

"DEATH AND MIGRATION IN TIMES OF CONFLICT: A FORENSIC PERSPECTIVE"



Ai Weiwei - Remains, 2015 (Courtesy Neugerriemschneider and the artist)

ABSTRACTS AND BIOS

OCTOBER 17-19, 2024
SCIENCES PO
PARIS, FRANCE

Sciences Po, Campus St. Thomas
Les Salons Scientifiques

17-18 Oct - 09:30 to 18:00
and 19 Oct - 09:30 to 12:30

Project Convenors

Dr. Bidisha Banerjee, International Research Centre for Cultural Studies, The Education University of Hong Kong
Dr. Thomas Lacroix and Mohamed El Sayeh, Sciences Po, Paris
Prof. Judith Misrahi-Barak, EMMA, Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3

Local organisers

Thomas Lacroix (Sciences Po, Paris) and Mohamed El Sayeh (Sciences Po, Paris)

Thanatic Ethics Conference #4
“Death and migration in times of conflict: a forensic perspective”

Centre for International Studies, Sciences Po, Paris
in partnership with the Education University of Hong Kong
EMMA (Paul Valery University Montpellier 3)
The Institut Convergences Migrations
The Corps-Témoins ANR programme (CORTEM)
October 17-19, 2024

Venue: Sciences Po, Campus St. Thomas, Les Salons Scientifiques
Date and time: 17-18 Oct: 09:30 to 18:00 and 19 Oct: 09:30 to 12:30

Abstracts and Bios

Keynote Speakers' Section

Adam R. Rosenblatt (Duke University, USA)

Cemetery Citizenship and Thanatic Ethics: Revising Burial Grounds in a World on the Move

This keynote lecture draws on years of activist anthropology and collaboration with grassroots volunteers at historic African American cemeteries, psychiatric hospital cemeteries, and other places of the marginalized dead. It explores the intersection of cemetery reclamation, active citizenship, and ethics in landscapes of the dead. Cemetery reclamation, I argue, can be thought of as an ethical practice of revision: revising relationships with the dead, the function of historic burial grounds, the stories that are included in public histories, and the logics of kinship.

In cities shaped by migration, mobility, and histories of displacement, marginalized cemeteries offer unique opportunities for descendants and non-descendants, longtime residents and newcomers, to cultivate rootedness and practice engaged citizenship. Cemetery reclamation requires attentiveness to plant and animal life, and embodied presence amongst the dead, stretching the boundaries of community beyond the living and the human. It also troubles boundaries and produces new contestations: for example, over what a "reclaimed" cemetery looks like and whom it should serve, whether it can be both a reinvented public space and sacred ground.

Without shying away from tensions and dilemmas, this talk explores the ties to place and the unexpected power that are emerging from degraded cemeteries—a vibrant new form of thanatic ethics.

Adam Rosenblatt is Professor of the Practice in International Comparative Studies and Cultural Anthropology at Duke University. In addition to his academic roles, he has worked at Physicians for Human Rights, the Human Rights Center of the University of Chile, and at the U.S.-Mexico Border. An ethnographer and cartoonist interested in human rights, the ethics of care, and our ongoing ties to the dead, Rosenblatt is the author of *Digging for the Disappeared: Forensic Science after Atrocity* (Stanford University Press, 2015). His new book, *Cemetery Citizens: Reclaiming the Past and Working for Justice in American Burial Grounds* (Stanford, 2024), is about grassroots groups working to preserve and honor places of the marginalized dead, especially African American burial grounds. It uses sketches and poetic

inquiry to “draw out” the voices and active, embodied presence of the activists and memory-workers. In Durham, Rosenblatt works with the Friends of Geer Cemetery, teaches community-engaged courses, and is the co-founder of the Durham Black Burial Grounds Collaboratory.

Mirza Waheed (Writer)

"Conjuring Death and Mourning in Exile: A brief reading from two novels and notes on the imaginative portrayal of death and mourning in fiction written from a distance.

In this talk, the writer will explore how an author in exile may grapple with themes such as thanatic anxiety, the denial of access to funeral and mourning processes, and separation from the society of grief. The discussion will consider how emotional, epistemic and physical distance from the ‘homeland’ shapes the writer’s depictions of the distant body, the longing for and the reimagination of last rites, and the transformative effects of disconnection from the cultural centre."

Mirza Waheed was born and brought up in Kashmir. His debut novel, *The Collaborator*, was an international bestseller, a finalist for the Guardian First Book Award and the Shakti Bhat Prize, and was longlisted for the Desmond Elliott Prize. In 2011, it was also a book of the year for *The Telegraph*, *New Statesman*, *Financial Times*, and *Telegraph India*, among others. His second novel, *The Book of Gold Leaves*, was published in 2014 to critical acclaim. It was shortlisted for the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature 2016, longlisted for the Folio Prize, and was a finalist for the 2015 Tata Literature Live! Book of the Year (Fiction).

Mirza has written for the BBC, *The Guardian*, *Granta*, *Guernica*, *Scroll India*, *Caravan Magazine*, *Writers Mosaic*, *Al Jazeera English*, and *The New York Times*.

Waheed’s latest novel *Tell Her Everything* was nominated for the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature 2019 and *Tata Literature Live Book of the Year*. It won the *Hindu Prize for Fiction 2019*. *Tell Her Everything* was published by *Melville House* in the US and the UK in February 2023. The book was translated into French as *Dr K (Actes Sud, 2022)*.

Panels Section

Forensics in Action: A Conversation on the Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) Protocol

Bertrand Ludes (Forensic pathologist, IML), Tania Delabarde (Forensic anthropologist, IML), Florence Galmiche (Social anthropologist, UP Cité/ IUF/CCJ) and José Luis Prieto (Forensic pathologist, Forensic Pathology Service, Madrid)

CORTEM / Institut Médico-Légal de Paris Round Table: Forensics in Action: A Conversation on the Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) Protocol

This panel proposes an overview of the work of identifying the dead bodies of mass casualty incidents based on the experiences of forensic practitioners. We propose to examine the way in which several expert assessments (mainly forensic, but also others such as religious or community authorities) have articulated their knowledge. In particular, when it comes to dealing not with dead bodies, but with remains and fragments, for which the very definition of a human body has not been accepted by all those involved in its treatment. We will also address the question of the limits of DVI protocols in relation to the different contexts in which disasters occur.

