festivals and exhibitions at the Venice Biennale, the Edinburgh International Festival, ICA (London), CCCB and MACBA (Barcelona), Border Cultural Centre (Mexico, CDMX) and IVAM (València). They have published articles in various books on feminist and queer practices in Third Text, with the University Jaume I (Castellón) and Universidad Miguel Hernández (Elche) amongst others.

SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS:

10:00–11:30

Session 1: *Landscape* (Room 1 / Aula B)

Moderator/discussant: Petr Gibas (Masaryk University, Brno)

Hydroperformativity and the Temporality of Water Crises in a Post-Industrial Landscape: A Blue Anthropological Perspective / Małgorzata Owczarska

This presentation explores how communities in post-industrial, post-socialist, and post-displacement landscapes navigate water-related crises, focusing on Pilchowice, a village in Lower Silesia, Poland, shaped by the hydroengineering legacies of the German Empire and the environmental paradoxes of socialist industrialization. Employing the framework of blue anthropology, it examines water as an active agent co-creating social realities—absorbing, transforming, and resisting human interventions across multiple temporal scales. The study challenges land-centric perspectives by foregrounding water's agency in shaping hydro-social entanglements, where past infrastructural decisions continue to produce new vulnerabilities.

Rather than isolating singular crisis events, this research emphasizes the longue durée of human-water relations, revealing how floods, pollution, and drought are part of an ongoing negotiation between technological control, political change, and ecological uncertainty. It investigates how residents develop uncanny strategies for inhabiting degradation, normalizing life alongside toxic waters while nostalgically recalling lost industrial prosperity. Historic infrastructures—such as the “post-German” wells—persist as both lifelines and sites of social tension amid growing droughts, illustrating the paradoxes of resilience in an evolving hydro-social landscape.

By integrating the concept of hydroperformativity, this paper moves beyond static notions of water as merely resource or hazard. Instead, it argues that water, as a transsubstance, carries historical memory, resists control, and compels communities to renegotiate their relationship with its unpredictable flows. Through this lens, the study contributes to critical debates on the temporality of water crises, the politics of hydro-infrastructure, and the challenges of envisioning sustainable futures amid climate uncertainty.

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Małgorzata Owczarska PhD is a cultural anthropologist and ethnographer. A graduate of the doctoral program at the GSSR PAN, and a Fulbright scholarship holder at the University of Hawaii in Mānoa, Honolulu. She has conducted research in Poland, Lithuania, and French Polynesia. Her research interests focus on blue humanities, Polynesian ethnography, indigenous activism, and post-colonialism. She has also collaborated on cultural and community projects with NGOs and museums in Poland, India, and Belgium. Lately, she was leading a National Science Centre grant titled Experiences of Water Excess, Water Deficit, and Water's Balanced Presence: A Study in Blue Anthropology, at Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Warsaw, Poland.

The Landscapes of Honor: Bay of Portmán (2025) project / Pedro Ortúño Mengual

Between 1957 and 1990, the Bay of Portmán, in Spain, suffered severe environmental devastation when the French company Société Minière et Métallurgique Peñarroya dumped 50 million tons of toxic waste into the Mediterranean Sea, causing one of the largest ecological disasters in Europe. In 1986, Portmán became a symbol of the awakening of environmental awareness in Spain, marking the beginning of Greenpeace campaigns in the country. However, decades later, the problem remains unresolved. This case highlights the severe consequences of ignoring nature's rights and the urgent need for companies to take responsibility.

The Landscapes of Honor: Bay of Portmán (2025) project aims to honor and remember this environmental disaster. Through the testimonies of two elderly local residents, it recounts how, in 1957, Peñarroya began large-scale open-pit mining, destroying the landscape and marine ecosystem and turning the bay and fishing port into a toxic waste dump.

Thanks to a Greenpeace action in 1990, mining activity was permanently halted, but the area remained heavily polluted. The company never took responsibility for rehabilitating the land and retained ownership. Furthermore, it evicted the widows of the miners from their homes in anticipation of a tourism-driven redevelopment of the area, a plan that never materialized. Today, the problem persists, exposing the lack of environmental justice and the unresolved debt to Portmán.

Pedro Ortúño Mengual (1966) works in a hybrid field between contemporary art, visual essays, and documentary filmmaking. A pioneer of Spanish video art in the 1990s, his work explores expanded sculpture techniques and concepts related to the recovery of historical and environmental memory. He is currently a professor at the University of Murcia (Faculty of Fine Arts). He has curated the exhibition "A Signature for the Mar Menor: Photographing Processes", displayed in more than 60 art centers and universities, including the Forum of the Institute of Architecture at the Technical University of Berlin (2024). The exhibition was created with the aim of collecting signatures for the ILP and granting Legal Personality to the Mar Menor. Since 1990, he has exhibited extensively in national and international museums and galleries, including ETOPIA, Center for Art and Technology in Zaragoza (2021), CCCC Centre del Carme de Cultura Contemporània de Valencia (2021), The Museum and Center for Humanistic Studies (MCEH), Puerto Rico (2018), and Palau de la Virreina, Barcelona (2018). He is the founder of the research group Arte y Políticas de Identidad at the University of Murcia in 2007, serving as its Principal Investigator until 2018. In 2009, he founded and continues to direct the journal Arte y Políticas de Identidad, a role he still holds today.

Who Would Dare to Swim in the Black Waters of the White River? Post-Industrial Landscapes, Artistic Perspectives, and Social Injustice in North Bohemia / Sasha Baydal

My work engages with water as a physical space that transcends human-imposed borders, a metaphor for human and non-human mobility, and a mnemonic device carrying traces of past and present activities by both humans and non-humans. A key focus of my research is North Bohemia, where industrialization has profoundly transformed landscapes, water systems, soil, and living beings. Historically shaped by mining since the Middle Ages and later by chemical production, North Bohemia offers a lens to examine how human activity reshapes environments, deeply impacting non-human life, soil, and water. Industrialization here is not only a history of resource extraction but also one of land occupation, economy, mobility, and displacement—constantly altering societies in unequal ways.

Following the transition from socialism to capitalism, the region experienced further environmental degradation, notably mercury pollution. In the 1990s, mercury discharges from the Spolchemie plant contaminated the Elbe River, prompting Germany to act quickly to clean it. Soil contamination also reshaped social fabrics and reinforced inequalities, especially affecting Roma communities who were displaced into more polluted areas near the plant.

For my contribution, I will juxtapose these historical events with oral histories from local communities—including Czechs, Romani people, Vietnamese diasporas, and Ukrainians arriving since Russia's 2022 invasion. I will complement these accounts with artistic works that reflect the interwoven legacies of industrialization, social transformation, and inequality. For example, Zdena Kolečková (b. 1969) collects grains from around the chemical factory and waters them with contaminated water to explore how pollution affects generations of living organisms over time. Josef Sudek's (1896–1976) photographs from the 1960s capture the “sad landscapes” of the North, pioneering an ecologically conscious documentation of industrial and social impacts. Through this multifaceted perspective, I aim to explore the crucial role of water in its entanglement with other environmental agents—human and non-human alike—and how these relationships are reflected in artistic practices.

