

WORKSHOP #4

IN SEARCH OF ACCOUNTABILITY



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

ABSTRACTS AND BIOS

OCTOBER 5-6, 2023

UNIVERSITY PAUL
VALÉRY MONTPELLIER 3,
FRANCE

Workshop Organizers

Syd Bolton and Catriona Jarvis, *The Last Rights Project of Methoria*
 Prof Yumna Masarwa, *The American College of the Mediterranean (ACM, Aix-en-Provence)*
 Prof Judith Misrahi-Barak, *EMMA, Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3*

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Dr Bidisha Banerjee, *International Research Centre for Cultural Studies, The Education University of Hong Kong*
 Dr Thomas Lacroix, *Sciences Po-CERI*
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Abstracts and bios

Invited Guests' Section

Even After Death (2020) Screening and Discussion

The Search for Loved Ones and for Answers: Accountability to the Dead, Missing and Bereaved as a Result of Migrant Journeys

Douglas Herman and Sonia Nandzik (ReFOCUS Media Labs) with Catriona Jarvis and Syd Bolton (The Last Rights Project of Methoria)

Ever since the beginning of the refugee crisis in 2014, nearly 20,000 people have died crossing the Mediterranean Sea as well as crossing the river Evros along the land border between Turkey and Greece. Most of the deceased have been found without documents, which makes identification extremely difficult, if possible at all. *Even After Death* presents the ways this problem is handled by coroners and forensic experts in different parts of Greece, and the movement to develop an internationally recognized system of human rights even after death.

The film takes viewers on a journey through marked and unmarked graves around Greece, where refugees have been buried since the beginning of the crisis, and explains how difficult it is to find a family member who has died while crossing to Europe, whether in a morgue or a cemetery.

Through the story of an Afghan woman who survived a deadly shipwreck off the coast of Turkey, *Even After Death* portrays the situation of thousands of refugees who have lost their loved ones while trying to cross to Europe. The film focuses on an under-reported issue of the identification of refugee bodies, DNA collection, culturally appropriate funerals and systematic identification of personal effects and grave-marking.

As part of the advanced course offered by ReFOCUS Media Labs on Lesbos, *Even After Death* was conceptualized, written and filmed by refugees who survived the Mediterranean crossing and felt compelled to tell their collective story.

Douglas Herman is an educator, media artist and humanitarian. Douglas has been guiding youth and refugees in developing media creation skills for the better part of two decades. To this end, he founded Rough Cut Media, which fights for equity in access to media creation tools both locally and globally.

Along with fellow humanitarians, Douglas co-founded Refocus Media Labs to ensure that refugees and those living this crisis have a platform to share their stories and develop professional media creation skills to secure future employment.

”In the beginning, it was all about bringing the crisis to my classroom so my students could connect with real people impacted by these policies. But quickly, I realized that it needs to be about bringing the classroom to the crisis because they deserve the same level of access and opportunities that we enjoy. Without equal opportunity, nothing changes.”

Sonia Nandzik is a dedicated humanitarian and public policy officer with significant experience in international institutions, namely the European Parliament, as well as practice in the field. Sonia specializes in refugee crisis relief, human rights advocacy, humanitarian aid coordination and project management.

For the past two years, Sonia has been in the field working with refugees, leading the "fresh response" initiative to distribute fresh cooking ingredients and desperately needed non-food items along the Serbian-Hungarian border, and coordinating with numerous aid organizations to increase refugee rights and provide daily support.

Sonia helped co-found Refocus Media Lab to shift the conversation in her native Poland so refugees are viewed as equals and deserving of internationally recognized human rights.

<https://refocusmedialabs.org/>

Accountability and the role of art research in the face of crimes against humanity: The Mexican case.

Luz Maria Sanchez Cardona (Professor and Transdisciplinary Artist, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya)

In Mexico, crimes against humanity are committed daily, with more than 300,000 casualties, 4,000 clandestine graves, 100,000 disappeared civilians, an inestimable number of displaced individuals, and an increasing number of active death camps with their crematoriums. Through the art research project *Vis[un]necessary force*, the Mexican human rights emergency will be addressed. When is the process of accountability start, if it ever does? What happens when there is not a body to reclaim and identify? How do civilians survive and endure? By amplifying the voices of victims, documenting their stories, and sparking dialogue, do creative practices offer a pathway to confront impunity and advocate for truth, justice, and human dignity? This presentation will examine the phenomenon of enforced disappearance, addressing questions of accountability and the role of art research in the face of crimes against humanity.

