

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

BODIES ON THE EDGE : LIFE AND DEATH IN MIGRATION



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

ABSTRACTS AND BIOS

APRIL 28-30, 2022

MAISON FRANÇAISE
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ABSTRACTS AND BIOS

Nada Afiouni

Dead Migrants: The Journey from a Taboo to a Media Subject

The starting point of this article is the tragic death of three undocumented migrants in the river port of Port-Jérôme-Sur-Seine (Normandy, France) in September 2003. The focus of my analysis is the response of local actors to what was at the time an unfamiliar situation.

Conducting my research to discover what happened to these bodies, I explored the limited local media coverage of the time and interviewed local actors (associations, individuals and activists). From this enquiry, it emerged that the whereabouts of the bodies remained a taboo subject. Local actors were unable to address the issue of the burial of migrants, and the authorities let their bodies fall into oblivion held in local morgues for more than ten months.

This case sheds light on the trajectory that has been covered over the past eighteen years in relation to the death of migrants, and in particular to post mortem issues and mourning. The paper analyses the treatment of the bodies of dead migrants as they reflect the response of local actors to a situation for which they found themselves ill-equipped and ill-prepared not having yet developed what Laczko describes as the counting rhetoric.

Building on these findings, the paper provides a critical overview of the changes that have been undertaken over the last two decades by local associations, local authorities, and port administrators to accompany migrants' death within their jurisdictions.

Nada Afiouni is a senior lecturer at Le Havre Normandie University and a CI Migration fellow (2021-2025). Her research focuses on cultural pluralism and religious minorities from a cross-cultural perspective. Her areas of specialisation include funerary rituals in the context of migration, and particularly the funerary rituals of Muslim minorities in France and Britain. She specialises in public policy, multiculturalism, discrimination, minority death and citizenship.

Franck H. Andrianarivo

Textual *Famadihana* in the Work of Jean-Luc Raharimanana

Famadihana, known abroad as the “turning of bones” ritual, is an exhumation practice from Madagascar that the living perform to remember their dead. For the *mpamadika* (practicers of *Famadihana*), this ritualized post-mortem care given to human remains is a sacred duty and an ethical obligation that they, as living descendants, owe to their dead ancestors. In this presentation, I show how this traditional ritual of passing can be transposed, in a metaphorical way, to the works by Franco-Malagasy writer Jean-Luc Raharimanana. In all of his texts, the author reactivates the festering wound of the March 29, 1947 Malagasy uprising against French occupiers of the colonized African

island. Insatiably, Raharimanana keeps coming back to this foundational trauma of Madagascar's second Republic which is believed to have killed over 89000 people. In addition to a cruel and violent death, these *fahavalo* (insurgents) also died anonymously, without appropriate rituals, and without graves. I argue that in his attempt to counteract this dehumanizing state of the "unritual" of colonization (Loichot), Raharimanana exhumes the re-membered bodies of these women and men *fahavalo* from the un-Malagasy vault of oblivion so as to transfer their remains into a new, textually constructed burial site. I call this process textual *Famadihana*. I hence consider textual *Famadihana* to be a creative project and strategy for fighting contemporary unrituality. Raharimanana's humanistic approach illuminates on the sacred function of art, as books become a sort of makeshift grave used to re-ritualize the desecrated bodies and souls of those left with no trace.

Franck H. Andrianarivo is an Assistant Professor of French and Francophone studies at the American University of Paris. He received his PhD in French from Emory University in Atlanta, GA, where he worked under the direction of Valérie Loichot. Franck also studied at the Université de La Réunion, the University of Sheffield, and the Université François Rabelais of Tours. Before beginning his doctoral work at Emory, Franck taught French for several years at Harvard University. His research interests include Francophone Indian Ocean, African, and Caribbean literatures, cultures, and films. His current book project investigates *Famadihana*, an ancestral exhumation practice from Madagascar, which he employs metaphorically as a framework for analyzing multigeneric insular narratives of La Réunion, Maurice, les Comores, Tromelin, and Martinique, which he studies alongside Madagascar. His articles appear in peer-reviewed journals *French Forum* and *L'Esprit Créateur*.

Emily Askew and Kaia Rønsdal

Every Bone Has a Story

"...[B]order politics makes living migrants some of the most heavily monitored individuals...while dead migrants warrant almost no attention." In the ongoing narrative of migration "crises," we ask how the presence of the body of the dead migrant, either the drowned body on the shores of Lampedusa or the desiccated body under scrub in the Sonoran Desert, changes or even eliminates the possibilities of easy notions of hospitality. Using Rønsdal's complexification of the concept of hospitality through the lens of calling we will argue that non-generative definitions of hospitality, for instance that of guest/host, creates an obscuring binary within a much more complicated, or perhaps simpler engagement. When the relationship between (living) migrant and living (white) non-migrant is more nuanced than static notions of hospitality allow, can fluid hospitality with its sense of calling apply even in cases where one human is dead. If so, what can that tell us about expanding our understanding of and practices of hospitality? "In this treacherous land, every bone has a story."

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 Counseling. 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. Rønsdal 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.

Syd Bolton and Catriona Jarvis

Contemporary Rituality, Its Economics, Its Administration and Politics

Laws, customs, rituals in relation to death differ from country to country. Burial in a marked grave may achieve a degree of certainty for the bereaved and society. In some countries disinterment is usual after a period. In others the dead rest where they are laid indefinitely. In Greece, where bodies of many migrants are found, a body is often disinterred after three years then placed in a common ossuary unless family is willing and able to pay for an individual cask. Death, burial, are repeated, the bereaved experience exhumation followed by reinterment - a second mourning. Another uncertainty is that experienced by Eritrean refugees who travelled to Sicily in 2021 to pay respects to relatives and friends who died in the October 2013 Lampedusa shipwreck, but were unable to locate the graves. The municipality had moved the bodies elsewhere, some said to a 'mass grave.' In this way, the dead had disappeared from their homes, disappeared into the sea, been recovered; disappeared into their first burial site, then re-disappeared, without relatives, loved ones or wider community having been informed or asked about repatriation. A burial society may have helped, as in Zimbabwe. We examine these aspects of human existence through the lens of the Last Rights Mytilini Declaration which sets out obligations of authorities, rights of families and proposes protocols and measures to enable better compliance with these obligations and greater respect for the dead, missing and bereaved.

Syd Bolton Co-Convener and Founder of the "The Last Rights Project", Director of Methoria

Syd Bolton is a UK lawyer (non-practising) specializing in children's rights, refugee and human rights law.

Catriona Jarvis Co-Convener and Founder of the “The Last Rights Project”, Director of Methoria

Catriona Jarvis is a former judge of the United Kingdom Upper Tribunal (Immigration and Asylum Chamber). She has extensive experience working internationally in refugee and human rights, especially regarding the rights of women and children and the bereaved.

Cédric Courtois

African (Precarious and Invisible) Lives in Europe: Caryl Phillips’s “Northern Lights” and Jennifer Nansubuga Makumbi’s “Memoirs of a Namaaso” and “Our Allies the Colonies”

The epigraph to French philosopher Guillaume le Blanc’s *L’invisibilité sociale*, taken from Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*, summarises the main character’s feeling of being invisible as a black man in U.S. society: “I am an invisible man. [...] I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids, and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible, simply because people refuse to see me”. Le Blanc explains that “social invisibility can be analysed as a process whose ultimate consequence is the impossibility to participate in public life”. The character in Caryl Phillips’s “Northern Lights” (based on a true story of British Nigerian David Oluwale, living in Leeds, but also dying there and buried there, “Forever in Leeds”), and Jennifer Nansubuga Makumbi’s “Memoirs of a Namaaso” (whose main character is a Ugandan stray dog that arrives in Manchester, and that is forced to lose its identity as a Ugandan stray to become a British pet) and “Our Allies the Colonies” (whose main character, a Ugandan man, paradoxically renames himself Abbey Baker in order to try and blend in 1950s Britain), all live invisible and, to some extent, precarious lives, that can be deemed “unlivable” (see Butler and Worms in *Le vivable et l’invivable*). In this paper, I propose to analyse the circulation and “(zombified) mobility” (Toivanen) of these precarious (see Le Blanc in *Vies ordinaires, vies précaires*) Africans in Northern Britain, embodiments, for some of them, of spectral figures that haunt the streets of Manchester and Leeds, and that can be said to be both alive and dead. By walking in these cities, these black bodies contribute to shaping them (de Certeau) by simply being visible. However, some of these characters (occasional remarks about other authors writing about Afropeans’ experiences) find themselves in-between life and (social) death, waiting to be recognised in order to feel they (fully) participate in the society they live in. A study of the choice of the short format (short stories for Makumbi) and a (short) biographical account for Caryl Phillips – short story? Novella? Biography? – will also be part of this reflection on the representation of precarious, invisible, and “unlivable” (Butler), African lives in Britain.