Sasha Baydal is an interdependent art worker, researcher, and curator. Founding member of the association Beyond the post-soviet Sasha Baydal (they/he) defines themselves as an interdependent art worker and an Eastern European kvir. Their practice as a researcher and curator focuses on experiences of displacement and diasporization, the cultural memory of the socialist past and its erasure, while also drawing from their own family history shaped by various forms of mobility. Their work is informed by postcolonial and queer theory, as well as decolonial approaches, and involves daily efforts of recollection, remembrance, and decolonization. Since 2014, Sasha Baydal has collaborated with institutions such as the Centre Pompidou, Palais de Tokyo, Cité internationale des arts, and Kadist in Paris; HISK in Ghent; Mudam in Luxembourg; Triangle-Astérides in Marseille; Capc Museum in Bordeaux; Lviv Municipal Art Center in Ukraine; Pickle Bar by Slavs and Tatars in Berlin; and Künstler*innenhaus Büchsenhausen in Innsbruck, among others. Their contributions take the form of exhibitions, lectures, workshops, public programs, performances, and writing. In 2021, they co-founded Beyond the post-soviet (Btps), a collective dedicated to producing and sharing knowledge about cultural and geographical regions formerly labeled as "post-Soviet" and "post-socialist." Among Sasha Baydal's recent activities is the co-curation, alongside Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez, of the ongoing traveling exhibition *Déplacements et torrents – Là où le Dnipro et l'Elbe se rencontrent*; their participation in the traveling exhibition *Borders Are Nocturnal Animals / Sienos yra naktiniai gyvūnai* (curated by Neringa Bumblienė and Émilie Villez) as a member of Btps; and their contribution to *After the End. The Forum on Imagining with Others* at Palais de Tokyo, and a residency at Secant Space in Istanbul in February-May 2025. They are co-curating, with Chantal Pontbriand, the next edition of SPHERE(S), which will be presented in Montreal in 2026 in collaboration with Fonderie Darling. Sasha Baydal is

currently curator-in-residence in Secant Space in Istanbul, where explore the past and present of human mobilities in-between Eastern and Central Europe, Central Asia, and Turkey.

Mine Songs: Sounding An Altered Landscape / Sara Pajunen

Mine Songs: Sounding An Altered Landscape is a long-term artistic project that questions accepted narratives of the altered landscape of Minnesota's Mesabi Iron Range - my childhood and ancestral home. I would like to present work from this project at TRACES, specifically focused on how water has been affected and how it is currently jeopardized by extraction industries (including pipe line building, see this link). Mine Songs is rooted in landscape, listening, and image: the complex fissure in our relationship with the earth, the power of sound to reorient our awareness toward our environments, the widened views of extraction industries' effects on the planet. Beginning in the 1800s, the human activity of mining iron (succeeding clearcut logging) on the Mesabi Iron Range not only forever altered land that had been the same for millennia (minerals that had existed under the surface for millions of years were depleted in less than 100 years), it interrupted an ancient symbiosis Native Americans (Dakota, Ojibwa) had with what we now call Minnesota. European immigrants entered a necessary relationship with the environment based on non-renewable profit driven extraction - a relationship that had been in place in the United States for hundreds of years. The Hill of Three Waters, a sacred site to Anishanaabe (Ojibwe) people, and the meeting of two continental divides and three watersheds, is now property of the mining company. No one, not the native people who have lived on this land for hundreds of years, or the European settlers who call this their home, can access it freely. How does extraction, capitalism, and ownership affect our organic relationship with the environment, and subsequently our cultural and personal health?

Sara Pajunen is an interdisciplinary artist based in Minnesota (USA), specializing in music and the sonic arts. Her work blends folk traditions (violin, hardanger d'amore, voice), still and moving imagery, environmental recordings, and improvisation. Born into the immigrant culture of Minnesota's Mesabi Iron Range, Pajunen's artistic practice is driven by the intersections of her ancestral roots, American cultural histories, and a deep connection to environments through sound. While questioning dominant American narratives, she searches for long-rhythm values and uncovers beauty and familiarity in the overlooked. Steeped in both folk and classical music since childhood, Pajunen has studied folk traditions extensively in the Nordic countries and has released six audio albums that use traditional music in progressive yet reverent ways, resulting in singular collaborations. As a composer and improviser, Pajunen challenges conventional boundaries between noise and music, using sound to alter our perception of the physical world. Longterm project Mine Songs: Sounding an Altered Landscape explores the transformed environment of the Mesabi Iron Range, investigating the fissure in our relationship with the earth and the complex stories we tell ourselves (or have been told) about history, power, identity, and agency. Works from Mine Songs have been presented on stage, in galleries, and as a 2024 audio album. Pajunen has performed extensively in Europe and North America and her work has received funding from the Jerome Foundation, Minnesota State Arts Board, Kone Foundation, New Music USA, American Scandinavian Foundation, and the Arts Council of Finland - amongst others. She holds classical music degrees in both the United States and Finland, and a Master of Music in Contemporary Improvisation from New England Conservatory.

12:00–13:30

Parallel Session 2: Toxic Materialities (Room 1 / Aula B)

Moderator: Karolína Pauknerová (Charles University, Prague)

Discussant: Giovanbattista Tusa (Nova Institute of Philosophy (IFILNOVA) at Nova University of Lisbon)

Ecologies of Film: Cadmium, Kodak, and Contaminated Waters / Alice Cazenave

My visual practice transforms plants and contaminated river waters into photo-chemistries to develop analogue photographs. I use these to discuss links between film photography, settler-colonialism, and water pollution. Before Kodak's establishment in western New York (1890), White Corn was cultivated extensively, and with care, by Haudenosaunee communities. This plant is a powerful remediator of toxic metals polluted by Kodak. It can store them in its botanical matter, detoxifying river ecologies. Working collaboratively with a Haudenosaunee photographer, we printed a photograph of White Corn using its plant matter as photo-chemistry. Its title, a:yetíya' dágeha' [We Should Help Her] speaks to the need to remediate Kodak-contaminated waters, which in Haudenosaunee culture is a female being.

My PhD research traces the metals, solvents and chemicals used by Kodak to manufacture film. Fieldwork took place in Rochester New York, homelands of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and Kodak's largest chemical plant. For decades, Kodak contaminated groundwater and river systems with heavy metals including mercury, cadmium and arsenic. Historically, these metals were added to film emulsions to enhance the aesthetic capacities of the film. Groundwaters below Kodak's chemical plant were so heavily polluted that their reversal to safe drinking water standards is considered technically impossible.

The paper includes experimental analogue photographs developed with plant-based chemistries made from White Corn, contaminated river water, and river plant species. This process of transforming matter from river ecologies into photographic materials explores the relationships between film photography, toxic metals, water pollution, and remediation. Tracing journeys of photographic pollutants through plant and river ecologies helps visualise the more-than-human worlds that collide with the materiality of imaging technologies. Mixing plant photo-chemistries explores the agencies of more-than-human life by engaging with it visually, materially, and chemically, and it opens dialogues into how photographic aesthetics link with cultures of contamination.