Bertrand Ludes, Forensic pathologist, Institut médico-légal de Paris

Tania Delabarde, Forensic anthropologist, in charge of unidentified bodies at the IML, Paris

Florence Galmiche, Social anthropologist, UPCité/ IUF/CCJ

Carolina Kobelinsky, Social anthropologist, CNRS/LESC

José Luis Prieto, Forensic pathologist, Forensic Pathology Service, Madrid

Nicolas Fischer, Researcher in Political Science, CNRS/Cesdip, will moderate the discussion.

Gaza One Year On: First Rights, Last Rights and Funerary Rites

Last Rights: Reflections on International Law, Death and Bereavement in Gaza

Catriona Jarvis (Methoria, UK)

Drawing on international law, judicial decisions and jurisprudence, the commentaries of expert bodies and scholars in their assessment of the legal obligations discussed, this paper will identify the core duties owed by all states in relation to civilian deaths as a result of armed conflict and state responses to acts of terrorism in particular in light of ongoing judicial findings on the evidence and law placed before the International Court of Justice in the South Africa (and others) v Israel proceedings.

Even in death, where the norms of a society in peacetime usually provide for the dignity of our dead and of those who are bereaved, Gazan's are denied the same basic dignities, provided by humanitarian laws during conflict. The Geneva Conventions, human rights and customary international laws all require accountability for death, for the collection of bodies from the theatre of conflict, for identification, for counting, for dignified burial, for the bereaved to mourn. None of that is available in any meaningful way in Gaza. Bodies cannot be retrieved for risk of those retrieving them being killed. The methods of destruction leave so many still buried under the rubble of obliterated buildings, never to be recovered and given their funeral rites. Ten mass graves have been discovered so far already, two in hospital sites. Graveyards have been bulldozed. The death count is hard to calculate accurately and likely to be much higher than such "official" figures as have been told to the public.

Wartime Impact on Funerary Rites in Gaza

Yumna Masarwa (American College of the Mediterranean, France)

Between the years of 2008 and 2021, Israel launched four military assaults on Gaza, during which about 4000 Palestinians were killed. At least 38,000 (as of 8 July 2024) Gazans have been killed in Israel's ongoing war since it began on October 7, 2023. In addition, "More than 10,000 people are believed buried under the rubble in Gaza" according to the UN humanitarians. Gazans refer to those who lost their lives in Israeli attacks as *martyrs/shahids*. Islamic funerary rituals bear significant importance within the Gazan community, and offer mourners some dignity and closure while grieving. Based on UN reports, first-hand journalists' reports from Gaza, published interviews with Gazan corpse washers and morgue directors, visual evidence (photos and videos), international media investigations and forensic analysis (Aljazeera, CNN etc.), and published academic articles, this talk examines how the war has violently upended funerary rituals in Gaza, and disrupted any proper opportunity for Gazans to bury their dead when tens of thousands are killed and there is no cemetery, no graveyard. I argue that the relentless bombardment, the staggering number of casualties, and the shortage of shrouds and cemeteries have made proper funerary rites and grieving impossible in Gaza. I will first address Islamic funerary rites in Gaza before October 7, 2023. Then, I will discuss how the Gazans struggle to bury their dead during the war while

facing unprecedented daily challenges. Lastly, I will end with some concluding remarks reflecting on the *status quo*.

First Rights: Reflections on International Law, Death and Bereavement in Gaza

Syd Bolton (Methoria, UK)

According to UNICEF, the United Nation's international children's agency, "*Gaza has become a graveyard for thousands of children.*" As of April 2024 Save the Children estimated that around 14,000 children had been killed in Gaza and the figure continues to grow daily. The number of children orphaned and bereaved was estimated by UNICEF as around 17,000. Children make up approximately 50% of the 2.3 million population of Gaza. The conflict has had and continues to have an overwhelmingly catastrophic impact on children, their development, their education, their basic survival needs and has caused incalculable psychological and physical trauma. In this paper, I will consider the rights, responsibilities and protections owed to children in armed conflict and the particular impacts of the ongoing violence in Gaza, specifically affecting children. I will also examine the provisions of the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child including survival, trauma and psychological recovery rights, the additional protocols relating to the situation of children in armed conflict and the expert commentaries of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and other international bodies. This examination draws on international law, judicial decisions and jurisprudence, the commentaries of expert bodies and scholars in their assessment of the legal obligations discussed. To the extent that it is possible, data and other evidence cited will be drawn from published sources, international agencies, court depositions and judicial findings of fact.

Catriona Jarvis, LL.M, MA, is a retired judge from the United Kingdom and a writer of fiction and non-fiction. She is a former chair of the Prisoners of Conscience Appeal Fund; a former trustee of English PEN; trustee (and former chair) of the Inderpal Rahal Memorial Trust and the Chair of Trustees of Methoria. Since January 2023 she has been a member of the Thanatic Ethics Project Team.

She is co-convenor, with Syd Bolton, of Last Rights. The Last Rights programme is creating a new framework of respect for the rights of missing and dead refugees and migrants and bereaved family members, to transform research and legal principles into deliverable, real benefits and respect for human rights.

The two are also co-convenors of Equal Justice for Migrant Children, a project launched by the First Rights programme of Methoria, which aims to promote a model of justice for migrant children by building upon the rights acquired by children under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Catriona is the author and co-author of various articles and blogs and a contributor to handbooks on refugee and migration law. She has a particular interest in improvement of law, procedure and practice, especially concerning women and children; has co-drafted guidelines on gender; unaccompanied children, vulnerable persons, as well as cross-jurisdictional protocols and professional development guidance to assist judges in the family, criminal and immigration/asylum fields to work more effectively. Her fiction has women as its focus.

Yumna Masarwa is the Dean of the School of Art at the American College of the Mediterranean (ACM)/The Institute for American Universities (IAU) in Aix-en-Provence (France), and a Project Team Member of the research project Thanatic Ethics: The Circulation of Bodies in Migratory Spaces. Since 2018, she has been conducting a multi-sited ethnographic research in the Mediterranean city of Marseille focusing on burial and body repatriation among Algerians, the role of French Muslim women in the death 'business,' and Muslim tombs in French cemeteries. Some of her research has been published in edited

volumes and peer-reviewed journals such as *Antiquité Tardive*, *Bulletin of Middle East Medievalists*, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* (CSSAAME), *Etudes sur la Mort*, *Nouvelles Etudes Francophones*, *Housing the Holy: Shrines in Ritual Architecture*, and *Western Monasticism Ante Litteram*.