Cédric Courtois is a Senior Lecturer 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* and, more generally, on African literatures written in English. He has published various articles and book chapters on mobility studies, refugee literature, and LGBTQ studies, among other things. His research interests include postcolonial literatures, decoloniality, transnationalism,

transculturalism, gender studies, Among his recent publications, we can note « 'She was a remarkable woman' : l'héritage afro-féministe d'Efuru de Flora Nwapa dans *Purple Hibiscus* de Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie et *Sky-High Flames* d'Unoma Azuah » (2021) in *Études littéraires africaines*, « 'Into the Mutation': Osahon Ize-Iyamu's 'More Sea than Tar' as Climate Fiction » (2021) for the Journal *Commonwealth Essays and Studies*, or « Bernardine Evaristo's 'Black' British Amazons : Aesthetics and Politics in *Girl, Woman, Other* » (2021) for the Journal *Études britanniques contemporaines*.

Dominic Davies

Clandestine Crossings: Graphic Narrative as Counter Forensics

From photographs of capsized boats and washed up bodies to distress signals registered on satellite monitors, the Mediterranean Sea is one of the most visible oceans on the planet. For migrants and refugees attempting the crossing, there are as many ways to be seen as there are consequences of being seen, and the “clandestine” quality of Mediterranean migration – its “concealed” or “surreptitious” nature – is just as contingent on image saturation as it is an absence of vision. In the Mediterranean basin, competing and conflicting lines of sight turn the seascape into a hall of mirrors, disavowing any comfortable consensus on the politics of refugee representation in visual media, including graphic narratives.

This paper will read a series of online visual stories about refugee crossings to raise a series of discomfiting questions: who or what are representations of refugees are for? What do they inadvertently invisibilise? What kinds of publics or forums do they create? And what spaces, but also what times, can they draw into view? After an overview of the different ways that refugees are “seen” in the Mediterranean, this paper turns to “Liquid Traces”, a legal case in which the activist organisation Forensic Oceanography used a counter forensic method combining graphic design, aesthetic innovation, and co-opted state-surveillance technologies to turn *the sea itself* into a witness able to testify or “speak” in a court of law. Then, in its second half, the paper suggests the depiction of the Mediterranean crossing in a series of webcomics as a similarly counter forensic practice. In so doing, the paper challenges the idea that comics and other visual media should somehow promote or encourage the viewer’s recognition of the “humanity” or rights of the refugee, replacing it with an emphasis on the need to recognise humanity and citizenship as racially and historically constructed concepts instead.

Dominic Davies is a Senior Lecturer in English at City, University of London, where he is also director of the BA English programme. He holds a PhD and British Academy postdoctoral fellowship from the University of Oxford. He is the author of *Imperial Infrastructure* (2017) and *Urban Comics* (2019), along with several articles in the fields of post/colonial literature, critical infrastructure studies, and visual culture. He is also the co-editor of *Figh7ng Words* (2017), *Planned Violence* (2018), and most recently, with Professor Candida Rifkind, *Documen7ng Trauma in Comics* (2020). He and Professor Rifkind are currently co-authoring a book project entitled *Graphic Refuge: Visuality and Mobility in Refugee Comics*, which is forthcoming with Wilfred Laurier University Press in 2023. Dom is also writing a cultural history of infrastructure in

Britain, from the industrial revolution to “levelling up”, which is due out with Lawrence & Wishart in late 2022.

Félicien de Heusch

States and Diasporas Facing Death in Migration: A Comparative Analysis of the Senegalese and Tunisian Cases Before and During the Covid-19 Pandemic

How do states of origin and their diasporas position themselves in relation to the « right » to body repatriation? By articulating the literature on « death and migration » with the corpus on diasporas and transnationalism, this paper analyzes the relationship between emigrants and the authorities of their country of origin through the prism of death. This study is based on a comparative survey of body repatriation policies in 12 states and on ethnographic fieldwork on the mobilization of Senegalese and Tunisian emigrants' associative networks around the « right » to body repatriation before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. By proposing the notion of a double rejection of « covid bodies » by the States of residence and origin during the pandemic, this article mobilizes the concept of moral economy in the analysis of diaspora policies.

Félicien de Heusch is PhD candidate at the Centre for Ethnic and Migration Studies (CEDEM), University of Liège. He is member of the European Research Council (ERC)-funded project “*Migration, Transnationalism and Social Protection in (post-) crisis Europe (MiTSoPro)*”, under the supervision of Dr. Jean-Michel Lafleur. Before joining the CEDEM, he completed a double MA degree in Immigration Studies at the University of Liège and the University Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, as well as a BA in Anthropology at the National University of Córdoba in Argentina. His PhD thesis focuses on Senegalese migrants' transnational engagement around death in Europe. His further research interests include: migration routes, street vending, social movements and Haitian migration. He conducted fieldwork in Argentina, Brazil, Senegal, Spain and Belgium.

Alexandra Délano Alonso and Benjamin Nienass

The Politics of Mourning: Deaths and (In)Visibility at the US Mexico Border

The invisibility and inaccessibility of the spaces where migrants are buried at the US-Mexico border, and the burial practices focused mostly on minimizing costs rather than representing these losses and leaving a space for individual or collective mourning, reveal a profound inequality in the presence of death for migrants (Martínez 2010, 175), as well as for the relatives who face the limbo of uncertainty when they cannot find those who have gone missing. This inequality reveals as much about the disregard for migrants as recognized members of a political community or their “precarious political position” (De León 2015, 17) as it does about the denial of state responsibility for these violations of rights, in life and in death. Activists and migrant rights organizations try to fill the voids of care and responsibility by politicizing (intentionally or unintentionally) the bodies and remains of the dead migrants and challenging the boundaries of

grievability. In this paper we argue that interventions like these can be understood as a disturbance of a consensus, a “politics of dissensus” in Jacques Rancière’s sense. Following Rancière (2010, 36), consensus is not to be understood here as the outcome of a specific debate or explicit agreement, but as the “partition of the sensible”: the assignment of specific roles by a police order that designates only certain acts as visible and only certain speech as audible, and that ultimately relies on the “absence of voids and of supplements.” Accordingly, political action, the staging of dissensus, always has an aesthetic component in that it undermines existing configurations of the sensible and brings into perception what the partition has so far kept out, for fear of disruption. Our work asks what it means to make these deaths and these spaces visible. How does mourning these deaths publicly and drawing attention to them through activism, advocacy and artistic interventions evoke questions of responsibility and accountability, both at a governmental level but also as a society? In what ways can these interventions, --calling to make visible what has been made invisible-- transform the political conditions that lead to migrant deaths? What are the limits and tensions of a politics of mourning?