Alice Cazenave is a photographic artist and AHRC funded PhD researcher examining the toxicity of silver extraction for analogue film industries. She is creating an alternative archive of film photography's history that foregrounds links between settler-colonialism, water pollution, and silver. She reimagines ecological futures of photography by mixing low-toxic, plant-based photo-chemistries to develop analogue photographs. She is an advisor to the Sustainable Darkroom, a charity developing low-toxic praxes in photography. Positions include the 2024 artist-in-residence (Hong Kong International Photo Festival), visiting scholar in Art & Sustainability (Rochester Institute of Technology, New York), 2023 TRACTS Fellow (Leiden University) and 2022 artist-in-residence (Silver City, Nevada USA). She has exhibited internationally, including Saatchi (London), London Art Fair, Pointsman (Hong Kong), Halide Project (Philadelphia), Centre for Creative Photography (Finland), BWA Gallery (Poland), and Chappe Contemporary Art Museum (Finland). Artistic features include the British Journal of Photography, The Guardian, and the New York Times. Conference presentations include Photographic

Histories Research Centre (UK), EASA (Barcelona), Polar Film Lab (upcoming, Norway). PhD research publications include contributions to the special series *Landscape Memories, Archival Ecologies* (TRAJECTORIA, Japan), and book chapter contributions to *Ecologies of Photography* (upcoming, Leuven Press) and *Counter Cartographies of Trace: Theoretical, Methodological, and Ethical Approaches Across Disciplines* (upcoming, De Gruyter).

Agriculture 4.0 in Southern Spain: Plastic Climate, Plastic Workers, Plastic Water / Loreto García Saiz

How do we feed ourselves? The landscapes that sustain us are shaped by the complex interplay of ecological processes and social relations, making sites where these dynamics intensify crucial for understanding the climate crisis and imagining a just ecological transition. A key site for this inquiry is the patchwork agro-industrial landscape of southern Spain, where much of Europe's fruits and vegetables are produced in greenhouses.

In the extremely arid region of Almería's "Sea of Plastic," a distinct form of what Davis terms "plastic matter" (2022) takes shape: through relentless extraction of fossil water from aquifers, the climate itself becomes plastified—controlled and engineered via climate management systems to meet market demands, creating the illusion of emancipation from local "agro-climatic conditions" (Escamilla-García et al., 2020). Workers, predominantly African migrants, are similarly plastified—treated as flexible, adaptable, perpetually available, disposable, and replaceable labor—echoing Lynes' concept of "greenhouse effects" (2023). Over time, even water has been plastified: as aquifers are depleted, desalination technologies are promoted as techno-optimistic solutions to sustain this extractivist system.

This intervention bridges environmental humanities, environmental cultural studies, and materialist-infrastructural media studies to demonstrate how the Sea of Plastic exemplifies, both materially and symbolically, the hegemonic material relations and ideological frameworks underpinning transnational agro-industrial infrastructures. It reveals their deep entanglement with colonial histories of domination, their ongoing extractivist character, and their projections of techno-optimistic futures amid the ecosocial crisis. In the context of climate breakdown, contemporary agriculture—through neoextractivist practices—enacts a process of plastification that permeates everything: climate, territories, water, bodies, and even the possibility of food sovereignty—not to nourish populations but to sustain profit-driven logics.

Loreto García Saiz holds a PhD in Communication from Carlos III University of Madrid. Her doctoral research, framed from an ecocritical perspective, explored material and representational approaches to territories of agroindustrial extractivism. She is part of the research projects "Speak4Nature: Interdisciplinary Approaches on Ecological Justice" and "Institutional Documentary in the Colonial Era" and has carried out research stays at the University of Granada (Spain), Concordia University (Canada), and the Federal University of Santa Catarina (Brazil). She is the founder and currently works at Rakonto, an environmental association based in France dedicated to crafting imaginaries of desirable futures through art, storytelling, and non-formal education. Her academic and activist work focuses on critical pedagogies, decoloniality, and ecocriticism, often using film and media as tools to question dominant narratives, foster collective reflection, and support alternative ways of inhabiting the world.

Toxic Flows: Tracing the Legacies of Critical Minerals and Supply Chain Dispossession / Elena Longhin

This proposal examines extractivism through the lens of resource supply chain cartographies, focusing on metal conflicts, environmental pollution, and patterns of dispossession. I investigate the historical case of phosphate extraction in Morocco and its shipment to Porto Marghera, Venice, where from the 1920s onward it was processed for industrial agriculture, with toxic byproducts disposed of in the Venetian marshes and Adriatic Sea. In parallel, I analyze contemporary conflicts surrounding critical mineral extraction—particularly cobalt—and its connections to the European fertilizer industry, highlighting how critical material trade perpetuates cycles of environmental degradation and social injustice. This research traces how these supply chains intersect with refining and manufacturing hubs within the EU, shaping territorial and socio-ecological transformations over time.

I aim to contribute to discussions on how water functions both as a conduit and battleground for extractive economies and struggles for social justice. My work intersects with key symposium themes, especially the historical entanglements of extractivism, the controlled and weaponized landscapes it engenders, and its enduring socio-environmental consequences. Through the case studies of phosphate trade and cobalt extraction, I explore how resource circulation creates contested geographies that connect colonial legacies with contemporary climate and labor crises. Additionally, I intend to discuss methodological approaches that trace the environmental legacies of extraction, including water contamination histories and supply chain cartographies as analytical tools for understanding dispossession and resistance.

Elena Longhin, Ph.D., is an architect (OAPCC Venezia/ARB London) and researcher based between Venice, Italy, and Delft, the Netherlands, working at the intersection of architecture, urbanism, and political ecology. She holds a MArch and Ph.D. from IUAV and graduated from the AA Landscape Urbanism Programme. Currently, she is a Postdoctoral Researcher at TU Delft, a studio mentor in the Transitional Territories Graduation Studio, and a member of the Delta Urbanism Interdisciplinary Research Programme. Since 2016, Elena has been the Programme Head of the Architectural Association School of Architecture of London's Visiting School Programme, Terrain Lab, now based in Venice. She is also an affiliated researcher with THE NEW INSTITUTE - Center for Environmental Humanities (NICHE) at Ca' Foscari University of Venice and a member of the Unruly Natures, an ongoing transdisciplinary collaborative research project on "Earth-Beings" based at St. Gallen University, Switzerland.

Scaling Otherwise through Acidophilic Architectures / Tomás Usón, Nieves Usón

Acid mine drainage (AMD) is one of the leading causes of water pollution worldwide. As a direct externality of the mining industry, AMD occurs when minerals such as pyrite and iron sulfides come into contact with water, oxygen, and—crucially for this paper—acidophilic microbes, named for their ability to thrive in highly acidic environments. While acidophiles contribute to AMD, some are also seen as strategic partners in addressing the challenges posed by acid drainage today. In the Callejón de Huaylas, a region in the Peruvian Andes severely affected by AMD, researchers are investigating the potential of acidophiles to precipitate heavy metals and deposit them at the bottoms of water bodies. In this process, acidophiles create terraced iron formations (TIFs)—physical structures that retain iron-rich water, facilitating its metabolism and the precipitation of heavy metals. This bioremediation approach embraces the concept of "staying with the trouble" (Haraway, 2016) evoked by mining pollution.