Luz María Sánchez is an artist, writer, and scholar. PhD in Art from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, she is a member of the National System of Art Creators (SNCA) and Scientific Researchers (Conacyt) in Mexico. Sánchez served in the

executive committee of the Samuel Beckett Society (2019-2023) and has extensive research on Beckett and electronic media. Sánchez received two consecutive Prix Ars Electronica's Honorary Mentions for her art research project *Vis.[un]necessary force* (2020, 2021). She has authored five books, curated exhibitions and conferences and presented by invitation at leading institutions such as the School of the Art Institute Chicago, the University of the Arts London, and ZKM|Center for Art and Media. With a professional career of +25 years, Sánchez has exhibited in Europe and the Americas, most recently at Galeria Metropolitana (Mexico City), Píksel Festival (Bergen), Vincent Price Art Museum (Los Angeles), Ars Electronica (Linz), MUAC (Mexico City), Museum of Modern Art (Mexico City), and ZKM (Karlsruhe).

<https://luzmariasanchez.com/>

Suha Araj (Filmmaker) and Anna La Chocha Albelo (Producer)

***Rosa (2020)* Screening and Discussion with Yumna Masarwa**

Rosa takes her job working at her aunt's flower shop to the underground when she begins a side business of shipping undocumented bodies to their home countries for burial.

Suha Araj creates films that explore the displacement of immigrant communities. The Cup Reader, shot in Palestine, screened at the Tribeca Film Festival and was awarded The Next Great Filmmaker Award at the Berkshire International Film Festival and Baghdad International Film Festival. Araj followed with Pioneer High. She has received support for her work from the Sundance Film Festival, Torino Film Lab, Independent Filmmaker Project, Berlinale Talent Project Market, Center for Asian American Media and Cine Qua Non Lab. She is the 2018 recipient of Tribeca/Chanel Through Her Lens production funding for her film Rosa. Rosa premiered at the Blackstar Festival in 2020 and was the recipient of the Best Short Narrative and the Lionsgate/Starz short film award and won the Best Short Narrative Award at Woodstock Film Festival and is now airing on HBO MAX. She is a 2020 Creative Capital Grantee and a 2021 Jerome Hill Grantee for her feature film Khsara (Pickled) and a Warner Media 150 Fellow for her feature comedy/thriller, Bowling Green Massacre. Otherwise you can find her directing audio romantic comedies for MeetCute.

www.suhamaria.com

Anna Margarita Albelo is Cuban-American writer, director and producer working in film, television, and digital content. Based in Paris, Anna has 20+ years of experience in both the US and France. Her company Burning Bra Productions specializes in creating content with an emphasis on women and diverse people in front and behind the camera.

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

An Ethno-graphic drawing performance at the crossroad of art and research

Accountability for migrants' death on the shores of the Mediterranean has become a key concern for researchers, activists and artists. However, migrants' death within Europe has received relatively less attention. The multiple violence migrants face, often as a precariat, expose them to increased risks of accidents, illness and consequently, death.

This is the story of migrants evolving in the shadows and on the margins of European cities. These different life trajectories are linked to each other by the disruption of tragedy, which invites and imposes itself like a "macabre ritual". Their names are Abdou, Mamadou, Mariama, Honoré, Koulibaly, Franco; they are Senegalese or Cameroonian, and they move between the cities of Belgium, France, Spain and Italy. Facing precariousness and irregularity, death, as an unpredictable but omnipresent event, brings them together as a community. Death requires them to organise and mobilise to guarantee a dignified death for those who have not been able to live a dignified life. While they experience precarity throughout their lives, their cold, lifeless bodies are eventually able to fly home legally.