Alexandra Délano Alonso is Associate Professor and Chair of Global Studies at The New School and the current holder of the Eugene M. Lang Professorship for Excellence in Teaching and Mentoring. She is co-editor of *Borders and The Politics of Mourning* with Benjamin Nienass (Social Research, 2016). She is the author of *From Here and There: Diaspora Policies, Integration and Social Rights beyond Borders* (Oxford University Press, 2018). Her book *Mexico and Its Diaspora in the United States: Policies of Emigration since 1848* (Cambridge University Press, 2011) was the co-winner of the William LeoGrande Prize for the best book on US-Latin America Relations and was published in Spanish by El Colegio de México in 2014. Her recent projects include *Brotos*, a poetry collection and *Fragments*, a short film that probe political and personal questions in the context of the pandemic. She is co-founder and faculty fellow at the Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility and a member of the Sanctuary Working Group at The New School.

Benjamin Nienass is Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science and Law. His research on the politics of memory has appeared in *The Review of Politics*, *Politics and Society*, the *German Studies Review*, *Globalizations*, the *Latin American Research Review*, and many other journals, as well as in several edited volumes. He is also the co-editor of "Silence, Screen, and Spectacle: Rethinking Social Memory in the Age of Information" (Berghahn, 2014; paperback in 2017) and of special issues in the journals *German Politics and Society*, *Memory Studies*, *Social Research*, and the *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*. Dr. Nienass received his PhD from the Department of Politics at the New School for Social Research in New York and has received fellowships from the Collège d'études mondiales in Paris and the Humanities Center at the University of Rochester. He previously served as co-chair of the memory studies network in the German Studies Association.

Chiara Denaro and Paolo Boccagni

Challenging “Ungrievability” for People Missing at Sea: Spaces of Public Mourning, Search Infrastructures and Claims for Justice

From 2014 onwards, the central Mediterranean Sea has been identified as the deadliest border in the world. While the estimates available are not exhaustive, as they do not include invisible shipwrecks and deaths, they clearly reflect a politically and morally unacceptable state of things. As the critical border studies debate has shown, these deaths reflect the structural violence of border regimes and demand due forms of political accountability and responsibility. At the same time, scholars have been analyzing how dominant power structures shape the visibility, grievability and identifiability of those who are missing and dead at the border, as well as the public narratives on “life and death in migration”.

Keeping this complexity as a background and choosing Lampedusa as a case study, we investigate the politics of challenging of what Butler called “ungrievability”, namely the lack of access to preconditions, spaces, and times of private and public mourning and commemoration. We critically discuss, in this perspective, the interplay between three components of the politics of challenging ungrievability: i) the creation of ‘spaces of commemoration’ through place-making (e.g. in cemeteries, squares, online platforms), time-marking (i.e. recurrent events) and collective action (e.g. civic committees); ii) the search infrastructures of the missing and dead at sea, made of a multiplicity of institutional, non-governmental and civil society actors; iii) the claim for justice and political accountability for those deaths, including through formal legal channels (e.g., trials and criminal reports). Overall, we aim to explore how deaths at sea are differentially perceived, commemorated and addressed, in terms of claims for identification, accountability and justice, among different and often conflicting stakeholders – civil society actors, family members, and public authorities.

Chiara Denaro is a Postdoctoral researcher in Sociology, University of Trento on the project “PRIN- 2017, Debordering activities and citizenship from below of asylum seekers in Italy”. She is a social worker and legal expert, working with migrants and refugees. Her socio-legal research work concerns asylum and migration policies in the Mediterranean space, border control policies, human rights, right to asylum, as well as the practices and strategies of resistance put in place by people on the move. As part of WatchTheMed Alarm Phone, Chiara focuses on the Central Mediterranean route.

Paolo Boccagni is a professor of Sociology, University of Trento, and principal investigator of ERC HOMInG – The home- migration nexus and MIUR HOASI - Home and asylum seekers in Italy. His areas of expertise include homemaking, transnationalism, migration, social welfare, diversity and care. He has recently done research on the views, emotions and representations underlying social work practice with immigrants and refugees in Italy. His publications in social work include papers in the British Journal of Social Work, Ethnic and Racial Studies and the Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies.

Marianne Dugeon

The Haunted Stages of Calais and London: Giving Voice to the Dead in Migration in Joe Murphy and Joe Robertson's *The Jungle* and Selina Thompson's *Salt*

Though British contemporary theatre is famous for its political commitment, few playwrights have yet come to grips with the migrant crisis, probably because of the difficulties of representing on stage the numbers of people involved and the intricacies of the geo-political situations those people stand for. Joe Murphy and Joe Robertson lived in the refugee camp in Calais for 7 months and established Good Chance Theatre there, until the eviction of half of the camp in 2016. They wrote *The Jungle* as a result of their experience. Starting at the point of arrival of the many characters, deadlocked in France and unable to cross the Channel, the play retraces the itinerary of migrants back to their home, giving voice to those who survived but also to the many who died on the journey.

That same year, Selina Thompson embarked on a journey to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, retracing one of the routes of the Transatlantic Slave Triangle, from the UK to Ghana to Jamaica and back, a route that her ancestors had taken. She then wrote and performed *salt.*, a play which reads as an intimate ritual inviting the audience to take part in the celebration of the dead, materializing their presence on the haunted stage through chunks of salt which are scattered by the hammer of the performer and taken back home by the spectators.

This paper aims at exploring the very different dramaturgical choices made in those two plays which both not only narrate the plight of migrants but also give voice and body to the dead in migration.

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* and *The Invention of Love* as well as documentary plays, among which Wolé Oguntokun's *The Chibok Girls: Our Story*. She is currently working on community plays and other experiments in amateur theatre.

Filippo Furri, Carolina Kobelinsky and Françoise Lestage

Databases for the Dead Border-crossers. Activist and Academic Uses under Scrutiny.

The desire to "respect" and/or denounce European Union border deaths has led a number of collectives - emanating in particular from civil society - to develop databases to find the graves of people who died during the crossing and to set up investigations with a view to their identification. In this presentation, we propose a reflection based

on fieldwork carried out in Catania (Sicily), where around 260 bodies have been buried since 2015, and on the French-Italian lower border area between the provinces of Imperia and the department of the Alpes Maritimes, where we have recorded so far around forty migrants who died accidentally since 2015.

First, we will examine the construction of the tool: 1) the actors at the heart of the approach, their negotiations with the various public institutions, as well as with the multiple secular and religious organizations; 2) the territories taken into account, the sources from which the information stored in the database comes from, as well as the choices in the variables put forward. The comparison between Catania and the French-Italian lower border will allow us to highlight the similarities and divergences in both the design and implementation of each database.

In doing so, we will also examine the tension between the general indifference to the border deaths and the involvement of the inhabitants of the border locations involved. Secondly, we will examine how these "humanitarian" databases can be used by researchers - who are sometimes also committed in their construction - as well as the concrete problems that these tools are likely to pose when they are mobilized within the framework of social science research, and among them the problem of secrecy.

Filipo Furri is an anthropologist, finishing a phd at the University of Montreal on the notion of sanctuary cities. Member of the Migreurop network and the Boats4People coalition, he contributed in 2016 to the realisation of a guide for families searching for missing persons in migration; associated with the Mecmi program, he joined Carolina Kobelinsky in the research project in Catania, and Françoise Lestage in the project at the French-Italian border. As a consultant of the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) he participates in the activities of the Missing person project and collaborates with the forensic unit. He participated in particular to the counting death project, an update of the Border Death Database produced by the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam).