This presentation examines multispecies collaborations with acidophiles by exploring the challenges of working at microorganic scales in landscape production. The initial phase of this experimental bioremediation approach has focused on speculative mapping of the architectures created by acidophiles, highlighting the complexities involved in designing acid-prone worlds. For the symposium, we propose to present these mapping efforts alongside reflections on eco-social justice related to the challenges of multispecies scales of work. A central question remains: how can we integrate the lives of those directly impacted by the biochemical regimes of mining extractivism into this exercise? How do we ensure that the existence and scale of acidophiles do not overshadow the lived realities of historically marginalized communities? In other words, how can we incorporate the stories of those historically considered “less-than-human” (Büscher, 2022) into a more-than-human scale?

Tomás Usón is a research associate at the Institute of Geography and IRI THESys at Humboldt University of Berlin. His research centers on the rhythms, temporalities, and materialities of environmental disasters. Currently, he is a postdoctoral researcher on the project “Re-scaling Global Health: Human Health and Multispecies Cohabitation on an Urban Planet,” which investigates urban pollution in riverine ecosystems from a multispecies perspective. Tomás has contributed to diverse research projects across Latin America and Europe, focusing on memory and anticipation practices in the face of climatic disasters, as well as employing participatory methods for flood-risk assessment and land-use scenario planning.

Nieves Usón is a visual and tattoo artist working at the intersection of ecological design and more-than-human relations. She holds a master’s degree in Ecological Humanities, Sustainability, and Ecosocial Transition from Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, with a specialization in eco-feminist approaches to ecological collapse and restorative justice. As an artist, Nieves has collaborated with the social platform Sobrevivir al Descalabro and the collective La Micorriza. She currently resides in Berlin.

Mapping socio-ecological relations in a Nile river island in Cairo, Egypt / Emanuele Fantini, Roger Anis

“Mapping Qursaya” is a transdisciplinary and participatory research project involving a photojournalist, social and natural scientists, a local NGO, and the residents of a small river island on the Nile, in the center of Cairo, Egypt. The project combines ethnography, water quality analysis, workshops with fisherfolk, and participatory visual research to map and co-produce knowledge on socio-ecological relations in and around Qursaya Island. Through these methods, we aim to represent and analyze the entanglements between socio-economic injustice (lack of public services, international investments in land), environmental transformation (invasive species, reduction of fish stocks), and water pollution (plastic and other contaminants). We wish to foreground the local knowledge and practices through which the island’s residents make sense of, navigate, and adapt to these transformations. We also reflect on the trans- and interdisciplinary collaboration between art and science, and on how to make such collaboration relevant for a local community.

Emanuele Fantini is Associate Professor of Water Politics and Communication at IHE Delft Institute for Water Education (The Netherlands). His research and teaching focus on the role of media and communication in water conflicts and collaborations across different contexts and scales, such as international river basins like the Nile, or social movements against water privatization in Italy. Committed to public engagement and transdisciplinary



projects with artists, photographers, and journalists, Emanuele hosts the podcasts *The Sources of the Nile*, *The House of Water*, and *Si dice acqua*. He is also the editor of the IHE Delft Water Governance Blog, *FLOWs*.

Roger Anis is an Egyptian documentary photographer, photo editor, and curator. He earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2008 in Egypt and began his career as a photojournalist in 2010, working with various newspapers and international news agencies. His work has been published in numerous international outlets and exhibited in Egypt, Turkey, and other venues worldwide. Roger holds a degree in photojournalism from the Danish School of Media & Journalism (2015) and completed a Master's in Photography and Society at the Royal Academy of Arts in the Netherlands. His work sheds light on important social issues in our communities, focusing on hidden or underreported subjects and essential topics often overlooked or forgotten.

12:00–13:30

Parallel Session 3: Water Justice Movements (Room 2 / Aula B)

Moderator: Sanja Horvatinčić (Institute of Art History, Zagreb)

Discussant: Jasmina Husanović (University of Tuzla)

Water Protests in Iran / Zahra Babaei (Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany)

In my doctoral dissertation, I study Iran's water-related protests. Over the past four decades, the Iranian government has placed immense pressure on the country's natural resources to mitigate the economic impact of extensive international sanctions. In pursuit of food self-sufficiency, Iran has implemented water policies that disregard both climatic realities and democratic considerations. These centralized, top-down water management policies include the construction of numerous dams, excessive groundwater extraction, and inter-basin water transfers. Over time, these interventions have disrupted the natural water cycle, caused severe environmental degradation, and generated significant socio-economic tensions. The growing wave of farmers' protests across different regions of Iran in recent years is directly linked to these policies.

At first glance, water protests in Iran appear to be an attempt by the public to achieve a fairer distribution of water resources—a civic effort toward democratizing water policies. However, I argue that this initial interpretation can be highly misleading. Instead, these protests must be analyzed within their broader social context and in relation to existing power dynamics. In fact, in many cases, water protests in Iran have not led to the emergence of grassroots politics but instead reinforce the role of the state. The government exploits pre-existing divisions within local communities—such as ethnic tensions—to transform water protests into areas of social conflict, thereby reproducing its own role as the primary mediator.

In my research, I seek to answer the following questions: What are the capacities and limitations of Iran's water protests in shaping a grassroots political movement? How does the Iranian state manipulate the nature of water protests, diverting them from concerns of environmental justice and social equity, and instead reframing them as conflicts over access to water resources? Finally, how do environmental movements, rather than facilitating democratization, become instruments for reproducing authoritarian systems?

Zahra Babaei is a PhD candidate in Political Science at Philipps-Universität Marburg. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Sociology and a master's degree in development studies, both at the University of Tehran in 2015 and 2018, respectively. In April 2023, she commenced her doctoral studies at Philipps-Universität Marburg, under the



supervision of Prof. Dr. Rachid Ouaissa. Her dissertation, entitled “Water Conflict: Transition or Reconfiguration of a Rift? (In Iran),” examines the interplay between water scarcity and the socio-political dynamics within Iran. Her research focuses broadly on the mechanisms through which authoritarian political systems sustain their power, with a particular emphasis on the social equity within these systems.

The River is (R)existence: River Restoration, Pollution and the Ecology of Resistances in the Alviela River Basin / Susana Batel (ISCTE – Instituto Universitario de Lisboa), Maria Alba, Maria Gato, Catarina Miranda, Lígia Figueiredo

The visions, projects, and infrastructures of the so-called green energy transition, such as hydroelectric power plants and wastewater treatment plants, have led to the accumulation of diverse forms of extractivism that have been colonizing the most silenced and invisibilized territories within capitalist logics, such as rural ones. Despite the urgency of fossil capitalism for the end of the world, replacing it with green capitalism risks reproducing socio-environmental injustices and skepticism regarding any transition.