Syd Bolton is one of the co-founders, co-conveners and trustees of the UK registered charity Methoria and its First Rights and Last Rights programmes, working to promote and protect the rights and interests of migrant children and for the bereaved families of those who have lost their lives as a consequence of migration journeys. Syd qualified in the UK as a lawyer in 2000. He is now resident in France and no longer in UK practice. He specialises in advocacy for children's rights and migrant rights, globally. He has worked as a lawyer for abused children, forced child conscripts, victims of trafficking, survivors of torture and the families of missing and deceased migrants. He has written and published many journal articles and contributed to legal practice and academic textbooks and the legal training of other lawyers. His photo-reportage of the situation of refugees in Europe has been exhibited and was short-listed for a human rights award. His experience as a lawyer, volunteer and activist over many years informs his current work. Since January 2023 he has been a member of the Thanatic Ethics Project Team.

Exile and After: a live performance and discussion around the graphic novel

Félicien de Heusch (University of Liège, Belgium) and Gaspard Njock (La Sorbonne University, France)

Interpreting the practices and narratives developed by research participants is a continuous preoccupation for anthropologists, especially when dealing with creative productions such as ethnographic novels. The artist then achieves a meaningful interpretation of the ethnographic work by translating it within a poetic framework, turning it into drawings, poems, and fictional characters. While the ethnographer creates a narrative based on his or her fieldwork, the graphic novel adds another interpretative layer to the ethnographic narrative. This presentation is built upon the following ethnographic novel project: *Exile and After*. This is the story of Senegalese and Cameroonian migrants evolving in the shadow and on the margin of European cities. These different life trajectories are linked to each other by the disruption of tragedy. Facing precariousness and irregularity, death, as an unpredictable but omnipresent event, brings them together as a community. Death requires them to organize and mobilize to afford a dignified death for those who have not been able to live a dignified life. While they experience irregularity throughout their life, their cold, lifeless bodies are eventually able to fly home legally. The novel explores the transnational thanatic ethics that underpin the journey of migrants to Europe. This work is the result of a collaborative effort involving ethnography, musicology, comics, and humanities. Together, the co-authors will present bilingual readings of excerpts from *Exile and After* and conduct a live drawing performance.

Félicien de Heusch is a postdoctoral researcher at the Centre for Ethnic and Migration Studies (CEDEM), University of Liège. In 2023, he was awarded a Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Latin American Institute, UCLA. His PhD thesis "Mobilizing for and through the Dead: An Ethnography of Senegalese Migrants' Transnational Death Management in Europe" was conducted in the framework of the European Research Council (ERC)-funded project "Migration, Transnationalism and Social Protection in (post-) crisis Europe (MiTSoPro)".

Gaspard Njock is a multidisciplinary artist and PhD candidate in Musicology at La Sorbonne University. His thesis focuses on the relationship between image and sound in the scenography of Richard Wagner's operas. Among his artistic work, he published in 2021 the comics documentary "Mauvaises Aires"; in 2018 "Un voyage sans retour", a watercolor docu-fiction, around the drama of migration, and in 2015 with Andrea Aprile "Aldo Manuzio", a graphic novel around the origin of printing. For more information: <https://www.gaspardnjock.com/>

Speakers' Section

Emily Askew (Lexington Theological Seminary) and Kaia S. Rønnsdal (University of Oslo, Norway)

The Cruelty of Intangibility and the Power of Forensic Hope

"So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." [1]

The ability to let a missing loved one be dead, without forensic evidence of death is almost impossible psychologically and simply cruel theologically.

It is psychologically difficult and they [families of the missing] usually say 'I cannot do that. I cannot stop searching...because it is as if I am abandoning my missing loved one. When I am deciding that my relative is dead, it is as if I am killing that person, my relative, again.' [2]

Any relief to be found in invisibility/intangibility as the hallmark of hope—"hope for things unseen", is revealed as traumatizing against the cold reality of waiting to hear from a missing migrant. We contend that hope in the invisible is not only not useful to families of the missing—it does real damage, as Mercedes Doretti makes clear.

And then there is always this hope. If the loved ones have not returned it is very likely that the person is dead but at the same time it is impossible not to have some hope that maybe something prevented the missing person from communicating. [3]

Instead, through the voices of waiting family members and forensic experts, we offer a humane, pragmatic hope that depends very much on physical evidence. Forensic hope, grounds itself in the known—DNA, artifacts, physical remains and accomplishes what intangible (usually religious) hope cannot—actually setting the groundwork for processes of repatriation, burial and mourning, without question or guilt.

Emily Askew earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy from Smith College graduating cum laude. She received the Master of Arts degree from the University of Northern Iowa with a specialty in Mental Health Counselling. After working as a mental health professional for several years, Dr. Askew was captivated by the theological dimensions of the human experience and returned to school, receiving her Ph.D. in theology from Vanderbilt University. As a Fulbright scholar she studied the impact of Muslim immigration into France and Germany. Her research and publication interests include climate migration, climate gentrification in the US, LGBTQIA migration into the US and the EU and theology and domestic violence.

Kaia S. Rønnsdal is associate professor in the field of leadership, ethics, spiritual and existential counselling/chaplaincy in plural contexts at the Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo, Norway. Her research interests are in the lived practices and human encounters in civil society, addressing issues such as marginality, migration, borders and peripheries, from perspectives including spatial theory, urbanity,

phenomenology and theological ethics. Her research also includes methodological explorations within these perspectives and fields. She is involved with several projects allowing for further explorations on the concept of hospitality in the context of migration. She is the co-editor of *Contemporary Christian-Cultural Values: Migration Encounters in the Nordic Region* (2021) edited by Cecilia Nahnfeldt and Kaia S. Rønsdal in the *Religion, Resistance, Hospitalities Series (RRH)* by Routledge. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2059-9199>

Inès Baude (Université Paris-Saclay, France) and Louise Bur Palmieri

Documenting migration and persecution by marble. The case study of Jewish migrant's collective burials at the Parisian cemetery of Bagneux from the interwar period to the present day.

Being buried in a collective grave with immigrants from the same locality is a little-known burial practice. However, this was a widespread practice among Central European Jews in France, often organized into native associations, still known as “*landsmanshaftn*”. This contribution is based on the study of collective burials of one of these “*landsmanshaftn*” in the Parisian cemetery of Bagneux between 1931 and nowadays. It firstly explores how urban investigation and ethnographic survey can be combined with more traditional materials such as public and private archives to shed light on the social ties forged between immigrants around the ultimate social stage of death. Building a bridge between trajectories of migration and trajectories of persecution in the study of death, this presentation will also put the emphasis on the status of collective burials as memorial and documentary supports of the Shoah. We'll prove how the development of lists of deportees on these graves allows the reconstruction of an order of the death after the genocide. At last, the study of funeral writings and portraits and the reconstitution of the logics guiding the choice of collective burial – and in some cases of exhumations – is an opportunity to examine how death re-enacts the definition of a social group. Material investigation enables us to see death as a crucial moment of definition of social affiliations (gender, generational and migratory) sometimes in conflict and worked on after death by the living ones.