Carolina Kobelinsky is an anthropologist, research fellow at the French National Scientific Research Centre (Laboratory of Ethnology and Comparative Sociology). Her current research deals with border deaths. Drawing on an ethnographic approach, she studies the material and symbolic treatment of dead border-crossers at the Southern borders of Europe (Spain, Italy). She has co-edited with L. Rachédi, *Les futurs rêvés des morts. Migrations, traces, mobilités* (ed. Petra, forthcoming) and among her latest articles "The Place of the Dead in the Mediterranean. A Sicilian Experience", *Migration Letters*, 2021, 18 (6) : 711- 719. (with F. Furri & C. Noûs)

Françoise Lestage is an anthropologist, professor at the University of Paris and a researcher at the Unité de Recherches Migrations et Sociétés (URMIS). Her current research is in the field of anthropology of migration and ethnicity and focuses on the relationship between states and migrants, family relationships and deaths in migration. She has published six books, three of which she co-edited, and 62 articles, including most recently "De la conjugalité à distance au soin du corps du conjoint dans un contexte de migration internationale", in Sylvie Fortin and Josiane Le Gall (dir), *Anthropologie et Sociétés*, volume 45, number 1-2, 2021, p. 25-44, and "Comment les cadavres des migrants sont devenus des objets sociologiques. Notes sur quelques

travaux en sciences humaines et sociales (2012-2018), Critique internationale, 2019/2, No. 83, pp. 193-203.

Elsa Gomis

Filmmaking as a Heuristic Tool for Thinking the Visual Aesthetics of the Bodies on the Edge

This paper uses the making of a film as a method for thinking the visual aesthetics of the circulation of bodies of migratory spaces. Who can tell the stories attached to those who disappeared? What can be shown? Can various stories of political violence be connected? It has for starting point the making of a feature fiction provisionally titled *The Gomis*, as a reference for a surname widely spread both in West Africa and in Spain. It recounts this investigation conducted through time and space by two individuals bearing the same surname: one French senior manager dealing with the 'gilets noirs' crisis and one Senegalese kora player whose son is questioning him about their family origins. Victim of hallucinations conjuring past slaves as she deals with the strike of undocumented workers in her waking life, the French character will discover the erasure of her own family story of migration.

The ethics of the visual culture of migration as well as today's conception of the memory of the dead throughout the three stages of the film production.

1. The scriptwriting as way to leverage a set of hypotheses for improving the visual aesth-et[h]ics of migration.
2. The filmmaking for reflecting about the conception of the memory of the dead.
3. The montage as a technique for articulating the legacies of stories of enslavement and forced migration.

Scholarship of Professor of African American Studies Yogita Goyal (2014 and 2017), of philosopher Michael Rothberg (2010 and 2019), in particular notion of 'knots of memory' and of researcher in art Jacob Lund (2019) will constitute the theoretical framework of the study.

Elsa Gomis is a film director and a Visiting Researcher at Maison Française of Oxford and at the University of East Anglia. She recently participated to the project Data Visualisation and Policymaking at Oxford Department of Politics and International Relations as Postdoctoral Research Assistant. She is co-editor of the 'En Images' section of the *De Facto* journal at Convergences Migrations Institute, Paris. Her work explores the connections between the collective imaginary of migration by the Mediterranean and today's European lethal policies. Her feature film *The People Behind the Scenes* has been screened in various places such as COMPAS Oxford and the Collège de France Visual Anthropology seminar. Elsa's work has been selected for the *Bold New Voices in Migration Research Conference* at Harvard Immigration Initiative.

Laura D. Gutiérrez

“Chastisement for Dreamers”: Death and the Post-Deportation Experience in Mexico

In 1976, a man named José Luis Rico Muñoz died in the Mexico City airport shortly after disembarking from the plane that transported him and dozens of other deportees from Texas. His body was then left on display at the entrance to the airport for hours. Initially, officials attributed the death to an injection given to control the effects of drugs he had allegedly taken. However, outcry at the public spectacle of his death led to an investigation and an autopsy which revealed he had died of a fractured cranium from abuse by police officials and guards tasked with monitoring the group of returning migrants.

Rico Muñoz’s death and the violence he experienced represents a larger shift in approaches by Mexican authorities. In the 1970s, Mexico became increasingly concerned with rising rates of deportation. To prevent migrants from immediately recrossing the border, “planelifts” were used to transport deportees to central Mexico, away from the border and their home states. In this paper, I use declassified documents from Mexico’s secret police archive to analyze how the country’s one-party state and the state-controlled press deployed the death of deported migrants to further deter unauthorized emigration, while simultaneously critiquing deportees as spoiled, entitled, and unwilling to work. As they extensively decried the actions of “fascist” U.S. Border Patrol officials against migrants attempting to enter the United States, Mexican officials participated in similar abuse against deported migrants, demonstrating what anthropologist Shahram Kosravi describes as “estranged citizenship” for deportees.

Laura D. Gutiérrez is currently Assistant Professor of Latin American and Latinx history at the University of the Pacific, located in Stockton, California. She is currently completing a book manuscript on return migration to Mexico in the twentieth century. Her work has been published in the *Journal of American Ethnic History*, and she has a forthcoming article in the *Pacific Historical Review*. In addition to her academic work, she serves as an expert witness in asylum cases for migrants from Latin America. Her work has recently been supported by the Institute for Citizens and Scholars, the American Historical Association, and the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies.

Linda Haapajärvi

Monies, Bodies and Belonging. Transnational Family Dynamics from the Perspective of Post-mortem Repatriation Arrangements

Although the cross-border transfer of bodies is an economically, administratively, technically, and emotionally costly and complex operation, every year tens of thousands of bodies leave the European soil to be buried elsewhere. But how do bodies come to board planes? What does it mean to migrants and nation-states to repatriate their deceased kin and citizens? How do the underlying practices shape dynamics of transnational belonging? This paper solves these enigmas by applying tools of relational economic sociology to the study of the post-mortem repatriation

arrangements developed by migrants settled in France and Finland. Based on multisided ethnographic research, it coins the concept of “transnational death money” to investigate how the economic arrangements that permit repatriation function as a foundational dynamic in transnational families. By zooming into three types of transnational death monies – personal savings, diasporic funeral funds and repatriation insurances, it examines the subjectivities and solidarities these monies shape and inquiries into the connections they forge between migrants, states, and markets. The paper offers an empirically grounded and theoretically nuanced account of the ambivalences of transnational money, money that defies nation-states, sets some migrants free while submitting others to its power. Transnational death money matters. By making post-mortem repatriation possible, it conquers ontological insecurities over belonging and makes transnational lives liveable.

Linda Haapajärvi is a post-doctoral researcher in sociology affiliated to Centre Maurice Halbwachs (CNRS-ENS-EHESS), the Centre for Research on Ethnic Relations and Nationalism (University of Helsinki) and to the Institut Convergences Migrations. She defended her thesis on the practice of participatory integration policies targeting migrant women in Helsinki and Paris at the EHESS in 2018 and has so far published the results of this research in *Lien social et politiques*, *Revue européenne des migrations internationales* and *Politics & Policy*. Her work in the field of urban and migration sociology has appeared in *Ethnography* and *Sociologia*. She is currently working on death in migration and in particular in the understudied phenomenon of post-mortem repatriation that she approaches from the perspective of relational economic sociology. Linda Haapajärvi's expertise is focused on migration studies, comparative and ethnographic research, relational theorization, and intersectional and multi-scalar mechanisms of inequality.

Marianna Karakoulaki

A Political Thanatos: Migratory Deaths in the Greek Borderlands

For decades, Greece has been an entry point for migrants who flee adverse conditions. Through the Greek mainland and the sea borders with Turkey, thousands of people have sought safety and security. However, the ultimate destination does not always guarantee safer routes. Violence, disappearances and eventually death are part of those trajectories.

Confronting the visual realities of death can lead to a political shift. When photographs of Aylan Kurdi's dead body lying on the shores of Turkey circulated on global media, they led to the temporary establishment of a safe passage through irregular routes. But the story that follows after the camera lights go off is much darker and more complex. Lack of burial sites for undocumented migrants and bureaucracy is one side of Greece's reality regarding migrant deaths. Lack of political will is the other.

This presentation looks at migrant deaths in Greece from a necropolitical viewpoint. It seeks to trace the steps after the demise of an undocumented migrant in Greece's borderlands. It explores what happens when someone dies, who is responsible for their burial, and what happens when there is limited information about their identity. It attempts to blend death politics with migratory policies and to explore the way they

influence each other. By examining Greece's border crisis between 2015 and 2021, this presentation will ultimately explore the lasting impact of the politicisation of death in migration policies.