This paper proposes to discuss the relevance of conducting psychosocial historiographies of territories to (re)think present ecological practices and narratives so that these are neither rejected by the learned institutional-colonialist helplessness of communities, nor co-opted by right-wing populisms.

For that, we focus our analysis on the basin of the Alviela River, Portugal, departing from a project led by GEOTA (NGO for the Study of Environment and Territorial Planning), initiated in 2023. The project “Free Rivers” aims to remove obsolete barriers from rivers and implement associated measures for river restoration to improve rivers’ connectivity and related ecosystems. Departing from this—research, lived, geographical—territory and its historiography, we attempt to trace the ecology of resistances against socio-environmental injustices therein coexisting and discuss how we can anticipate and construct possibilities for futures that grow from the river and current ecological practices. Empirical data were collected from fieldwork conducted between August 2024 and February 2025 in the basin of the Alviela River, including archival research, “river post,” individual interviews, and group workshops.

Susana Batel is an Assistant Researcher and Lecturer at the Center for Psychological Research and Social Intervention and the School of Social Sciences and Humanities of the University Institute of Lisbon, Portugal (ISCTE – Instituto Universitario de Lisboa). Her research adopts a critical interdisciplinary perspective to examine the relationship between people, the territory and the climate crisis, specifically around energy transformations towards carbon neutrality, and related socio-environmental justice and political participation issues. I am also generally interested in how discourse and communication relate with social change and resistance.

Terra Creativa and the Mountains of the Silenced Water / Maria Bella (independent researcher, curator, and cultural producer, Galicia)

This presentation will focus on *Terra Creativa*, an epilogue to the story of *The Mountains of the Silenced Water*—mountains stolen from their people and handed over to the eucalyptus industry, which drained their natural waters, silencing their echoes. Furthermore, *Terra Creativa* gives voice to its sister and brother mountains in Galicia—all

of them mountains of silenced water. *Terra Creativa* is the spirit of a regenerated mountain in the village of Corcubión, located in Costa da Morte, western Galicia, Spain. It is also the story of a community cultural project developed in a specific territory and on a particular mountain named Cambeiro. The project revisits the long history of extractivism in Galicia and disrupts it to open space for alternative narratives. It is a story-project that calls for the recognition of a community's deep connection with its mountain—both in honoring the past and advocating for its present and future rights.

With the aim of addressing these complexities through a transdisciplinary approach, *Terra Creativa* has developed a set of experimental tools emerging from an alliance between art, culture, social humanities, science, environmental studies, community engagement, and participatory practices. These tools seek to rehearse acts of regeneration in a world facing destruction.

Maria Bella is a curator, independent researcher, and cultural producer based in Costa da Morte, Galicia. She holds a PhD in Curatorial/Knowledge from Goldsmiths, University of London (2019), where she also completed a Master's in Creative Curating (2000). She earned her BA in Fine Arts from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid (1997). Throughout her career, she has theorized and put into practice forms of artistic and cultural production based on collaboration and cooperation with communities, addressing experimental ways of working collectively. In recent years, she has developed projects and exhibitions deeply connected to the territory, extractivism in Galicia, and the climate emergency.

She was part of the founding team of Intermediae Matadero-Madrid, a public cultural institution dedicated to exploring new institutional models (2005), where she curated its programming until 2012. Since 2019, she has also been part of the team and cultural association (UGBN) that preserves, maintains, and activates the archive of the citizen movement Nunca Máis, which emerged in response to the environmental catastrophe of the Prestige oil spill in 2003. She is the founder of the cooperative Azul mais Verde (2023), the organization that initiated the *Terra Creativa* project in alliance with the environmental association Boca de Sapo and with the support of the Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation.

14:30–16:00

Parallel Session 4: Water and Memory (Room 1 / Aula B)

Moderator: Alberto Berzosa (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Discussant: Lee Douglas (Goldsmiths, University of London)

The Relationship Between Hydric Sovereignty and Spiritual Sovereignty / Juan Pablo Pacheco Bejarano (Independent artist, writer and educator)

What is the relationship between hydric sovereignty and spiritual sovereignty? How can sound create spaces of deep listening with bodies of water, revealing their histories, agencies, and resistances? My research explores water as a living archive—an entity that remembers, transmits, and transforms—challenging extractive and colonial paradigms. Through sonic meditations, editorial projects, and collaborative workshops, I work to reframe water as an animate presence rather than a passive resource. Using hydrophones and field recordings, I develop listening methodologies that invite participants to engage with water as an active subject, amplifying its rhythms, vibrations, and hidden narratives.

At the symposium, I will share insights from *Water Fronts*, an artistic research project examining Madrid's water crisis through historical, ecological, and political entanglements. Revisiting the Water Front of the Spanish Civil War—where Republican forces defended key reservoirs from fascist attacks—this project connects past struggles over water sovereignty with contemporary threats, such as ongoing privatization efforts.

This research also builds on a 2024 residency with Marina Monsonís, supported by Hablarenarte, the Carasso Foundation, and the Reina Sofía Museum, where we visited the source of the Manzanares River with artists, ecologists, geologists, and activists. Through a collective meditation and deep listening session, we explored the river's contested history—from sacred site to militarized frontier to urbanized waterway—while reflecting on the broader tensions surrounding water governance.

By integrating hydroacoustic research, historical analysis, and ecological activism, this project asks: How can artistic practices expand our ways of knowing water? What forms of listening might foster new modes of care, resistance, and collaboration across disciplines? *Water Fronts* proposes that art can open critical spaces where scientific knowledge, embodied experience, and political action converge in defense of water sovereignty.

Juan Pablo Pacheco Bejarano is an artist, writer, and educator who seeks to amplify the healing powers of water. Through audiovisual and edible projects, texts and collaborative workshops, his work weaves together questions on ecology, technology, and spirituality. Juan Pablo researches water as a living archive, digital infrastructures, telepathy and fermentation, opening portals between the visible and the invisible to imagine other technologies beyond extraction. Juan Pablo has worked with the Garage School, Espacio Odeón, Plataforma Bogotá and the Institute of Postnatural Studies. He has taught at the Javeriana and Andes universities in Bogotá and at the Royal Academy of Arts in The Hague. His work has been recently presented at the Reina Sofía Museum, Madrid (2024); Manifesta 15, Barcelona (2024); Jan van Eyck academie, Maastricht (2023); La MaMa, New York (2023); Kunstenfestivaldesarts, Brussels (2022); ISEA, Barcelona (2022); Galería Santa Fe, Bogotá (2020); Transmediale, Berlin (2020); Ural Biennial, Yekaterinburg (2020); Museo Carrillo Gil, Mexico City (2019), among others.

Water Imaginaries and Environmental Coloniality in Francoist Spain / Carmen Martín-Luquero (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Spain)

Hydraulic policy was a central element of early Francoism's modernization project. The massive construction of dams and interventions in waterways had profound social and ecological consequences. This development policy was justified through a discourse of national redemption and reconstruction promoted by the regime. The boom in public works, especially after the influx of American funds following the Madrid Agreements (1953), and the formation of energy oligopolies during this period exemplify what Mario Gaviria termed "electro-Francoism."