Based on an "ethno-graphic" narrative project around the thanatic ethics of migration, this proposal explores alternative channels for raising awareness and dignifying death in the context of migration. Through a short live performance, it proposes a multidisciplinary, multilingual and multimodal dialogue between ethnography and drawing. In doing so, the project explores how the techniques and narratives of drawing contribute to a deeper sensitivity to the tragedy of migrant deaths.

Félicien de Heusch is completing his PhD at the Centre for Ethnic and Migration Studies (CEDEM), University of Liège. He was part 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. His PhD thesis focuses on Senegalese migrants' transnational and moral engagement around death in Europe. He co-authored the article "Negotiating moral authority for body repatriation: the case of Senegalese Migration" with Thomas Lacroix for *Interventions* (2023).

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 "*Mauvaise 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 visit: <https://www.gaspardnjock.com/>.

Speakers' Section

Henriette Korthals Altes (Birkbeck College/Maison Française d'Oxford)

Accounted lives and accountability in Shimona Sinha's *Assommons les Pauvres!*

This paper proposes to study Shimona Sinha's critique of the states' non-accountability with regards to its migration policies and politics in *Assommons les pauvres!* (L'Olivier, 2012), recently translated into English under the title *Down with the poor!* (Les Fugitives, 2022). *Assommons les pauvres!* is the angry self-examination of a Bengali interpreter working for the French office for refugees. As she finds herself remanded in custody after she has hit a refugee on the head, she is summoned to explain her incomprehensible act of violence. This thinly disguised autobiography exposes the ways in which interpreters and asylum seekers alike are victims of a Kafkaesque system.

This paper fleshes out the absurdity of the asylum seekers' system. Life stories are the very basis on which asylum applications are granted and refugees regurgitate clichéd formulaic narratives which they have been sold by human traffickers. The interpreter, accountable for the accuracy of the translation is placed in a double-bind: render faithfully the gaps and inconsistencies of the life narratives and thus betray her fellow refugees or resist/bend to human rights lawyers' demands to embellish narratives in order to sway the outcome of an application. Sinha lost her job as an interpreter when the book came out, another ironic instance of the State's non-accountability.

This paper will show how *Assommons les pauvres!* exposes the ways in which states largely remain unaccountable for a larger eco-geopolitical crisis in which the massive migration flow northwards is as uncontrollable as inevitable. They also remain unaccountable for the chasm between the promise held out by human rights and freedom of movement and the reality of human dignity that is being flouted.

Henriette Korthals Altes is a specialist in 20th and 21st French Literature. She has held several positions as a lecturer in French (Oxford, Queen Mary, London, Aberdeen and Essex). Her research has developed along several lines of enquiry. Firstly, she has published on the ethics of mourning and melancholia in Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Pierre Michon and Pascal Quignard. Secondly, she has worked on the cultural mourning of the Vichy period as reflected in fiction and film. Thirdly, she has published several articles on the relations between the arts, notably the role of music in Roland Barthes's work and of dance and music in Pascal Quignard's work. Her current project on surveillance fiction and film is interdisciplinary and comparative. Covering both the French and English domains, it focuses on surveillance and shows in particular how fiction and film have offered counter-narratives to dominant national or globalized myths.

Bidisha Banerjee (The Education University of Hong Kong)

**Aquatic Affect, Empathy and Accountability:
Thalassic Spatiality in *Mediterraneo***

The modern day refugee crisis has demonstrated the dramatic convergence of migration and the environment. While climate change has influenced human migration patterns for years, it has now begun to affect the migratory journeys themselves with global heating leading to many more migrant deaths. The “prevention through deterrence” border regimes of Western nations have led to the co-opting of natural landscapes and the weaponization of deserts, seas, mountain ranges and rivers in the service of borderization. Such policies rerouting migratory passages via inhospitable terrain compel refugees to encounter the “liquid violence” (Heller and Pezzani) of the Mediterranean, the “hostile terrain” (Jason de Leon) of the Sonoran Desert and the “necro-hydrology” (Duncan and Levidis, 2020) of rivers, with their perilous journeys often ending in death. The border then becomes a mobile concept, constantly shifting as environmental elements are mobilized in the production of death.