Inès Baude is a PhD student at the European Centre of Sociology and Political Science (CESSP, EHESS) and at the Sociological Research Centre on Law and Criminal Institutions (CESDIP, Paris-Saclay University). She works on trajectories of French people in Algeria after independence and the framing of “deferred repatriation” by the French government, under the supervision of Nicolas Mariot (CESSP-CNRS) and Emmanuel Blanchard (CESDIP, Paris-Saclay University and Sciences Po Saint-Germain-en-Laye).

Louise Bur Palmieri is a PhD-student in history at the Centre d'Histoire Sociale des Mondes Contemporains, she is related to Paris 1-Panthéon Sorbonne. Since September 2023, she has been working on a PhD thesis under the supervision of Emmanuel Bellanger (CHS, Paris 1-Panthéon Sorbonne) and Julian Mischi (IRISSO, Dauphine-PSL) on the involvement of working-class women in the French Communist Party between the wars (1920-1939).

Since their studies at École Normale Supérieure (ENS de Paris), Inès and Louise are members of the ERC Lubartworld research project (directed by Claire Zalc, IHMC-CNRS) about the trajectories of the Jewish inhabitants of Lubartów in Poland between early 1920s and the present day. This contribution is part of this collective survey which combines microhistory of the Holocaust and its aftermath and the transnational history of migrations. Inès and Louise investigate together the collective graves of the Lubartów *landsmanshaft* at the Parisian cemetery of Bagneux.

Cristina Del Biaggio (Université Grenoble Alpes & Laboratoire Pacte, France)

From Blessing Matthew's Case to Systemic Border Violence and Deaths Disentangling Responsibilities and Risks through Forensics Architecture Approach

On 9 May 2018, the body of Blessing Matthew, originally from Nigeria, was discovered in the Durance River, in the French Hautes-Alpes near the border with Italy. The Gap court opened an investigation but eventually dismissed the case in February 2021 without shedding any light on the circumstances of her death or determining any responsibility for it. I took part in the consortium, led by the agency Border Forensics, that conducted a counter-investigation whose aim was to reconstruct the events leading up to Blessing's death. Our analysis indicates that Blessing's death is not an isolated event, but the result of a conjuncture of political decisions and police practices that endanger migrants in their crossing of the Alpine borders.

The paper proposes to analyze the events that occurred in 2018 and the results of the counter-investigation conducted by a transdisciplinary team. The tangle of laws, regulations and practices will be analyzed at different levels to inscribe Blessing's within the migration and border regime and thus overcome the rhetoric of fatality and the discourse attributing the young woman's death to the dangerousness of the mountain environment. To unravel the long chain of responsibilities, I propose to analyze not only the general legal framework (international and national), but also the mission order that the gendarmes who arrested Blessing and the two other fugitives in May 2018 received from their superiors, in order to highlight the discrepancy between orders and practices. This last legislative aspect, locally embedded and dependent on the topography of the site, is less discussed in the literature which generally focuses on the (supra-)national context to explain border deaths.

Cristina Del Biaggio Cristina Del Biaggio is assistant professor in geography at the Université Grenoble Alpes and the Pacte research laboratory. She is interested in the geographical, political and social dimensions of migration. Her current researches focus on the conditions under which exiled persons attempt to cross the Alpine borders. In this framework, I took part in the investigation "The death of Blessing Matthew - A counter-investigation into violence at the Alpine borders", carried out by Border Forensics in collaboration with the NGO Tous Migrants.

<https://www.pacte-grenoble.fr/fr/cristina-del-biaggio>

Antranik Cassem (New York University, USA)

Unearthing the Past: Forensic Approaches in Contemporary Iraqi Fiction

In Arabic, the shared root—šeen, haa, and del—between šāhada (witness) and šahīd (martyr) offers a powerful entry point into discussions of witnessing and death. In this presentation, I will build on this linguistic tension to examine the forensic gaze in contemporary Iraqi novels. Initially, I will explore the aesthetic dimensions of the novel as a means to document the deaths of individuals or groups, forced expulsions, and various Iraqi conflicts, as narrativized from within the realities of post-2003 Iraq.

Nassif Falak, in his novel 'Aīn al-Dūd (The Eye of the Worm, 2010), asserts the necessity for this gaze and its significance: "A gap in time and in space has to be found to reach the memory of the land and discover the skulls and bones of those who were killed or buried alive in our mass graves, in order for us to give them flesh and blood and tell people the stories of the blood that went to waste in the dust of the desert" (Falak, 212). I contend that the gap in time and space identified by Falak signifies an investigative gaze

used by many contemporary Iraqi novelists to contextualize and reveal the machinations that led to the demise of distinct individuals and communities.

While such explorations can be found in many Iraqi novels, I will focus on works by Sinan Antoon, Lutfiya al-Dulaimi, Nassif Falak, Diyā' Jubaylī, and Inaam Kachachi. These novelists articulate the loss present in Iraq and the experience of mourning from exile, expressing grief from afar. This is most evident in the "electronic cemetery" in Inaam Kachachi's *Tashari* (2013). I will demonstrate how Iraqi literature addresses the questions of witnessing and the impact of death on individuals and communities as it investigates the past and its consequences on the present in Iraq.

Antranik Cassem is a writer, translator, and researcher who recently earned his doctorate from the Department of Comparative Literature at New York University. He works in Arabic, Armenian, English, and Spanish. His work will be featured in the forthcoming anthology *Naseej: Becomings of Palestine*, published by Insaniyyat, the Palestinian Society of Anthropologists, and will be published in Arabic by Mutawassit. His scholarly articles have appeared in *ASAP Journal*, and his translations are featured in *Asymptote Journal* and *Rialta*. His work focuses on themes of coloniality, necropolitics, genocide, poetics, translation, literary expressions of climate change, and historicity in fiction, particularly in Iraq and Armenia and their diasporas.