Marianna Karakoulaki is currently a part-time PhD Researcher at the University of Birmingham, UK. Her thesis, provisionally titled "Border Violence along the Balkan Route: The Necropolitics of 'Fortress Europe'" explores refugee experiences of borders, violence and death through a necropolitical lens. Marianna is also an award journalist and photojournalist focusing on migration in the eastern Mediterranean, and currently works as the Communication Manager for Media Diversity Institute. Marianna Karakoulaki is the editor of 'Critical Perspectives on Migration in the 21st Century'.

Henriette Korthals Altes

Speaking for the Voiceless/Speaking for the Dead: Ai Weiwei's Poetics and Ethics of Witnessing

In *Frames of War: When is life grievable?* (2009), Judith Butler famously posited a divide between the lives that are individualised and mourned and those lives which are not grieved or grievable, because they 'do not qualify as lives'. Such divide has found resonance in the migrants' crisis, its countless deaths, and the Western failure to respond to the humanitarian emergency.

It is worth reminding that *When is life grievable?* forms of a follow-up to *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning* which exposed the politics of violence led by the Bush administration in the aftermath of 9/11 and construed as an inability to mourn the deaths of the 9/11 victims, a form of pathological mourning as well as a helplessness that is a form of melancholy gone awry. Criticism, in particular Ida Danewid, has argued that Judith Butler's foregrounding of grief, vulnerability and compassion as the bedrock for new forms of cosmopolitanism problematically maintains a (post)-colonial *status quo* in which the West reasserts an ethical superiority and only pays lip service to an ethics of care it otherwise promotes. This paper will focus on Ai Weiwei's work on the migrants' crisis, in particular his documentary film *Human Flow* and his installation art. It will explore the ethical implications of his aesthetic choices and how they manage to sidestep the pitfalls of the euro-centric moral superiority identified by Danewid by giving voice both to those – dead or alive - whose lives have not been spoken for. Calling upon trauma studies (Dauri Laub, Colin Davis), this paper will also flesh out the position of the onlooker, the limits of empathy, and how a melancholy position may be channelled into activism.

Henriette Korthals Altes is Assistant Lecturer at Birkbeck College, University of London. She is also a specialist in 20th and 21st French Literature.

Sonja Loots

Disturbed Graves and Disturbing Afterlives: Reimagining the Remains of Hendrik Witbooi and Sitting Bull

This paper will focus on the lives and deaths of two migrant tribal chiefs from the 19th century. The Sioux chief Sitting Bull was born in present-day Montana, fought many battles in Dakota territory, spent years in exile in Canada and was forced by hunger and desperation to relocate to the United States. He was shot dead in 1890 in Fort Yates, where he was being held prisoner. The Nama chief Hendrik Witbooi was born in South Africa before leading the |Khowesin tribe north to Namibia, where Witbooi and the Nama revolted against German rule. Witbooi was killed in action on the battlefield in 1905. I am particularly interested in the controversies surrounding the burial of their remains, the alleged despoiling of their dead bodies, the exhumation and reburial of Sitting Bull's remains and the disappearance of Witbooi's. I will outline how the conflict and controversies surrounding their corpses were linked to their diasporic, border-crossing lives and how, even in death, they were evacuated and resettled as part of intense battles for symbolic control over them and their legacies. By tracing their literary afterlives, I will illustrate how they are constantly being (re)conceptualised and (re)framed. I will build a bridge between the decimation of the Khoisan peoples of Southern Africa and that of the Native American peoples of Northern America to illustrate how Sitting Bull and Hendrik Witbooi increasingly inform how people of mixed race or diasporic people think of themselves, with the histories of their disturbed graves playing an important role in the commemoration process.

Sonja Loots is a senior lecturer in the Afrikaans and Netherlandic Section of the School of Languages at the University of Cape Town. She is the co-editor of a comprehensive anthology of Afrikaans short fiction, *Die Nuwe Afrikaanse Prosaboek* (Human & Rousseau, 2019). She writes a column about culture and politics for the South African Sunday paper *Rapport*.

Her novel *Sirkusboere* (Tafelberg, 2011) was awarded the M-Net Prize for Afrikaans Fiction, the Eugène Marais Prize, the UCT Book Award and the K. Sello Duiker Memorial Award. She is a board member of the South African Association of Dutch Studies, the Cape Forum for Dutch Studies and the Van Ewijck Foundation. She obtained her PhD at Stellenbosch University with a thesis on encyclopaedic fiction and the oeuvre of South African novelist Marlene van Niekerk.

Yumna Masarwa

Enacting Death and Islamic Funerary Rites in the Shadow of COVID-19

The central aspects in Islamic funerary rites are the ritual washing (*ghusl*) and shrouding (*kafan*) of the deceased. Muslim undertakers and corpse washers emphasize that the ritual mortuary toilet is “therapy” for the bereaved families as the washed and perfumed *dead's body* helps families accept death. Moreover, Muslim corpse washers believe that the dead feel their touch; upon completing the ritual washing and shrouding, they stand next to the deceased's head, place their hand on the deceased's shoulder and ask for forgiveness in case they have hurt him/her during the washing and shrouding. Taking all of this into consideration, one might assume that the *body of the Muslim dead* is an active social agent; this is why I use the terms ‘the body of the dead’ and ‘the dead's body’ rather than corpse or the dead body.

Based on ethnographic research in Marseilles, which includes participant observation with Muslim undertakers and corpse washers, this talk examines how bereaved Muslim families, Muslim funeral homes and the French Council for the Muslim Religion (CFCM) are adapting and reacting to new French government health regulations especially those banning the ritual mortuary toilet (washing and shrouding). I consider that these reactions are not ephemeral and transient but rather enduring responses to the upheavals occasioned by the new regulations, both at the level of funeral home practices and family responses. From my point of view, they open up new ways of enacting funeral rites and death.

Yumna Masarwa (PhD Princeton University) is an Associate Professor and the Director of the School of Art at the American College of the Mediterranean (ACM)/The Institute for American Universities (IAU) in Aix-en-Provence, France. She was trained as an archaeologist and Islamic art historian. Since 2018, she has been conducting a multi-sited ethnographic research in the Mediterranean city of Marseilles focusing on burial and body repatriation among Algerians, and Muslim tombs in French cemeteries.

Federica Mazzara

Objects of Hopes and Death: The Semiotics of the Life Jacket in Contexts of Migration, from Mainstream Media to Art and Activism

The arrival of asylum seekers' boats to Europe from the Middle East and Africa via liquid borders has produced a large quantity of 'debris' and 'waste,' which inevitably carries a meaning that goes beyond its mere opposition to 'utility'. Debris generated by and at violent borders usually consists of personal and domestic items, which testify to a humble attempt of keeping one's life decent, even in the horrific conditions many migrants endure during their unauthorised journeys.

A major source of migrant debris is however represented by the life jackets left behind after rescue operations or floating at sea. In the Western imagery, these objects have become a symbol of the necropolitics of migration, despite being an object whose functional meaning is to save lives.

Over the past decade, a series of artists and activists have made use of these abandoned life jackets to instil a new meaning and upcycle the symbolic function of these otherwise harrowing objects.

This paper will look at some artistic examples including Ai Weiwei, Pedro Pires and Achilleas Souras, as well as some initiatives of recycling run by activists and volunteers such as No Mad Makers, who have repurposed the lifejackets into utility objects.

This paper is interested in answer one main question, which is to what extend are these artistic and militant interventions able to subvert the hegemonic discourse of migration that sees death as an inevitable consequence of an unmanageable crisis?

Federica Mazzara is Reader in Cultural studies at the University of Westminster, London. Author of *Reframing Migration: Lampedusa, Border Spectacle and Aesthetics of Subversion* (Peter Lang, 2019), her current research interrogates contemporary concerns in Europe regarding migration as represented in cultural practices. She also

curated the recent exhibition Sink Without Trace at the P21 Gallery in London, revolving around migrant deaths at sea.