Several recent refugee graphic novels tell harrowing stories of the treacherous journeys migrants undertake in order to reach “Fortress Europe.” Sergio Nazzaro and Luca Ferrara’s wordless graphic novel *Mediterraneo* (2018) tells “the story of a sea that, out of shame and modesty, has decided to draw back its waters to reveal everything it has concealed until now,” thus laying bare Europe’s biggest cemetery “with large pools of bodies, ghosts wandering about” (ANSA). Through an analysis of the novel, I ask how the graphic depiction of the dry seabed exposes the violence of deterrence policies and counters the human manipulation of the environment while also arousing empathy for the migrants and demanding accountability from the necropolitical powers for migrant deaths.

Bidisha Banerjee is Associate Head and Associate Professor of English in the Literature and Cultural Studies Department at the Education University of Hong Kong. Her research and teaching interests include postcolonial studies, diaspora and refugee studies, postcolonial feminist fictions and theory, cultural studies, photography and visual studies. She has published in journals like *Interventions: Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, *Visual Studies*, and *Postcolonial Text*. She is the Principal Investigator of a transdisciplinary, collaborative project called *Thanatic Ethics: The Circulation of Bodies in Migratory Spaces*. She has recently co-edited a Special Issue for *Interventions: Journal of Postcolonial Studies* on *Thanatic Ethics*. Her monograph, *Traces of the Real: The Absent Presence of Photography in South Asian Literature*, is forthcoming with Liverpool University Press.

Cédric Courtois (University of Lille)

“[P]lay[ing] some role in the quest for accountability”: Sally Hayden’s Literary Journalism in *My Fourth Time, We Drowned: Seeking Refuge on the World’s Deadliest Migration Route* (2022)

The issue of death in migration is at the heart of Irish humanitarian journalist Sally Hayden’s first book *My Fourth Time, We Drowned: Seeking Refuge on the World’s Deadliest Migration Route*. She recounts the stories of the people who attempt to make it through the Central Mediterranean Route. Her journalistic (and literary) work reveals the inefficiency of many aid organisations and points to the responsibility of the EU in this humanitarian catastrophe. Throughout this work of journalism, the reader can hear the words of some of these refugees who Hayden had the opportunity to listen to through WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter... This book clearly has a political aim, that of making Westerners “open their eyes” in order to “bear witness to human rights abuses thousands of miles away”.

Beyond reporting, what can we say about the role of this book “in the quest for accountability” —as explained by Hayden in her Prologue — compared to more conventional ways of reporting? In *The Literary Journalists*, Norman Sims explains that “[t]he literary journalists are marvellous observers whose meticulous attention to detail is wedded to the tools and techniques of fiction writers”. *My Fourth Time, We Drowned: Seeking Refuge on the World’s Deadliest Migration Route* was awarded the Orwell Prize for Political Writing in 2022. The Orwell Prize’s website indicates: “the Orwell Foundation awards prizes to the writing and reporting which best meets the spirit of George Orwell’s own ambition “*to make political writing into an art*”. I propose to reflect on the issue of political writing as an art form, on “literary journalism” and the aforementioned “tools and techniques of fiction writers”, to explore the various (literary) strategies put in place by Hayden in order to make citizens ponder over accountability and mobilize them.

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) for *Études anglaises*; “‘Into the Mutation’: Osahon Ize-Iyamu’s ‘More Sea than Tar’ as Climate Fiction” (2021) for *Commonwealth Essays and Studies*; and “Bernardine Evaristo’s ‘Black’ British Amazons: Aesthetics and Politics in *Girl, Woman, Other*” (2021) for *Études britanniques contemporaines*.

Chiara Denaro (HEMIG project, University of Bologna) and Maurice Stierl (Osnabrück University)

Contesting unaccountability, seeking justice: the legal and political afterlives of four shipwrecks in the Mediterranean

The Mediterranean Sea is considered the deadliest border in the world. Since 2014, more than 26,000 lives are said to have been lost there. Yet, the actual death toll will never be revealed as most persons remain missing, with bodies rarely being found and hardly ever identified. In view of this ongoing mass disappearing and dying, contesting the unaccountability of state actors and seeking justice is a tall order. In our paper, we focus on the legal and political afterlives of four shipwrecks: The ‘Left-to-Die’ case of 2011, a boat that capsized in October 2013, the ‘Easter massacre’ of 2020, and a recent shipwreck off the Sicilian coast in 2023. Also based on our own involvement in some of these cases, we examine how survivors, family members, activists and civil society organizations have brought these cases before European courts in often long and arduous processes. Based on these instances and drawing from postcolonial and critical legal perspectives, we reflect on what it may mean to seek accountability and justice for state in/action in cases of maritime disaster.