Cédric Courtois (University of Lille, France)

“[T]he charred body of a dead man whose head has morphed into something gory”: The Poetics and Politics of Death in Chigozie Obioma’s *The Road to the Country* (2024)

In 2007, Nigerian writer Dulue Mbachu, author of a novel entitled *War Games*, explains that “[t]he truth is that up till this day, the complete story of Biafra has not been told. You cannot talk about Nigeria without Biafra”. When the first postcolonial conflict broke out on May 30 1967, the Igbo were targeted — “slaughtered like chickens” — and a famine was deliberately organised by the Nigerian authorities in the secessionist region of Biafra. The latter capitulated on January 15, 1970. What remains of this period are photos and footage of Biafran refugees, particularly children, that were suffering and dying from starvation and mass killings. At the time, these images shocked the western world.

More recently (2018), Chika Oduah, a Nigerian-American journalist, has explained that “[b]eyond Biafra, there are so many moments of history in Africa that need more documentation by Africans to capture the way people experienced them”. One of these moments is the Nigerian Nigerian Biafran war. Its cataclysmic consequences are explored in four Nigerian novels in order to bring to the fore the sheer horror endured by those who were hunted down: Buchi Emecheta’s *Destination Biafra* (1982), Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2005), Uwem Akpan’s *Say You’re One of Them* (2008), and Chigozie Obioma’s *The Road to the Country* (2024). I aim to ponder over the aesthetic (and political) representations of this conflict and the ensuing forced migrations and mass killings. I will also explore the evolution of these representations from 1982 to 2024. How do these novels contribute to a form of forensics, in the sense that they develop (literary) techniques to explore the countless crimes? How do these novels investigate the trauma of the war by focusing on the bodies of the dead and the traces they may have left behind? What type of gaze do these novels bring into the conversation? How can they contribute (or not) to a form of reparation in this context?

Cédric Courtois is Senior Lecturer in Anglophone studies at the University of Lille, France. He specialises in Nigerian literature, which was the focus of his PhD dissertation on the contemporary Nigerian rewritings

of the Bildungsroman. He has published various articles and book chapters on mobility studies, refugee literature, LGBTQIA+ studies, etc. Among his recent publications are “Politics and Poetics of (De)colonization in Namwali Serpell’s *The Old Drift* (2019)” (2023) for *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*; “Visibilizing ‘Those Who Have No Part’: LGBTQIA+ Representation in Contemporary Nigerian Fiction in English” (2022), among others. He has been active in the “Thanatic Ethics: The Circulation of Bodies in Migratory Spaces” project (<https://www.thanaticethics.com>).

Karim Daanouné (Université Paul Valéry-Montpellier 3, France)

“Destiny has been derailed”—War and Massacre in Etel Adnan’s *The Arab Apocalypse*

Etel Adnan’s long poem *The Arab Apocalypse* (1989) addresses the Civil war in Lebanon and more specifically, the siege of Tel al-Za’atar, a Palestinian refugee camp in the northeastern part of Beirut. Originally published in French in 1980 and translated by Adnan herself, the poem is composed of 59 sections which correspond to the 59-day siege of the camp of Tel al-Za’atar which culminated in a massacre on August 12, 1976. The poem is very cryptic in its form as it displays images, or rather an asemic kind of writing. Yet those signs or marks are clearly integral to the poetic syntax rather than merely illustrative. The fragmented narrative that unfolds elicits vivid images of bodily putrefaction and excretion, disease imagery and explicit slaughter to portray the massacre and the war. Additionally, it resorts to a whole range of characterizations, including that of the sun and the sea, to convey the cataclysmic scale and intensity of the crimes. Amidst those planetary and elemental catastrophes—“matter is desperate” (36)—involving the sun in almost every single page, an anonymous speaker, addressing us in the first-person pronoun, navigates the poem and serves as a witness. However, the speaking ‘I’ is, according to Hilary Plum, more than simply a witness. It is a victim but also an executioner. I would like to posit that the symbolism at stake in the poem which accounts for a total war and the mutability of the “I” which oscillates between complementary, yet contradictory, positions with idiosyncratic gazes may provide aesthetic forensics grounded in ethics in the face of mass killing.

Karim Daanouné is Associate Professor in Contemporary American Literature at University Paul Valéry-Montpellier 3, France. His research centers on contemporary American literature which includes Arab American and Arab Canadian writing. He has written on Don DeLillo, John D’Agata, Brian Evenson and Philip Metres. His work is concerned with the intersection between poetics, ethics and politics. Lately, he has been focussing his attention on the notion of “Listening” in/to literature. He is a member of the editorial board of the online journal [Transatlantica](#), a publication of the French Association for American Studies ([AFEA](#)).

Camilla Fojas (Arizona State University, USA)

Media Forensics of Death on the US-Mexico Border

In the Spring of 2022, the news media and members of the Douglas and Bisbee communities in Southern Arizona reported that a woman attempting to climb the border wall near Douglas became entangled in climbing gear and, according to the Guardian, “hung upside down [for] ‘a significant amount of time,’” leading to her death by asphyxiation. She was left to die, by those who travelled with her and by agents on the scene. Though the details surrounding her death are murky, her fate and story aligns with so many others along the border in which the failures of the humanitarian state enable the work of the brutal security infrastructure. Moreover, in the current state of the surveillance regime at the border, the permanent visibility at the nation’s edge, obviates assertions that her accident was not seen or that interventions were deployed as expeditiously as possible. In many other such circumstances, migrants are

seen but left to suffer and die. Douglas offers a close view of the interplay of technologies of surveillance and techniques of border security. The border under surveillance is the site of obscene violence, violence that has been off-scene or unseen but is now hyper visible, mediated and transmitted globally. I explore the mediation of border violence in mass media to trace how visual evidence of death is framed, interpreted, and consumed.

Camilla Fojas is Foundation Professor and Director of the School of Social Transformation at Arizona State University. Her research explores mediated cultures of the Americas and the Pacific through the axes of empire, security, and race with a focus on the U.S.-Mexico border within the context of the expanding borders of the United States. She has 6 books on these topics, most recently *Border Optics: Surveillance Cultures on the US-Mexico Frontier* (NYU Press, 2021), *Zombies, Migrants, and Queers: Race and Crisis Capitalism in Pop Culture* (Illinois, 2017), and *Islands of Empire: Pop Culture and U.S. Power* (UT Press, 2014). She is working on a new book, *Im/material Border: Surveillance Infrastructure on the US-Mexico Border*. She lives in Phoenix and Bisbee, Arizona.