Siobhán McGuirk

Spectres, Spectacles and the Cruel Optimism of *The Walk*

Over July-November 2021, an ambitious art project guided a 3.5-metre-tall puppet of a Syrian child, Little Amal, over 8,000km from the Greece-Turkey border to the UK. According to its producers, *The Walk* aimed “to reignite the conversation about the refugee crisis and to change the narrative around it”. Amal, who “represent[ed] all displaced children”, encountered crowds, celebrities, journalists, and festivals along her tightly-scheduled journey, which ended in family reunification. Three weeks later, at least 27 people drowned in the English Channel as they traced Amal’s route. In this paper, I draw on Lauren Berlant to consider *The Walk* as a cruelly optimistic exercise: ostensibly inspiring action towards the better treatment of migrants while obscuring the necropolitical dynamics habitually encountered by the people Amal is purported to represent. First, I consider Amal as a spectre of refugee children who have died attempting to reach or cross European borders, and particularly of Alan Kurdi, the Syrian toddler whose body washed ashore a Turkish beach in September 2015. Second, I suggest that the spectacle created by *The Walk* is not Amal, nor her journey, but her reception. Amal’s subjectivity as speechless emissary and “innocent” forever-child are essential to both functions. *The Walk*, then, presents a comforting counter-reality: as their governments enact ever-more brutal migration policies, European citizens may project onto Amal the optimism that they can create a radically different socio-political reality – but in masking the horrors of the present, such utopian dreaming only forestalls the more radical actions needed to achieve it.

Siobhán McGuirk is an interdisciplinary scholar, filmmaker and curator based at Goldsmiths, University of London. Her work addresses migration, gender and sexuality, art, activism, and the material culture of social justice movements, and has been published in a variety of peer-reviewed and popular presses. Her co-edited volume *Asylum for Sale: Profit and Protest in the Migration Industry* was published in 2020 by PM Press, and she is an editor and culture columnist for *Red Pepper* magazine.

Olga Michael

Graphic Thanatopoetics and the (In)Visible Spectacle of Death

Drawing from Stuart J. Murrey’s (2006, 2018) analysis of ‘thanatopolitics’ from Achille Mbembe’s (2019) work on ‘necropolitics,’ from Jason de León’s (2015) theorization of ‘necroviolence,’ and from Michel Foucault’s (2005) analysis of ‘*meletē thanatou*’ or the ‘mediation on death,’ in this presentation I examine the rhetorical potential of *thanatos* occurring in the context of border crossings from Africa and Asia to Europe during the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ in print and digital graphic narratives. To refer to depictions

of *thanatos* through comics, as well as to their close examination, I introduce the term 'graphic thanatopoetics,' which, I argue, entails the potential for unveiling the Western structuring of particular deaths as invisible in its demonstration of how these become visually embodied. I look, inter alia, at how depictions of dead bodies and their treatment can differ from those embodied in photographs such as that of Alan Kurdi. My analysis is built on the premise that certain deaths tend to become obscured, unseen, or unrecognized, consequently obscuring their (political) causes, and it thus seeks to address the question of whether the comics medium can potentially shed light on such invisible or obscured deaths and to thus render them visible, unveiling, at the same time, the political potential of the spectacle of death. The texts I focus on are *Illegal*, by Eoin Colfer et al. (2018), *Zenobia* by Morten Dürr and Lars Horneman (2017), and 'An Empty Promise' from *PositiveNegatives* by G. Frödén and Jarbrain (2017).

Olga Michael is a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of English, University of Cyprus. She is currently working on the completion of two monographs (under contract with Bloomsbury Academic): *Human Rights in Graphic Life Narrative: Reading and Witnessing Violations of Others in Anglophone Texts* and *Migrant Stories and the New European Literary Canon: The Rise of the Ethnotopographic Narrative in 21st-Century Europe* (co-authored with Nelson Gonzalez Ortega). Her forthcoming publications also include '21st-Century African and Asian Migration to Europe: The Rise of the Ethnotopographic Narrative (co-authored with Nelson Gonzalez Ortega for a special issue of *Studies in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Literature* on 'Narratives of Migration in Europe,' edited by Farid Laroussi) and 'Injurious Metaphors and (Non-)Art as Activist Counter-Discourse to Greece's "Refugee Crisis,"' (co-authored with Jovana Mastilovic for *Representing 21st-Century Migration in Europe: Performing Borders, Identities and Texts*, edited by Nelson Gonzalez Ortega and Ana Belen Martinez Garcia, Berghahn).

Ruta Nimkar and Matthew Porges

Borders, Necropolitics, and the Migrant Experience: Case Studies on the Route from Afghanistan to Europe

Images of migrant bodies adrift at sea permeate public and academic discourse on migration - despite the fact that migrants face death and physical injury, not only at sea, but at various other points, including border crossings, journeys across mountains and trips across deserts. Academic discourse about necropolitics and migration has focused on Western states and their peripheries. There is a strong focus specifically on treatment of refugees and migrants during the crossing into Western states, or within Western states.

For many migrants, particularly those from fragile states, the road to Europe or the US is long; it may involve months of travel and crossing through several different borders. Migrants may cross through states which are themselves authoritarian, or states which have recently undergone periods of fragility, and experienced migrant outflows. There is currently limited understanding or analysis of engagement between the state and migrants in or at the borders of transit countries.

This presentation will use as a case study the journey of Afghans from Afghanistan to Europe, and will analyse the necropolitical experience along two particularly noteworthy border crossings: Afghanistan/Iran and Croatia/Slovenia. In each case, the attitudes and behaviours of the states in question toward migrants are governed by social, cultural and historic factors, including, but not limited to, the state's own experience with fragility, and in particular palimpsests of conflict, long-standing cultural and ethnic perceptions and biases and religious imperatives.

Ruta Nimkar is a first year DPhil student at COMPAS. She worked with humanitarian organisations in Afghanistan and Iran from 2015 to 2017. Her current research examines the ways in which migrant smugglers interact with local economies, particularly in border areas. She completed an MA in International Relations at Yale University in 2010.

Matthew Porges is a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow at the Centre on Migration, Policy, and Society. His current research explores the relationship between migration, activism, and political imagination in Central Europe and the Balkans, primarily Slovenia. He completed a PhD in Social Anthropology at the University of St Andrews in 2021.

Claudine Raynaud

Death and the Afterlife of Slavery: Afro-Pessimism, “Live” Performance, “Life” Writing

Through a contrastive analysis of the play by Black-British dramatist Selina Thompson, *Salt* (2016) and African American scholar Saidiya Harman's essay *Lose your Mother* (2008), this talk interrogates the ways in which death, or rather the Dead (of the slave trade, of the Middle Passage, of migration, one's dead forebears), haunt the living. The autobiographical dimension of each work—a dramatic performance by the author herself and a reflexive travel narrative of sorts by a historian of slavery—“presentifies” this relation to repeated historical events of forced displacements and massive dying. Mbembe's necropolitics that theorizes sovereignty as the power of life and death over those previously reduced to object status (thingified), as well Afro-pessimism (Wynter, Douglass and Wilkerson), will first provide a critical lens through which to think “blackness” and the human. The ultimate question is that of a way out of the diagnosis of the “production of death at a large scale” or the acknowledgment that regimes of violence create a structural antagonism between blacks and humans, and the role of the work of art, of intellectual scholarly endeavor.

To what extent and in what ways can drama (“live” performance) and reflection (theoretical exegesis cum travel memoir) point to a way out of afro-pessimist discontent? Is the referential link enough to trouble these meditations “on a poetics and politics of abjection” (Sexton on Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me*)? Do the generic differences and consequently the differing interventions of these productions affect the message, the meaning? In her play, Thompson smashes a block of salt on stage, the fragments “acting” from then on as commodities, but also people, remains, debris. Memory and melancholia, unresolved grief and cultural trauma: both

works interrogate the (im)possibility of mourning. Can salty sea water cleanse us from the always living memory of the dead at sea? Where lies our “response-ability”?