Chiara Denaro is a sociologist, legal expert, and social worker who has worked for years with disadvantaged communities in precarious settlements, squats, and detention facilities. Her socio-legal research work concerns search and rescue, 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. She is now working on the HEMIG project at University of Bologna.

Maurice Stierl leads the research group “The Production of Knowledge on Migration” at the Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies, Osnabrück University. His research focuses on migration struggles in contemporary Europe and (northern) Africa and is broadly situated in the fields of International Political Sociology, Political Geography, and Migration, Citizenship and Border Studies. His book ‘Migrant Resistance in Contemporary Europe’ was published by Routledge in 2019.

Mohamed Elsayeh (Sciences Po Law School)

European responsibility for the appropriate treatment of remains recovered at the border

Despite important advances in multidisciplinary research on the treatment of the remains of migrants recovered at international borders, legal research has only scantily addressed this question. Drawing on ongoing doctoral research and preliminary findings, I aim to articulate the value of a cultural study of law in helping to advance

understanding of the treatment in the EU of the remains of border crossers today. I will notably focus on the identification and management of remains to highlight European moral, political and legal responsibility for the appropriate treatment of remains recovered at the border. My research is particularly concerned with establishing linkages between the domains of law and culture by drawing on societal relationship to death, the relationship between Self and Other, as well as the treatment of remains in historical and contemporary contexts, to argue for the responsibility of the EU towards the treatment of the remains of border crossers at a time when deaths at its borders have been considered to be one of the worst tragedies since the Second World War.

I aim to discuss domestic legislation in Italy, Spain and Greece, as main countries of destination of migrants attempting to reach the EU via the main Mediterranean sea routes, to underline the treatment of migrant remains against the backdrop of the treatment of the remains of citizens. Based on ongoing fieldwork, I emphasize the role of different stakeholders in the identification and management of the remains of migrants recovered at the border, to explain forms of 'invisibilization' of migrant remains through the lens of the (un-)grievability of migrant lives. This research is principally concerned with the ways in which human interactions and the structure of social and political life in Europe are shaped by procedures and legal arrangements relating to the treatment of the remains of migrants recovered at the border.

Mohamed Elsayeh is a PhD candidate at Sciences Po Law School and a lecturer at the Sciences Po Undergraduate College in Paris. Through a cultural study of law, his doctoral research explores the reasons why EU law has thus far been unable to respond to the lack of identification and management of the remains of border crossers who die at EU borders.

In 2022, Mohamed was a Visiting Researcher at the Department of Law of the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence. He currently serves on the editorial board of the *European Journal of Legal Studies*, based at the EUI Department of Law. He is the Coordinator of the Migration and Diversity interdisciplinary collective at Sciences Po.

Mohamed held various positions at inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations prior to joining the Sciences Po Law School. He holds a Master of Laws in International Human Rights from the National University of Ireland, Galway and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from The American University in Cairo.

Eric Florence (University of Liege)

Making Death, injuries and exhaustion visible: rural migrant workers' struggles for dignity and quest for accountability in South China