Rahul K. Gairola (Murdoch University, Australia)

From Partition Necropolitics to Digital Biopolitics: Reincarnation of Resistance in Online Archival Narratives of the 1947 Partition Archive

This paper proposes to examine the necropolitics of Partition survivors online by engaging in a study of the 1947 Partition Archive. Founded by Guneeta Singh Balla and based at the University of California, Berkely, the archive coalesces a crowd-sourced community of activists who are collecting the story of a generation of Partition witnesses before they pass away. As such, these refugee/ migrants are doubly tangled in the necropolitical web: they escaped the cross-border genocide of Partition wrought the British Crown's self-interest at the close of WWII, and now are subject to death as age creeps forward. That is, ironically, these "liminal diasporas," to use a term I coined in 2019, have marched from the jaws of post-colonial necropolitics into those of mortality biopolitics wherein both destinations inevitably lead to death. We could even say that this is also the case for Palestinians in Gaza, although it appears that they would be perpetually oscillating between the jaws of post-colonial necropolitics. However, I would propose that the opposite is occurring for liminal diasporas of the Partition in the digital milieu. Indeed, the oral recording and digital archiving of these seniors, whose bodies/ memories/ stories are themselves biological archives of Asian trauma, is another kind of migration but into an eternal format. To further explore this contention, I comparatively analyse the digital narratives of three different Partition migrants currently living in different places around the globe by using a digital forensics methodology.

This methodology, pioneered by Cliff Stoll, who in 1986 utilised computer and network forensics methodologies to track notorious network hacker Markus Hess in 1986. Stoll, whose investigation made use of computer and network forensic techniques. These narratives are accessible on the website of the *1947 Partition Archive*. Given that all humans arrive and depart in the throes of death, Partition witnesses in this millennium acquire a modality of digital biopolitics that evokes a kind of cultural reincarnation. This talk, then, attempts to seek a less bleak outlook on liminal diasporas doubly exposed to death; in this talk, I argue that the physical violence imposed by the British Empire during Partition is potentially avenged in a digital life form that eternally condemns the Crown – even in post-colonial, biological death. I thus engage in a digital ethnographic project that draws on diaspora and postcolonial studies to comparatively track death within death as a kind of new life in the digital milieu – a kind of virtual life that is eternal in its indictment of the British Empire by serving as a material witness to atrocities of the Partition across borders.

Rahul K. Gairola is The Krishna Somers Senior Lecturer in English and Postcolonial Literature and a Principal Fellow of the Indo-Pacific Research Centre (IPRC) in the School of Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences (HASS) at Murdoch University, Western Australia. He has published six books and over 50 peer-reviewed research articles and has delivered invited talks and conference papers around the world for over two decades. He previously taught at the Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee, and The City University of New York, USA. He is an editor for both Routledge and Oxford University Press and is a 2024 Research Fellow at the University of Münster, Germany, under the Marie-Skłodowska-Curie-Programme of the European Union.

Angshuman Kar (The University of Burdwan, India)

Marichjhapi, Oral History and Forensic Aesthetics: Reading Deep Halder's *Blood Island*

Marichjhapi massacre has resurfaced in Bengal politics in the twenty-first century, especially after Nandigram massacre of 2007. In the recent past, quite a few works have been published to bring to the fore the real story of Marichjhapi which was buried "somewhere between manufactured lies and stifled cries" (Halder). The latest addition to the list is Deep Halder's *Blood Island: An Oral History of the Marichjhapi Massacre* (2019), an incisive attempt at unearthing a state-crime hidden for long. Using a forensic gaze, this book writes an oral history of one of "the most controversial atrocities in post-Independence India" (in which, according to some estimates, around ten thousand Dalit refugees were killed) by interviewing a few survivors of the massacre. The way the interviews have been scripted by Halder shows how, while writing the book, he was trying to construct a forensic aesthetics of journalism fit for oral history.

Keeping in mind Bruno Latour's assertion that "facts do not speak for themselves," this paper will close-read *Blood Island* vis-à-vis a few historical documents, such as, newspaper reports, government notices, a few letters like the one mentioned above as well as research findings of Annu Jalais, Ross Mallick et al to argue that forensic aesthetics demands the oral historian's unbiased and inclusive mediation of the object under restoration in order to place it in the forum of reading public convincingly. Even slightest lapse in this regard might betray the purpose of using the forensic for unearthing incidents of injustice and state-crimes. In so claiming, the paper will also try to identify the features that constitute forensic aesthetics.

Angshuman Kar is Professor of English, Director, Centre for Australian Studies and former Head, Department of English and Culture Studies, The University of Burdwan, India. He has also served the Sahitya Akademi (National Academy of Letters in India) as the Secretary of the Eastern Region. As the holder of the Australia-India Council Fellowship (2006) he pursued research on Aboriginal petitions in different universities in Australia. He was offered the Distinguished Visitorship by Australian National University, Canberra in 2020. He has presented papers/chaired sessions in several national and international seminars/conferences in India and abroad including those held at Oxford and Edinburgh. Kar's books include *Partition Memoirs from Two Bengals*, *Reception of Indian Diaspora in India*, *The Politics of Social Exclusion in India: Democracy at the Crossroads* and the like. His articles have appeared in prestigious international journals like *Journal of South Asian Review*, *American Notes and Queries*, *Antipodes*, *Asiatic* and *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*. He has also been published by Routledge, Bloomsbury and Anthem-Wimbledon. Kar has completed a UGC-sponsored Major Research Project on Indian Diasporic Fiction and an Australia-India Council supported project designed for translating

Australian Aboriginal poetry into Bengali. As a poet, Kar is the recipient of several prestigious awards and has read poems in the US, Scotland, Germany and Bangladesh.

Nives Ladina (University of Rome, Italy)

'The Drowned and the Saved': A view on the Embedded Memories of Conflict and Racial Discrimination among Migrant Victims of Torture and Intentional Violence in Sicily, Italy

Over the past two decades, the number of people who have died or disappeared attempting to cross the liquid border of the central Mediterranean has increased dramatically. Those who manage to survive and reach Italy often apply for asylum or protection. This procedure requires the applicant to report in front of a commission his or her story and the reasons that led him or her to undertake the journey. To provide credibility to the testimony, lawyers who follow applicants may advise them to undergo a medico-legal assessment. The examination certifies the compatibility of the marks on the bodies with the stories of violence suffered in the home country and those of transit, although the commissioners only consider the former, thus creating a hierarchy in the experience of pain.