Alongside the development of this centralized energy model for industrialization—which generated significant territorial imbalances—the regime actively shaped imaginaries of reconstruction and progress. These were disseminated through energy-focused films produced by state media and certain energy companies. Iberduero, for instance, was among the first to recognize and exploit the power of corporate communication, with filmmaker Fernando López Heptener playing a key part.

Building on the idea that images play an active—rather than merely representative—role in shaping our relationship with reality, this presentation aims to analyse and contextualize some of these films. It highlights the creation of a specific political aesthetic, promoting nationalist and productivist visions of the landscape, associated with infrastructure and the power of water. At the same time, these films portray engineering as more than a technical endeavour, framing it as a social regulator through images of villages built for company workers. In contrast to these filmed realities, this presentation also sheds light on the darker side of electro-Francoism: the dispossession suffered by forcibly displaced populations due to valley inundation and the precarious working conditions of a cheap labour force, often composed of the regime's penal detachments. These symptoms of an authoritarian development policy have been challenged by counter-hegemonic imaginaries, including artistic and activist responses that contest the dominant narratives of this form of hydro-modernity.

Carmen Martín-Luquero Rodríguez holds a degree in Art History from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, a Master's in Social Sciences from the Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis (Master Mondes méditerranéens en mouvement) and from the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Master Arts, littératures et langages). She currently holds the JAE Intro research grant from the CSIC, which she is developing in the Institute of History under the supervision of Jaime Vindel in the training programme "(Post)fossil culture: socio-cultural imaginaries, global warming and energy transition". Within the framework of this programme, her research focuses on the study of the intersection between energy imaginaries, the cultural construction of water landscapes and developmentalist economic policies.

SOI_ School of Imagination / Crafting Futures: Indigenous Knowledge and Decolonial Learning in the Fishing Communities of Karachi / Behzad Khosravi Noori (Independent artist, writer, itinerant educator, playground maker, and necromancer)

This artistic project investigates the role of indigenous craftsmanship among oceanic fishing communities in Ibrahim Hyderi, Karachi, and explores its potential as a site for alternative education and social transformation. Rooted in the artisanal practices of the fishermen and in collaboration with the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF), the School of Imagination (SOI) proposes an interdisciplinary and community-driven approach to learning. By foregrounding traditional boat-making, net-weaving, and other indigenous craft techniques, SOI seeks to revitalise and document the knowledge embedded in these practices while encouraging a dialogue on sustainable livelihoods, ecological consciousness, and decolonial pedagogy.

This project reimagines Karachi's oceanic Indigenous fishing community of Ibrahim Hyderi as a living seascape of imagination—a dynamic interplay of ancestral craftsmanship and collective memory. Building on the Fisherfolk Forum's struggle for fisherfolk rights, the School of Imagination (SOI) proposes an initiative to build, document, reinterpret, and amplify the endangered maritime practices of boat-builders.

SOI rethinks education beyond conventional disciplinary frameworks by embedding it within lived realities, storytelling, and collective making. Drawing from the indigenous practice of *Kechahri*—a form of dialogical community gathering—the project facilitates workshops, artistic research, and participatory knowledge production to reclaim marginalised histories and resist the epistemic erasures brought about by colonial and capitalist disruptions. Through hands-on engagement with craft, the project documents endangered skills and repositions them within contemporary discourses on environmental sustainability and economic justice.

The SOI initiative will support local craftsmen and fisherfolk by creating a platform for intergenerational learning and exchange, ensuring that traditional knowledge systems are preserved and adapted for future generations. By integrating archival practices, workshops, and site-specific interventions, the project envisions a dynamic, evolving space where artistic research, craft, and pedagogy intersect to shape the imaginaries of education. This initiative seeks funding to establish the necessary infrastructure, facilitate community collaborations, and develop long-term strategies for knowledge dissemination and sustainable impact.

By centring indigenous craftsmanship as both a means of education and a mode of resistance, SOI positions itself as a vital space for rethinking learning, labour, and the future of coastal communities in Karachi. The project ultimately aims to bridge artistic research and social activism, offering an alternative framework for transformative, community-led education that challenges dominant narratives and envisions new possibilities for justice and self-determination.

Behzad Khosravi Noori is an artist, writer, itinerant educator, playground maker, and necromancer. Noori's practice-based research includes films, installations, and archival studies. His works investigate histories from The Global South, labour and the means of production, and histories of political relationships that have existed as a counter narration to the east-west dichotomy during the Cold War and beyond. By bringing multiple subjects into his study, He explores possible correspondences seen through the lenses of contemporary art practice, proletarianism, subalternity, and the technology of image production. He critically examines recent history to unearth memories transcending borders and explore transnational entanglements and non/aligned recollections. Noori is a member of the editorial board of the *ViS – Nordic Journal for Artistic Research*, co-founder of the *Sarazad.art* and imparts lessons on art and postcolonial theory at Habib University in Karachi, Pakistan. He is a visiting scholar at the Fine Art Department of Goldsmith University in London.

DOCUMENTS OF DYSTOPIAN // Recycled cinema as critical ecology / Virginia Villaplana Ruiz (Universidad de Murcia, Spain)

The recycled cinema installation DOCUMENTS OF DYSTOPIA, composed of drawings, sculptures, and film materials from the present, holiday film footage, home movies, and fiction films, proposes the narration of a dystopia about the territory of the Mar Menor and offers a critical review of the different phenomena that affect the natural environment as ecological and affective memory. The sexualization of the territory, nature, desire, and politics intersect in the notion of queer ecology, altering the paradigms of binary, rigid, and heteronormative ways of understanding nature toward interdependence and fluidity. The term *queer ecology* refers to a set of practices that reimagine nature, biology, and sexuality in light of queer theory.

Otherwise, how can the use of archival imagery be employed to challenge narrative and create counter-narrative ecologies and critical ecology? Overloaded with visual material—accessible footage there for the taking—and endless streams of 'nature content' we encounter and generate every day, there is infinite potential for a practice of remixing, re-appropriating, and rewriting cinema—recycled cinema as a form of critical ecology. The work operates as a physical experimental ethnography where the visual geography of the three river water connections intersects: Las Encañizadas, El Canal de Estacio, and the Gola de Marcha Malo between the Mar Menor and the Mediterranean Sea, and the Sierra Minera de La Unión.

Throughout the experimental queer recycled cinema, we have responded to a variety of topics that I have considered the most characteristic and important, and that summarize the current situation of the community of Mar Menor. It is also an x-ray of its collective memory, because, as has been exposed, the scenario is one of total uncertainty, and the future remains unclear. The research was carried out to identify a film archive—fiction and nonfiction films—from the “nitrate era” to the “internet archive,” and the film essay and archival footage serve as an experience of queer and critical ecological reception. I wish to explore at the event: inspiring innovative approaches for addressing the climate crisis and its social dimensions.