Post-Mao Chinese State capitalism, through its complex politico-institutional configurations, has produced extraordinarily efficient processes of extraction of rural migrant workers' labor value. Starting with the 1993 Zhili factory blaze in South China

in which 84 female migrant workers, locked in their workshop, were burnt alive to then focus on the 2010-2011 waves of suicide in Foxconn factories, the following question will be asked in this paper: how have claims to justice and accountability been framed and made visible by migrant workers in a context in which the accountability of capital and the State cannot be framed straightforwardly because of the CCP's foundational commitment to represent the working class along with other social categories? This will be pursued at two levels: how have grassroots associations, through the formation of alliances between workers, social organizers, students and scholars endeavored to strike (unstable) balances of recognition and visibility of their actions and claims for dignity and accountability; secondly, I will document the nature of various forms of cultural mediation (literary and visual) of workers' experiences of their bodies being exhausted, injured or made dead (Tyner, 2019). At the theoretical level, drawing on Tyner (2019) and Mitchell (2012; 2020), I will engage with the idea of the centrality of death in the resilience of global capitalism. Sources for this paper are a combination of ethnographic observations carried out in China (mainly Beijing and the Pearl River Delta) between 1999 and 2019, of online exchanges and observation, of popular cultural products and archives (songs, poems, popular literature, exhibitions, etc.) gathered over the years.

Eric Florence is associate Professor at the University of Liege (CEDEM and Pragmapolis). His research focuses on the cultural politics of labor in contemporary China. For the last twenty years he has taken part in research on labor migration in China and on international migration at the Centre for Ethnic and Migration Studies. His recent writings include "Migrant worker museums in China: public cultures of migrant labour in state and grassroots initiatives", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. (with Junxi Qian, 2020); "Precarity, Platforms, and Agency: The Multiplication of Chinese Labour", in *Agency Beyond Precarity: Platforms and the multiplication of labor regimes in China* (with Chris King-chi Chan and Jack Linchuan Qiu), *China Perspectives*, 2021/1.; "'Make Contributions and Offer Your Youth for Tomorrow's Dream": The Establishment of the Shenzhen Migrant Workers Museum.' (with Junxi Qian) In *Proletarian China: One Century of Chinese Labour*, edited by Ivan Franceschini and Christian Sorace, London and New York: Verso Books.

Erik Freeman (American College of the Mediterranean)

What We Owe to the Dead: The Death of Death and Turning Bodies into Saints

A dead body washes up on a shore. The living collects it like a piece of refuse. Which it is. Moral accountability to the dead, in war, famine, or migration, is comprehensively frustrated by the fact that contemporary formulations of moral theory are largely incapable of attributing rights and duties to the living with respect to the dead. Ethics is a conceptual science by and for the living. Death is the wall our moral conceptions cannot struggle across. In this paper I will argue two things. First, that the root cause of this impasse is what George Steiner referred to as the "death of death", the progressive existential banalization and semantic evacuation of death, inflicted by the

carnal, ideological, and technological horrors of modernity. It is the transition from death as a part of life to death as a part of nature. In consequence, I suggest that discourses of accountability in crises involving mass death (war, famine, epidemic, and of particular concern here, death in migration) inevitably fail to convince, because the moral force of what we owe to inanimate nature can never be as great as what we owe to animate, conscious life. In a second section, I will argue that a politically and socially operative thanatic ethics must be grounded in the recovery of an earlier religious tradition of corporal works of mercy and the veneration of the dead. The suggestion is not that ethics must become religious. Rather, I defend the thesis that it must draw on ideas concerning the dead which are present in all the major theistic traditions — that of treating them as saints — in order to identify and incorporate practices that morally bind the living to the dead and ultimately transcend the conceptual limitations of moral theory.

Erik Freeman is an Associate Professor of Philosophy and Theology at the American College of the Mediterranean in Aix-en-Provence. He is also a translator from Swedish, French, and Russian into English.

Filippo Furri (Migreurope)

Disappearance as a political factor: counting and naming missing migrants in the central Mediterranean

In February 2023, *libero quotidiano*, a daily newspaper close to the Italian government stated that the approach of the Minister of Internal Affairs Piantedosi - which, among other things, intensified measures to limit the action of NGOs at sea - had "paid off" and that it had halved the number of deaths in the Mediterranean : it did so by relying on the figures published by UNHCR (confirmed by IOM), which spoke of 55 dead or missing in January 2023, as opposed to 119 in 2022. Yet civil society actors reporting on the numerous cases of missing boats and shipwrecks in the central Mediterranean for the same period speak of 416 cases. The discrepancy between the official figures of international organisations and the unofficial information collected through the testimonies of families points to a dire situation: the xenophobic violence in Tunisia, which has generated a wave of departures with increasingly precarious means (metal boats), and the neutralisation of the capacity of NGOs to intervene at sea and observe, are opening up yet another black hole in which thousands of people are disappearing. Matching the names of these people through the traces provided by their relatives, and associating them with the dozens of cases of distress recorded at sea, - according to an approach tested in the Canary Islands by the ICRC's forensic service - seems to be the only possibility today of contrasting a migration management system "by disappearance".