The proposal aims to illustrate - through observations in a Sicilian Legal Medicine clinic for migrant victims of torture and intentional violence - how what is at stake during the examination is not only the production of a written report. The marks on the bodies of the living become the material substratum through which migrants co-construct individual and collective histories with the medical team. These stories recount conflicts in foreign countries where family members have disappeared, travelling friends abandoned in the desert by smugglers, and discrimination in North African countries against sub-Saharan people subjected to abuse and imprisonment. Those who speak tell of all those who perished along the way and whose bodies, bearing the same scars, will never be found.

Nives Ladina is a PhD candidate in History, Anthropology and Religions at Sapienza University of Rome. She received her bachelor's degree in philosophy at the University of Milan and her master's degree in Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences at the University of Milano-Bicocca. At the same university, she completed her education with a postgraduate course in Critical Theory of Society. Her research interests concern victims of borders, torture and intentional violence crossing the Central Mediterranean; the intersection between forensic disciplines, legal medicine, and migration; and human and material remains. Besides her research activities, Nives is a tutor at the University of Milan for students with disabilities and specific learning disorders. Furthermore, she participates in the network on Death and Oblivion NIMO, is a board member of the climate change research-action association HIMBY and is part of the editorial board of the independent anthropology journal ALEA.

Giorgia Mirto (Columbia University, USA)

Beyond Bodies: Rethinking Forensic Practices in Border Deaths

The way forensic action mediates between the dead and the living has been discussed extensively in the "forensic turn" in the social sciences. But can deathwork be interpreted as an act of mourning? In this paper I examine these questions in the context of the identification of border deaths in the central Mediterranean.

In 2016, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) played a crucial role in supporting identification efforts following the April 18, 2015 shipwreck that claimed 1,200 lives. The intervention marked a paradigmatic shift framing the Mediterranean as a conflict zone, akin to a war zone.

The ICRC's approach departed from traditional forensic methodologies by employing a non-body centered method, challenging prevailing assumptions within the forensic turn. This innovative method drew parallels between missing migrants in the Mediterranean and the highly politicized question of the desaparecidos in Argentina, underscoring broader socio-political issues.

Drawing on my involvement as consultant on this initiative, as well as my continued ethnographic engagement on this issue in Southern Italy for my doctoral research, this paper integrates inquiries into the intersections between forensics, the political and mourning work. If grief work is about subsuming death within ritualized practices capable of making sense of it, to what extent can we read forensic action as mourning? If mourning practices are inherently collective, what are the political implications of non-body based forensic approaches? This paper aims to contribute to the discussion about “forensic turn” and social and political implications of deathwork.

Giorgia Mirto is a researcher and anti-racist activist hailing from Sicily, Southern Italy. Her work focuses on border death, particularly the mourning practices and political ramifications surrounding this issue. Giorgia pursued her PhD in Anthropology at Columbia University, conducting fieldwork along the Sicilian coast. Her research delves into the treatment of bodies, relatives, material remains, and reliquary traces following migrant maritime disasters, exploring how these aspects influence the struggle over the incorporation of the body and person of the unknown migrant. For over 15 years, Giorgia has been deeply involved in various research projects about Italian protocols for managing, burying, and identifying migrants' bodies recovered from the Mediterranean Sea. Beyond academia, Giorgia's activist engagement contributes to a wide network of actors aiming at supporting family members of the disappeared and their collectives who are seeking truth and justice on both sides of the Mediterranean.

Alan Rice (University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK)

African American Mutiny, Riot and Death in a Lancashire Village: The Strange and Inspiring Battle of Bamber Bridge and its Commemoration

In June 1943 a few days after the Detroit Riots, African American troops from the segregated 1151 Quartermaster Truck Regiment reacted against the racist behaviour of the American military police in the small Lancashire village of Bamber Bride just outside Preston. This MP behaviour was ubiquitous in Britain where the American military authorities attempted to impose Jim Crow segregation as they felt that anything less was undermining to the proper disciplining of Black troops. The flashpoint of the incident was drinking up time at Ye Olde Hob Inn when the MPs sought to make an arrest of a Black GI over a trivial misdemeanour. Locals expressed their outrage and supported the African American troops in protecting their colleague from arrest. This continued the pushback against the oppression of the GIs where locals often showed their support for the troops in their midst. The MPs came back with reinforcements and over 5-6 hours of intensive conflict with over 400 bullets fired up and down the main thoroughfare of the village what became known as the Battle of Bamber Bridge was fought. This paper will examine narratives of the incident from the court martial transcripts to eyewitness testimony from the villagers. It will examine the racialised proceedings of the court martial with its highly charged and discriminatory language and contrast the conviction of over 30 of the men for mutiny and other charges with the lack of investigation of the death of Private William Crosland who was shot and later died in the battle. The paper will examine the memorialisation of the event in 2023 where organised commemorations happened alongside spontaneous guerrilla memorialisations at the spot where Crosland fell. It will use the concept of “guerrilla memorialisation” I developed in my 2010 work *Creating Memorials, Building Identities: The Politics of Memory in the Black Atlantic* to examine anew this hitherto rarely investigated incident. The

paper will discuss the forensics of bullet holes still extant today and the way locals use them as active markers of the tragedy that happened in their midst. The paper will examine the death of Crosland and the traumatic legacy for the shamed black troops in the wider context of the war against fascism, the later civil rights movement and the nascent campaign for a pardon for Crosland and those convicted of mutiny whilst they were fighting segregation.

Alan Rice is Professor in English and American Studies at UCLan, Preston, co-Director of UCLan RKE Institute for Area and Migration Studies (AMIS), Director of UCLan Research Centre on Migration, Diaspora and Exile (MIDEX), and co-Director of Institute for Black Atlantic Research (IBAR).

He has published *Radical Narratives of the Black Atlantic* (2003), *Creating Memorials, Building Identities: The Politics of Memory in the Black Atlantic* (2010) and *Inside the Invisible: Memorialising Slavery and Freedom in the Life and Works of Lubaina Himid* (2019). In 2021 he curated the exhibition *Lubaina Himid: Memorial to Zong*. Most recently in 2023 together with Lancaster Black History Group and Facing the Past he has rolled out his Lancaster Slave Trade, Abolition and Fair Trade Tour to new audiences and written the catalogue *Facing the Past: Black Lancastrians* for Lela Harris's exhibition. In 2023 with Preston Black History Group he organised landmark commemorations for the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Bamber Bridge.