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Virginia Villaplana Ruiz is an interdisciplinary artist widely recognized for her innovative media artworks. Experimental filmmaker, writer, and innovator of the essay documentary. Over the last three decades she has made single and multi-channel video and sound installations, films, photographs, performances, artist books, feminist queer visual activism and public interventions whose most salient feature is the continual re-questioning of cultural artifacts. She investigates transnational relations under the impact of critical queer ecology and social justice as prison, border and amazonia ecological territories. Artist whose practice often expands into critical theory, editorial work, curatorship and teaching. She is a Professor in Media Communication at UMU. Her artwork has been commissioned by the CDAN International Museum art and nature, CGAC, Modern Art Museum IVAM and The Memory Museum Ex ESMA (Buenos Aires). Villaplana's artwork has been exhibited and screened widely including at Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Centro Cultural Español (Miami), Centro cultural de Bolivia; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León (MUSAC), Fundació Antoni Tàpies, CCCB (Barcelona), Institute of International Visual Arts, INIVA London and La Virreina Center for the Image. Her work explores writing as a negotiation between memory and history tales of fiction and documentary. Author of the books *Net-narcocultura*, *Softfiction: Visuality affects and experimental film* or *The moment of memory and Infinitive Cinema*. Her research focuses on the history of LGTBIQ+ cultural discourses, queer theory, materiality and memory.

14:30–16:00

Parallel Session 5: Tracing Histories and Futures through Waterscapes / Hybrid (Room 2 / Aula B)

Panel in collaboration with EASA Network of an Anthropology of History and Heritage (NAoHH)
Moderators: Veronica Ferreri (Ca Foscari) and Helen Cornish (Goldsmiths, University of London)

How might the lens of waterscapes prompt us to rethink the concept of trace and its relationship to anthropology and history?

This panel considers ethnographic approaches to the sea and the entanglements of social practices, institutions, materialities and complex pasts. It explores how attention to watery matters can help us rethink the terrestrial imaginaries that have long shaped the relationship between anthropology and history.

The sea's complex temporalities call for new approaches to tracing histories and futures. Micro entities linger in the water across vast historical spans while spectral remnants of the past leak out into contemporary environments, contaminating what lies ahead. Water can serve as a medium for retrieving what has seemingly been lost yet continues to reverberate in the present. It enables embodied relationships with the past, through which political projects can be recovered and reinvigorated, while nurturing new aspirations and future possibilities.

From heritage institutions confronting toxic and violent legacies of submerged military wrecks to the intertwined temporalities and regimes of historicity embedded in sea sand, the contributions demonstrate how waterscapes are sites of layered, contested histories and imaginaries. They explore collective performances, rituals, and craft practices around water, challenge legacies of violence, and examine anxieties about loss; probing potential for healing and resistance. Together, they examine how pasts and futures are reconfigured through unsettled and liquid imaginaries to question dominant parameters of time, scale and space in anthropology and history.

At the Ocean's Edge: Remembering the Spirits/Finding the Ancestors in a South African Seaside Town /
Dominique Santos

Dislocation, dispossession, and the making of new creole communities out of points of contact, appropriation, assimilation, and pragmatic alliances were features of the tumultuous settler-colonial era in South Africa's Eastern Cape province. The process of Christianization entailed the loss of indigenous modes of relating to land and water, including language, names, and cultural forms. Contemporary descendants of indigenous Khoekhoe people, assimilated into the racial category of "coloured"—indicating a person of mixed descent according to colonial and apartheid racial categories—have been reviving indigenous identities, including language and cultural reclamation.

In the seaside towns, the waters of the Indian Ocean have been a focal point for reviving and renewing rituals of healing and reconciliation associated with historical trauma, as well as more recent bereavements and challenges. Re-invigorating a relationship with the waters is a feature of the communities' efforts to bring intimate restoration and healing, alongside carving out a political claim to custodianship of land and water in post-apartheid South Africa. This paper explores the intersections of macro political identity politics and the intimacies of communal healing, taking place at revivals of Khoekhoe Full Moon rituals on the Indian Ocean coastline, where tensions around notions of belonging, property, and custodianship of nature play out in the aftermath of the settler-colonial era.

It considers how ritual is enacted as an embodied resuscitation of traces of past practice and connection to ancestral spirits and other-than-human entities, fostering a sense of re-connection to a recovered past, with the intent of acting in a political project to regain indigenous sovereignty in the present, alongside the more subtle intimacies of family healing. The making of alternative historicities through embodied ritual practices recasts the colonial telling of the past, bringing into view the tensions between control and resistance that continue to mark this region in the present.

Dominique Santos is a Senior Lecturer in Anthropology at Rhodes University. Her scholarly work explores the intersections of history, people, music, play, dreaming, ritual, place and heritage with intimate experiences of the self, space and social change. Her anthropological trajectory has been, following Sylvia Wynter, informed by a commitment to 'unsettle the coloniality of being', connecting the university as a public and intellectual space with the wider community and natural world it is part of. To this end, she has worked with children and organisations on projects to occupy public space playfully, promote sustainable food systems that are rooted in the recovery of self-esteem and joy, and re-think monuments and collections, supporting creative interventions that permit alternative modes of experiencing space, self and society to emerge. On good days, Dominique combines academic inquiry with community engagement and artistic practice to generate conditions for collaborative anthropological approaches in community, heritage, public and exhibition spaces that effect social change for the greater good. On bad days, she expresses herself in memes and drinks too many cups of tea.



Leaving with Sand: The Sand of Sardinian Beaches, Between Erosion and Tourist Imagination / Cecilia Paradiso

The Maddalena Archipelago, once a military base, has become a popular tourist destination. Since the 1990s, conflicts have arisen over beach erosion, with multiple potential causes. Here, the most prized and threatened beaches are those with clear, fine sand, partly made up of organic fragments from small marine animal shells. Located 250 kilometers southwest, the Sinis Peninsula is a largely undeveloped area between the open sea and coastal ponds. Some beaches here, known as “rice grain beaches,” are made of quartz sediments that originated from the erosion of the island of Mal di Ventre. Both regions are Marine Protected Areas.

A recent issue gaining media attention is the theft of sand from Sardinian beaches by tourists. Sea sand—with its biophysical and aesthetic properties—is an object of desire and a driving force of coastal economies. It is also crucial in various coastal processes. In this regard, sand is defended, extracted, transported, and studied. Growing concerns about coastal sand reflect shifts in the way societies interpret this element and the spaces it belongs to. In the two Sardinian contexts, conflicts over sand loss manifest in unique ways, involving different knowledge systems, regulations, and practices. Examining these specificities reveals how political, economic, and cultural issues intersect with beach and sand management. To follow the threads of this matter, ethnography must dialogue with history, marine geology, and environmental planning.

Different temporalities are at play here: the geological and ecological processes of sand formation, the historical evolution of coastal areas, and the personal experiences of tourists collecting sand as souvenirs. Cultural representations of beaches as timeless spaces seem to influence both social perceptions and management strategies. This presentation, based on ethnographic research, will seek the traces of these intertwined temporalities and explore what kind of regime of historicity might emerge from considering them.