Filippo Furri is an anthropologist and has been working on the issue of death in/by migration since 2013 between academic research (MECMI programme: reception and management of the bodies of migrants who died at sea and were buried in the city of Catania with C. Kobelinsky; MOCOMI programme: Cartography of migrant deaths and burials at the Franco-Italian border of Ventimiglia Menton, with F Lestage), civil society (Boats4people, EuromedRights, BorderForensics) and international organisations (consultant for ICRC Forensic office in Paris: Report Counting the dead, 2022): is concerned with both the issue of identification procedures and the search facilities available to the families of missing persons

Klaudia Kopiasz (Aix-Marseilles University)

Lighting the lamp in the dark heart of Scotland's colonial past: Jackie Kay's call for accountability in 'The Lamplighter' and 'Bronze Head from Ife'

Jackie Kay, former Scots Makar, recently realized how little she knew about Scotland's involvement in the slave trade. Such discovery concerning her home country's infamous past prompted her to write 'The Lamplighter', a lyrical drama exploring the dark world of colonialism from the slaves' capture to the deaths at sea.

Though she didn't intend to be pigeonholed as a black writer, Kay decided to write her poignant work on the transatlantic slave trade not merely to commemorate the 200th anniversary of abolition but rather to revive forgotten voices and raise awareness among people - even those, who like the author herself, were born and raised in Scotland, and never had an opportunity to access the dark heart of the country's colonial past.

Indeed, in both 'The Lamplighter' and a poem entitled "Bronze Head from Ife" in which a Nigerian artifact becomes the symbol of the "shocking past... the ships, the human clearances", Kay, an influential writer on both political and literary scenes, calls for accountability and recognition from the Scottish people. In order to accomplish her project, she makes use of her two powerful devices, her "black pen" and "Scottish voice", which enable her to rewrite history and advocate for the revindication of the Scottish identity, as not only a "victim", a marginal state to Britain but also a victimizer.

Drawing from literary analysis, history and race studies, this presentation will explore how, through the thanatic representations vis-à-vis slave trade, Kay's works endeavor to reach justice and accountability.

Klaudia Kopiasz is a book writer and a contractual Ph.D. student at Aix-Marseilles University working on identity and memory in contemporary British literature. After having received her MA degree with acclaim, she decided to pursue her academic research on Jackie Kay and other British writers who put to the fore those voices, which, as Kay once observed, have been 'left out'. Klaudia Kopiasz also lectures two courses: Translation and English for non-specialists.

Marija Pavicevic (University Paris 8)

Accountability and humanization of migrant deaths: The case of Serbia

As a part of the European border regime, Serbia has developed, in particular since the 2015 “migrant crisis”, the migration policies that directly or indirectly criminalize migration and dehumanize the migrants. The absence of accountability of the Serbian government for the deaths of migrants can be analyzed as a result of these policies. Therefore, the accountability of the state for the migrant’s deaths could be perceived as a final stage of the process of dehumanization of “undesirables migrants”. In order to change the paradigm of impunity of the state, the humanization of the migrants that die trying to live “better lives” would be the first stage of the process. I will examine the role and impact of the Serbian and international non-governmental sector on Serbia’s migrations policies and practices in raising awareness, humanizing the migrants and reaching accountability for the migrants’ deaths on the Balkans route with the focus on Serbia.

Marija Pavicevic is a PhD candidate at University Paris 8. The title of her thesis is “The challenges of international migration at the EU's borders: The case of Serbia.” Her research focuses on European Migration politics, European external borders, refugees, migrations and International relations. She is the author of the article “Sécurisation des frontières et criminalisation de passage sur la route des Balkans” published in *Sciences & Actions Sociales* (<https://doi.org/10.3917/sas.009.0039>) She holds a postgraduate degree of European Studies and International Relations at Institute for European Studies, University of Paris 8 and Applied French Language, Sorbonne and has many years of experience in European project management.