Arkadi Zaides (University of Antwerp, Royal Conservatoire Antwerp, Ghent University, Belgium) and Christel Stalpaert (Ghent University, Belgium)

Spectral Infrastructure Revealed: Counter Forensic Processes at Necropolis (United)

In the discourse of the freethought collective, spectral infrastructures encapsulate “textures, rhythms, atmospheres, invocations, gestures, vernaculars, and affects¹” that introduce disruption within what seems an otherwise efficient organism. Given the ongoing fatalities at European borders and intensified border fortifications, these deaths can be seen as “the ephemeral glue in an affective modality²,” which reflects a catastrophic legacy that perpetuates Europe's extensive history of colonisation.

For literary scientist Thomas Keenan, 'assigning names and histories after the event of annihilation³' is crucial when the aim of the disappearance 'is not just to erase people but also their history and their rightful claim to share the earth with others⁴.' He uses the term 'counter-forensics' to describe identity restoration as an essential 'process of political resistance and mourning.⁵'

The ongoing performance project *Necropolis*, initiated by choreographer Arkadi Zaides (PhD, UGhent, UAntwerp) and the FWO-funded research project *Necropolis United* (UGent, PI Christel Stalpaert), both aim to establish an ecology of mourning—a dignified tribute to those who have died or disappeared during migration. Zaides' counter-forensic practice involves the search for and geolocation of graves of migrants buried on European soil, giving rise to a spectral infrastructure constructed through the process of getting in proximity to the remains of deceased migrants. The *Necropolis United* project brings a diverse group of collaborators to develop a virtual memorial commemorating these migrant deaths, in close collaboration with the concerned communities. In this presentation, I will walk through the main pathways of this multidisciplinary project, providing insights into the challenges, aims, and aspirations, demonstrating how interdisciplinary collaboration can honour memory and advocate for the dead.

Arkadi Zaides works as a choreographer, curator, and researcher. He obtained a master's degree at the AHK Academy of Theatre and Dance in Amsterdam. Since 2021, he is a doctoral researcher in the Arts at the University of Antwerp, Royal Conservatoire Antwerp, Ghent University, and KASK/School of Arts

(HoGent). He is a member of the CORPoREAL research group at the Royal Conservatoire Antwerp and the research centre S:PAM (Studies in Performing Arts & Media) at Ghent University. His performances and video installations have been presented at numerous dance and theatre festivals, museums, and galleries across Europe, North and South America, and Asia. Zaides is a recipient of various awards, among them a prize for demonstrating engagement in human rights issues, awarded to him by the Emile Zola Chair for Interdisciplinary Human Rights Dialogue.

More info: www.arkadizaides.com

Christel Stalpaert is Senior Full Professor at the Department of Art History, Musicology and Theatre Studies at Ghent University (Belgium). She is director of the research centre S:PAM (Studies in Performing Arts and Media) and co-founder of the FWO-funded research network CoDa (Cultures of Dance). She was a Distinguished Visitor at the University of Alberta (Edmonton, Canada) in March 2023 and publishes widely in the field, in journals such as *Performance Research* and *The Drama Review*. She recently published *Performance and Posthumanism* (with van Baarle and Karreman, Palgrave 2021). She is currently writing her monograph on *Hyphenated Thinking: Performing Arts Activating Ecological Awareness*.

Non-Speaker Panel Chairs

Laurent Bonnefoy (Sciences Po Paris, France)

Laurent Bonnefoy is a CNRS researcher in political science at the Centre de recherches internationales, Sciences Po in Paris. His focus is mainly on mobilizations in the contemporary Arabian Peninsula. Among other publications, he is the author of *Salafism in Yemen. Transnationalism and Religious Identity* (Hurst/Columbia University Press, 2012) and he recently co-edited *Arab Youths. Leisure, culture and politics from Morocco to Yemen* (Manchester University Press, 2023). He lived and worked for numerous years in Arab societies, Yemen and Oman in particular as well as in Palestine where he headed the local branch of the Institut français du Proche-Orient for more than two years.

Marianne Dugeon (Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3 University, France)

Marianne Dugeon is a Lecturer in English Studies at Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3 University, France. Her research focuses on politically-committed British playwriting from the 19th century to the present. She has published articles and edited and co-authored books on David Edgar, but also Oscar Wilde, Samuel Beckett and Tom Stoppard. She recently edited *Medieval and Early Modern England on the Contemporary Stage* (Cambridge Scholars, 2021). As a member of the Maison Antoine Vitez, a non-profit organization dedicated to the translation into French of plays from all languages, she has co-translated several plays including Stoppard's *The Hard Problem* (Nouvelles Scènes, PUM, 2017) and *The Invention of Love* (Nouvelles Scènes, PUM, 2022) as well as documentary plays, among which Wolé Oguntokun's *The Chibok Girls: Our Story* (publication in progress). She is currently working on community plays and other experiments in amateur theatre.

Nicolas Fischer (Centre de recherche sociologique sur le droit et les institutions pénales, CESDIP, France)

Nicolas Fischer is a CNRS Research Fellow in Political Science at the Centre for Legal and Penal Institutions Sociology (Centre de recherche sociologique sur le droit et les institutions pénales, CESDIP). His recent research has dealt with the administrative detention of foreigners in France, penal detention and issues of Human Rights within detention facilities, and more broadly on the tension between violent repression and legal protection of stigmatized populations in democracies. He is currently completing a research on the recent litigation against judicial executions by lethal injection in the United States.

He is the author of *Le territoire de l'expulsion. La rétention administrative des étrangers et l'Etat de droit en France* (Lyon: ENS Editions, 2017) and co-author (with Pr. Camille Hamidi) of *Les politiques migratoires* (Paris: la Découverte, 2016).

Filippo Furri (Institut Convergences Migrations Paris, France)

Filippo Furri, a researcher in anthropology and fellow of the convergences migration institute (Paris), has been working since 2012 on the issue of people who have died or gone missing in migration, both by studying the evolution of forensic medicine arrangements at national level and by supporting families and civil society organisations in their research. He has taken part in the MECMI (deaths in the context of migration) and MOCOMI research programmes. He is a member of the Migreurop network and the Boats4people coalition, and has collaborated with Forensic Oceanography/Border Forensics, Euromed Droits, Last Rights and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Carolina Kobelinsky (University of Paris Nanterre, France)

Carolina Kobelinsky is CNRS Research fellow in anthropology at the Laboratory of Ethnology and Comparative Sociology, University of Paris Nanterre. Her current research deals with the material and symbolic treatment of dead migrants at the Southern borders of Europe. Her latest publications are *Relier les rives. Sur les traces des morts en Méditerranée* (with F. Furri, La Découverte, 2024), and a co-edited volume (with L. Rachédi) entitled *Traces et mobilités posthumes. Rêver les futurs des défunts en contextes migratoires* (Pétra, 2023).