Claudine Raynaud, Professor emerita of American Studies at University Paul-Valéry, Montpellier 3, has taught in England (Birmingham and Liverpool) and the United States (Michigan, Northwestern and Oberlin). A Fellow at the Du Bois Institute (Harvard, 2005), she was vice president of the CEAA when Michel Fabre was its president, has headed GRAAT, the nationwide African American Studies Research Group in Tours and a research unit at ITEM/CNRS. She is the author of *Toni Morrison: L’Esthétique de la survie* (1996) and numerous articles on black autobiography (Hurston, Wright, Baldwin, Lorde, Baker), Joyce and feminist theory. Her most recent publications include the translation of Sojourner Truth’s *Narrative* (PURH, 2016); the edition of *The Self as Other in Minority American Life Writing* (with Nelly Mok). Newcastle: CSP, 2019; ‘French Baldwin (on Screen): *le criminel artiste*,’ in *Of Latitudes Unknown. James Baldwin’s Radical Imagination*. Craven, Dow, and Nakamura eds., Bloomsbury, 2019, 135-153; ‘Breathing Statues, Stone Sermons, Pastoral Trails: Memorializing Truth’ in *Traces and Memories of Slavery in the Atlantic*. Aje and Gachon eds., Routledge, 2019, 249-266; ‘The Uses of Enchantment: Instances of Magic Realism in Morrison’s Later Writing’ in *The Palgrave Handbook of Magic Realism in the Twenty-First Century*, Perez and Chevalier eds., 2020, 263-280; “Richard Wright’s Many Lives or the Travails of Literary Biography” in Nowlin ed. *Richard Wright in Context*. Cambridge UP, 2021, 307-317. With Tina Harpin, she coedited *ELA #51, (Re)reading Black Feminisms* (2021).

Alan Rice

Lubaina Himid’s Memorial to Zong: Death, Spectrality and the Memorial Process

This paper will present from the curator’s perspective the 2017 Turner Prize winning artist Lubaina Himid’s Memorial to Zong exhibition at Lancaster Maritime Museum in 2021 including works from 1991-2016. It will use this discussion to talk about the waste of lives on the Atlantic then and in the Mediterranean now. The exhibition highlighted a series of works memorialising the throwing overboard of enslaved Africans on the slave ships Zong (Liverpool, 1781) and Le Rodeur (Le Havre, 1819). The latter painting from 2016 has not yet been fully interpreted and this paper will examine its meaning in the context of memorialisation when most of the information we know about it comes from a medical journal. The paper will discuss the curating of the exhibition which used the paintings to shed new light on the ways that black life was counted as nothing on these voyages and how Himid uses the medium of art to make those lives have meaning in the historical record and now. It will interpret the works using a range of cultural theorists but particularly Ian Baucom’s *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery and the Philosophy of History* which discusses the Zong incident without mentioning Himid’s signal intervention. Her paintings enable Baucom’s theories new modes that will be explored. Other theorists such as Eduardo Glissant, Stuart Hall, Michael Rothberg, Saidiya Hartman, Dionne Brand, Paul Gilroy and Paul Ricoeur will enable a multiform interpretation of Himid’s work.

Alan Rice is Professor in English and American Studies at the University of Central Lancashire, Preston. He has degrees from the University of Edinburgh, Bowling Green State University, Ohio and Keele. He has worked on the interdisciplinary study of the Black Atlantic for the past three decades including publishing *Radical Narratives of the Black Atlantic* (Continuum, 2003) & *Creating Memorials, Building Identities: The Politics of Memory in the Black Atlantic* (Liverpool UP, 2010). Alan was academic advisor to the *Slave Trade Arts Memorial Project* in Lancaster, was editor in chief of Manchester's *Revealing Histories Website* and a co-curator of the Whitworth Art Gallery Manchester's 2007-8 exhibition *Trade and Empire: Remembering Slavery*. He has given keynote presentations in Britain, Germany, the United States, Italy, Denmark, Spain, Poland and France and has contributed to documentaries and news programmes for the BBC, Korean Television, Border Television and public broadcasting in America. In May 2014 he launched as co-director, the Institute for Black Atlantic Research (IBAR) at UCLAN with special guest writer, Caryl Phillips. He has recently co-written a monograph on the works of the 2017 Turner Prize winner, Black British artist, Lubaina Himid With Celeste-Marie Bernier, Hannah Durkin & Lubaina Himid. *Inside the Invisible: Slavery and Memory in the Life and Work of Lubaina Himid (1985-2018)* (Liverpool University Press, 2019) and is currently curating an exhibition *Lubaina Himid's Memorial to Zong* at the Lancaster Maritime Museum.

Arnaud Richard

Spectrality: Ghosts, Spectres and Zombification in the Postcolonial Perspective on Migration

In the last decades, after numerous political crisis (for example: the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in July 2021) or natural disasters (earthquakes and hurricanes), life in Haiti is perceived as unbearable for more and more Haitians who are trying to leave their country. Sharing the same island with the Dominican Republic, this neighbour country offers the first and easiest opportunity for migration. Historically, Quebec (and Canada), New-York and Florida were the most important destinations for the Haitian diaspora (Laguerre, 2006). These overseas destinations are not as accessible as the inland option that is turning into a transnational zone along the border. This region is rural and it is deeply rooted in voodoo practices such as zombification (Dayan, 1998).

Zombies are symbolic figures in the globalized collective imagination of many cultures (Moreman et al., 2011). Very popular in films and television series like "The Walking Dead" or in video games such as "Resident Evil", they are the symbol of bodies hovering between life and death. Zombies' common characteristics in these productions are their (slow and clumsy) mobility, their scary appearance (decaying state and rag clothes), their absence of speech and their contagiousness. However, the original Haitian zombie, and still perceived as such, doesn't share those features. In this context of trans-border migration for working migrants, the transitioning body of the zombie appears as a complement or a substitute, from work (for migrants) to slavery (for zombies), and vice-versa...

This presentation proposes to discuss the representations of Zombies and local migrants in the Haitian press. The analysis will also be based upon an ethnographic work at the Dominican-Haitian border between 2015-2020.

Arnaud Richard is Associate Professor in Linguistics at the University Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3 and Research Unit LHUMAIN (Language Humanities Media-tions Interactions and Digital Studies). He is associate researcher at the State University of Haiti (SUH) in the lab LANG'SE (Language Societies and Education). He is in charge of two Erasmus+ MIC programs in Haiti and has made a dozen of academic and ethnographic missions in the country. He was one of the experts for the Haitian ministry of Education in order to set up a language proficiency referential for Haitian Creole and French in primary and secondary schools. He is a discourse analyst and has published papers on the relations between Haiti and the Dominican Republic (for example: Richard Arnaud and Govain Renauld. "Schibboleth, la langue comme arme de détection massive : 1937, le massacre des Haïtiens". *Lengas : revue de sociolinguistique*, Presses universitaires de la Méditerranée, 2016, (10.4000/lengas.1193)).

Lisa Senecal

Mapping Malta's Regime of Borders through Deathnography

'Deathnography' (Senecal, 2020) is an approach to the study of death in migration contexts that relies on ethnographic methods. The specific goal of this study is to "trace" (Derrida, 1982; Levinas, 1972) back the journey and trace forward the death-journey. Death becomes a method of migration research – also, an extension of life and the migratory world. Deathnography becomes a tool to enlarge what we can know about that world, as the death-journey is a traceable extension of it.

Deathnography provides a method to directly challenge enumeration – or counting – as the dominant representation of border death (Horsti, 2021). Although I do not want to detract from the significance of the work that has been done in this area (see Last, 2016), at times it has been co-opted or translated into a kind of dehumanization that justifies stricter and more violent policies.