Alan Rice (University of Central Lancaster) and Jessica Sache (Digital Archive Project)

Accounting for Historical Black Bodies in the Forgetful Archive: The Case of Lancaster

This paper jointly presented by an academic and a community activist will present the recently constructed digital mapping project Facing the Past. This digital archive documents Lancaster's history as the fourth largest slavery port in 18th century Britain and the ways in which this history has been memorialised. The archive is a publicly accessible resource that enables the public to research and contribute to this history and uses as its prime resource Alan Rice and Lancaster Black History Group’s Lancaster Slave Trade, Abolition and Fair Trade Trail.

Much of the evidence we have about Lancaster's involvement in slavery comes from those who administered the trade such as ship log books and merchants' diaries. We

know that enslaved people were baptised in Lancaster, having been brought here by slavery merchants, but we have little detail about their lives.

Despite this, black artists like Lubaina Himid, and more recently Lela Harris have used creativity as a methodology through which to understand the experiences of enslaved people, and how contemporary lived experiences of racism can be rooted in the untelling of this history. They seek to account for this previously unrelated history.

We are conscious of the archive's use as a colonial tool to separate people, objects and events in order to reinforce myths of white supremacy. Facing the Past seeks to understand the complex social, political and economic systems that allowed trans-Atlantic slavery to operate so pervasively, whilst giving agency to those whose voices have been silenced. This paper will present the digital archive and the way it makes amends for the silences of history through retellings and artistic interventions.

We have taken an expansive approach to what we include within the archive. Referencing the work of Stuart Hall, Ian Baucom, Jean Fisher and bell hooks, we have constructed the archive through an alternate framework, shifting away from centring the white voices of written forms of history, whilst exploring the role of creativity in allowing contemporary black artists to draw links between slavery and racism experienced today.

This paper reflects on the notion of 'truth' and its relationship to the archive - from whose understanding of 'truth' dictates what has been included within the archive - and examines how broadening this allows us to reimagine the forgotten histories of enslaved Africans living in Lancaster. How it allows us to account for the formerly unaccounted for.

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**Ambivalent accountability logics: missing Moroccan migrants' families
between culpability and political claim**

In Morocco, most families of missing migrants live the absence of their relatives in silence, not having news about their fate for years. They cannot perform funeral rituals, nor can they grieve, because of the lack of information. Often, they do not declare the disappearance to the authorities. Indeed, in Morocco, law 02-03 states that those who try to migrate without the Schengen C Visa, are punishable with fines and prison sentences. This externalizing logic assigns accountability for migrating to individuals

and families, making them guilty of the offense of 'irregular migration'. When people go missing, consequently, families can act differently, reporting or not the disappearance to the authorities, according to first, their implication on the migration attempt and second, their conception of responsibility in the migration issue. This ambivalent attitude regarding reporting to the authorities could differ depending on the context. The same family can scream during sit-ins: "You let the mafia [smugglers] go free and you neglect our children" (27/03 – Beni Mellal), calling the government to take responsibility and identify a culprit, while she does not want to report the missing migrant to authorities.

Based on fieldwork conducted in Morocco, with families of missing migrants and associations engaged in supporting them, I will explore the ambivalent logics of assigning accountability in the border deaths and disappearances issue. I will analyze how the European border externalization policy acts deeply in Morocco, where it prevents people from leaving but also deters families from reporting missing migrants, clashing with the right to know their fate.

Sofia Stimmatini is a Ph.D. student at Université Libre de Bruxelles in anthropology (LAMC). During her Master's, Sofia worked on border disappearances in Tunisia, where she studied the political mobilization of Tunisian families searching for their relatives. She observed that after the long-term political engagement, especially mothers and wives of missing migrants started to consider themselves as militants for freedom of movement, engaging themselves in a political subjectivation process. Her actual work focuses on Moroccan families and aims to understand how absence impacts the missing migrants' families, putting attention to how they intimately reorganize their family and social life after the border disappearance.