Cecilia Paradiso is a lecturer and researcher at La Rochelle University, affiliated with the LIENSS laboratory and CeRCLEs/EHESS. She obtained her PhD in social and historical anthropology in 2022 from EHESS (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales), and the title of her dissertation is "Un archipel de relations socioécologiques. Le cas du Parc National de l'archipel de la Maddalena (Sardaigne) : une analyse anthropologique des politiques environnementales" (<https://theses.fr/2022EHES0008>). She is currently working on the social and cultural dynamics surrounding coastal sand and shifting shorelines. To this end, she develops research projects that explore the changing valuation of coastal areas in contemporary times, both in the Mediterranean and along the Atlantic coasts. Her work has been published in *Vertigo*, the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, *L'Homme*, and several collective volumes.

Post-Conflict Waterscapes: Managing Cultural Heritage and/or Environmental Hazards / Sven Bergmann

Waters are not only natural entities, but also contested geopolitical spaces shaped by historical, political, and military legacies. This contribution explores the complex relationships between waters, borders, and regulation, with a particular focus on the enduring presence of military remnants in the marine environment. War wrecks and

underwater munitions, as submerged war landscapes, are mostly not visible except to divers or through geophysical scanning methods from research vessels. Depending on the perspective taken on the use and/or importance of the sea, they pose different problems: from an obstacle to shipping or infrastructure, an artificial reef for marine life, to a sailor's grave. Their traces are more often conveyed indirectly, through entries in sea charts and reports in archives. Little research has been carried out into the effects of war debris on the marine environment; they can be characterized as "slow disasters." Nevertheless, a dangerous mine or shell found in a fishing net is an occasional reminder of the sea as a theater of war, even long after the wars are over. Thus, wars are part of the marine cultural heritage, but also an environmental hazard and toxicological risk. In this field of tension, questions of heritage are sometimes juxtaposed with those of environmental protection. Traces of the past touch the future, especially from a more-than-human perspective on the state of the oceans, while questions of responsibility for these problems have long been neglected by states and authorities. Researching and managing these risks requires transnational cooperation, as the movement and traces of pollutants in the water do not adhere to politically defined water boundaries.

Sven Bergmann is a senior researcher and curator at the German Maritime Museum – Leibniz Institute for Maritime History in Bremerhaven, Germany. At the institute, he coordinates the exhibition and research area *Ship and Environment*. Trained as a cultural anthropologist and STS researcher, his research interests range from feminist technoscience, kinship, reproduction, and the body to political ecology, marine and environmental anthropology, and economies of waste. In recent years, his research has focused on what he calls 'speculative ecologies'—e.g., the transformation of the ocean via microplastics or other pollutants. He led the European research project *North Sea Wrecks* and currently leads a sub-project in the REMARCO project (*Remediation, Management, Monitoring and Cooperation addressing North Sea UXO*), funded by Interreg North Sea, which deals with war remnants such as underwater munitions in the sea. He also co-founded the interdisciplinary *Waste in Motion* DFG network.

Activist and Artistic Methods Opposing Logics of Control / Valentina Zagaria

Between June and October 2024, together with the artist collective El Warcha and twenty young people from the Kram seaside neighbourhood of Tunis, we developed a performance surrounding the building of a small wooden boat (a flouka). Despite aiming to bring people together and have fun (*jaw*), the project soon encountered bureaucratic hurdles and security anxieties. Both the authorities and other inhabitants of the neighbourhood immediately associated young people and boat building with desires for the unauthorised crossing of the Mediterranean to reach Europe (the *harga*). Adamant to shake off these stereotypes commonly lobbed at young people throughout North Africa, the performance we developed involved rap, circus, and verbatim theatre to showcase stories related to creating space for enjoyment and for being together with and at sea.

With the young people, we carried out interviews with fishermen, naval carpenters, residents originally from the island of Kerkennah (known as a longstanding fishing community as well as being a departure point for the *harga*), and with racialised non-Tunisians living or working in the neighbourhood, who are often also viewed as "candidates for irregular migration" (much like the Tunisian youth themselves).

Both the contents of these interviews and the processes of building the boat and the performance led to shared reflections regarding the changing histories of mobility and labour between North Africa and Europe, as well as the possibilities for following one's aspirations across generations. The injustices brought about by the European

Union's border externalisation to Tunisia were made tangible through the boat-building process. Pursuing fun through the sharing of practical skills and memories, and attending to them through rehearsals and performance, allowed us to give value to different understandings, imaginaries, and narratives that playfully unravelled societal and political logics of control.

Valentina Zagaria is an anthropologist of borders, migration, and social change in North Africa and the Mediterranean. She is a Leverhulme Research Fellow with the Anthropology Department at the University of Manchester, and a Research Associate with the IRMC in Tunis. For her latest project she carried out collaborative research with young people in Tunis involving building a boat and devising a performance on the themes of fun, knowledge exchange, and projections related to the sea. She was awarded a PhD in Anthropology from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) in 2020, which she is turning into a book. Based on extensive fieldwork in southeastern Tunisia, this ethnography explores the concepts of dignity and social death as drives of both revolutionary and migratory movements in the country. Between 2020 and 2022 she also carried out research with Libyan women engaging in civil society work from Tunisia as a Post-doctoral Fellow at the Central European University (CEU) in Vienna. She has published in a range of academic and journalistic venues, including *The Cambridge Journal of Anthropology*, *American Behavioral Scientist*, *openDemocracy*, *AllegraLab* and *Border Criminologies*. She is the co-president of the Migreurop Network and regularly collaborates with activist and artist collectives.

Helen Cornish is a lecturer in Folklore Studies at the University of Hertfordshire and a research fellow in Anthropology at Goldsmiths. She is the co-founder of the EASA Network for an Anthropology of History & Heritage (NAoHH). Her research primarily explores how magical religious Witches and Wiccans in Britain engage with history by revising narratives and drawing on expanded forms of historicity, including music, the senses, landscape, materiality, ritual, and the imagination. The Museum of Witchcraft and Magic in Cornwall has served as a major fieldsite since 2000.

Veronica Ferreri is a Global Marie Curie Fellow in the Department of Humanities at Ca' Foscari University in Venice. She obtained her PhD from SOAS, University of London with a thesis entitled "A State of Permanent Loss: War and Displacement in Syria and Lebanon" which was awarded the Leigh Douglas Memorial Prize by the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies in 2018. Her current project, Archives in Times of War, ethnographically examines diasporic Syrians' archives and their entanglement with kinship ties, ethnonationalism, political violence and construction of the self. Recently, she was a Visiting International Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies in the Humanities in Essen, focusing on her monograph entitled *The Aftermath of War: Survival and Displacement across the Syrian-Lebanese Border* on the wartime predicament of a Syrian rural community. Her work has appeared in *History & Anthropology*, *Citizenship Studies*, *Society & Conflict*, and *AllegraLab*. She also co-curated with Inana Othman the trilingual literary collection "Eternity Unwoven: Echoes of the Unwritten and Poetics of the Archive" in collaboration with the magazines *Arabpop* and *UntoldMag*.

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