Deathnography assumes that unearthing and tracing the after-death journeys of this group of border-crossing noncitizens along the Southern, Central European border will reveal important, novel empirical data about where we might delineate or 'locate' – territorially and physically as well as conceptually and experientially – what Shachar (2021) has dubbed the "shifting border".

In addition to presenting the theoretical, conceptual and methodological groundings and implications of deathnography, I will present _research findings. I will present evidence that practice is evolving and responding to legal constraints – and that Malta's borders may at times be experienced within Libya. I will also present further research findings from a trip planned for 8 to 22 April 2022.

Lisa Senecal is a PhD candidate in Migrations at the Institute of Social Sciences at ULisboa. Her research converges around the intersection of race, class and migratory

spaces – with the concepts of noncitizenship, hierarchies and mobility justice as focal points.

Titled *Mapping Malta: A Study of the Regime of Borders Through Structures and Noncitizen Subjectivities*, her thesis aims to disentangle constructed aspects of the regime of borders in Malta from those experienced by the noncitizens who engage them. Using border ethnography as a tool to define both physical and conceptual spaces of engagement, it addresses the construction and enforcement of border structures and how they are experienced and negotiated in order to reveal their function, purpose and consequences. This novel approach aims to illustrate how regimes of borders (re)produce hierarchies of value that have direct consequences on the trajectories and opportunities of the noncitizens who traverse borders.

Nando Sigona

‘We Must Stop This Carnage’: Migrant Deaths and the Politics of Mourning in the Production of Europe’s ‘Migration Crisis’

Between 2014 and 2016 an estimated 1.6 million refugees and migrants crossed the Mediterranean by boat to Europe. Over 12,000 deaths were recorded of people trying to make the journey, and many more unrecorded deaths are thought to have occurred elsewhere along the way before reaching the sea. In 2015, at the height of Europe’s so-called ‘migrant/refugee crisis’, over one million arrivals were recorded in Italy and Greece and 3771 people died during the crossing. Against this backdrop, the paper locates the discussion over migrant deaths at sea in the context of debates on border externalisation, accountability and the politics of mourning.

Drawing on a thematic analysis of public statements by European political leaders in response to tragic events at sea and an analysis of policy development that followed such events, the paper unpacks the relationship between how and by whom migrant deaths are mourned and the reorganisation of the governance of migration and border control in the Mediterranean, revealing underpinning tensions and power struggles between national, EU and international actors.

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The Conversation. He is Senior Research Associate at ODI and held visiting research and teaching positions at the University of Oxford and the European University Institute.

Maurice Stierl

CommemorActions

“[D]eath associated with water”, the philosopher Gaston Bachelard (1999) once wrote, “is more dream-like than death associated with earth: the pain of water is infinite.” Such pain is infinite especially when a body remains absent, and when for those who are searching, the hope of return and reunification can persist. In these cases, traditional rituals and transitional rites associated with mourning the dead cannot begin. The ‘EUropean’ border is a not merely a deterrence but also a disappearance machine, annihilating particularly racialised individuals and causing trauma and despair in families and entire communities. Given that, following psycho-therapist Barbara Preitler (2015), no known rituals for the disappeared exist, “new forms need to be created.” This paper will explore one such ritual that has emerged at EUrope’s external border: CommemorActions. Often organised by relatives and friends of the dead or disappeared and activists, these practices attempt to invent new rituals that allow relatives and friends to come together and collectively express sorrow and anger. This paper reflects on these affective practices and draws from interviews I have conducted with participants who have long sought to speak back to the violence of the EUropean border.

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Sofia Stimmatini

Missing Migrants’ Political Absence in Tunisia

Harragas are people from North Africa who are trying to join the Schengen area with no documents. While most of them arrive in Italy, Malta, or Spain, many of them disappear after embarking on the journey. Have they arrived in Europe and still blocked in the hotspots? Or have they drowned in the sea? Families are not sure where their parents are and whether they are still alive. If they are dead, the families cannot access their bodies. Without bodies and news from the missing, families cannot make funeral rites, they live an “ambiguous loss” (Boss, 2014). How do families deal with the absence of their relatives who have gone missing? How do they address the struggle of the disappearance of migration? Based on an ethnography conducted in Tunisia with political associations of missing migrants’ relatives, this communication wants to address disappearance of migration from the point of view of families. In Tunisia, after 2011, families of missing *harragas* protested in the streets, in front of the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Italian embassy. Here, ambiguous loss experiences gave rise to forms of activism that trigger political subjectivation. Indeed, addressing in the public

space the political issue of disappearance, missing migrants' relatives became political subjects engaged in the freedom of movement of all individuals. This process changed the actors' perception of themselves and their relationship with the missing. Indeed, public absence's performances produce political rituals that help families to deal with disappearance's ambiguous loss.

Sofia Stimmatini is a Ph.D. candidate and teaching assistant at the Université Libre de Bruxelles (2021–2027). Her Master's thesis (2019), "In search of recognition: an ethnography with the relatives of young Tunisians who disappeared during migration", concerned political responses to disappearance of migration in Tunisia, referred to in the above communication. For her doctoral research, she is interested in ambiguous loss experiences of missing migrants' relatives in Morocco. She will assume a sociological course life approach and she will address the unrituality and how it determines family social and political reorganization. For doing this, she will do fieldwork in Morocco in 2022 among missing migrant's relatives.

Valérie Cuzol

The "Return" of the Deceased: Intimacy and Politics

In the presentation, we would look at different aspects of the "return" of the deceased in the case of immigrants of Maghrebi origin and their descendants. Remarks are based on a doctoral research on the issues around burial in migratory contexts. We will first clarify the prescriptive framework that governs decision-making about place of burial with a focus on repatriation of the remains. We would try to understand motivations and effects on the different groups. And lastly, we would examine if travel restrictions introduced during the covid-19 pandemic on funeral choices experienced during have renewed this transnational social practice.

Valérie Cuzol is doctoral fellow at the Max Weber Centre, University of Lyon 2, supervised by Emmanuelle Santelli. She is interested in the study of immigrants' trajectories and their descent. She worked on funeral ritual in minority context and the sociopolitical and identity stakes of burial. She released two documentaries: *Chibanis, mémoires d'exil* (2014) and *Quel côté de l'absence?* (2018) (with Frederic Lecloux).

Diana Volpe

Humanitarian Crisis or Human Tsunami? A Case Study of Italy/NGO Discourses on Search and Rescue Operations

This paper presents a discourse analysis of the discursive narratives regarding search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean sea, from the point of view of both the Italian government and NGOs active in search and rescue. It does so through a critical discourse analysis during 2016-2017, the period during which *Mare Clausum* operations were set up, the undeclared operation of containment through multilevel

policy between Italy, the Libyan Coast Guard, and the EU (Heller and Pezzani, 2018). It will argue that both parties move between frameworks of securitisation and humanitarianism, albeit through the employment of different framings. On the one hand, both sides use evoking imagery to conjure sentiments of humanity and moral duty (in the case of NGOs), and to incite fear through images of invasions (in the case of the government). On the other hand, appeals to lawfulness by using human rights and anti-smuggling protocols, reveals the effective consequences of the fragmentation of the current international law regime. By being able to selectively interpret and apply aspects of international law, both sides legitimise their work in a context of lawfulness, but fail to encompass the bigger picture. As long as international frameworks of criminal law do not successfully integrate and combine human rights obligations in their structures, they will result in contrasting forms of action and policy, informed by selectively chosen interpretations of the law, and depending on the intertwined interests of the specific actor.

Diana Volpe is a DPhil candidate at the Oxford Department for International Development, where her research focuses on the ethics and legality of pushbacks and sea rescue in the Mediterranean, specifically in the context of Italy-Libya relations, and its current out-sourcing practices. She holds a Master's degree in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies from Oxford University, and she obtained her Bachelor's degree in Politics and International Relations from University College Dublin.