

# THE AESTHETICS OF GEOPOWER: IMAGINING PLANETARY HISTORIES AND HEGEMONIES

4 & 5 April 2024

Universiteitsbibliotheek Singel  
Singel 425  
1012 WP Amsterdam



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OF AMSTERDAM

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# INTRODUCTION

If the earth was once passed off as a neutral backdrop to human life, in the present age of ecological derangement it has reemerged as fraught with relations of power and politics. In this context, cultural theorists have put forward the rubric of geopower to conceptualize the ways that power is exerted over and through but also by the earth (Clare 2013; Neyrat 2019; Yusoff 2018). Having long been entangled with extractive, racial capitalism (Bain 2023, 1–2; Gómez-Barris 2017, xvi–xix), geopower is becoming especially visible amid climate change and discourses of the Anthropocene. From proposals for solar geoengineering to legislation extending legal personhood to ecological entities such as the Ganga River, contemporary manifestations of geopower indicate how politics and planetarity are colliding in complex ways that are increasingly defining the present and will shape the future.

Extrapolated from Michel Foucault’s thinking of biopower, geopower—or “geontopower” in Elizabeth A. Povinelli’s alternative formulation (2016)—has been theorized along several overlapping trajectories (Tola 2022; Luisetti 2019). For some, it primarily signifies the “government of the earth” (Diran & Traisnel 2019, 44) and implicates the technologies and tactics through which

dominant subjects frame and exploit not just terrestrial environments but those “defined into nature” under patriarchal and colonial orders (Caputi 2020, 183). For another strand of theory, which draws on posthuman philosophies of life and matter (esp. Grosz 2008), geopower names the nonhuman forces of the earth, which permeate, condition, but also often disrupt or imperil humanly regulated environments (Clark 2011; Grosz, Yusoff, & Clark 2017).

Building on these developments, this conference explores how geopower intersects with aesthetics, taken expansively as referring to art, film, literature, and other forms of cultural practice as well as sensed materiality and embodied perception. Our premise is that the aesthetic, far from being secondary or supplemental to the forces shaping the earth, is centrally entailed and embedded in dynamics of geopower. This can be seen in the visual construction of “the Earth system” as an object of calculation, conservation, and control, or in scholarly, literary, and filmic narratives of the Anthropocene, which cast different human subjects as planetary culprits or custodians (Bonneuil & Fressoz 2016). It is also evident in the ways that colonial enframings and enclosures of environments have been contested by decolonial practices of art and activism, which, as Macarena

Gómez-Barris has shown, have proposed and enacted myriad alternative ecosocial relations in the face of intensive colonial extraction (2017). The earth's inhuman forces, meanwhile, have a transgressive vitality that often registers aesthetically and might be articulated in artistic practice (Sheikh 2017). Such forces suffuse cultural practice even when not explicitly thematized, whether because some artistic scenes are economically aligned with particular regimes of resource extraction (Acosta 2020) or because cultural works are necessarily composed of planetary materialities, which precede and exceed discursive or authorial framings of the aesthetic (Parikka 2015).

To probe the connections among power, planetarity, and the aesthetic, we

call on scholars, critics, and practitioners across disciplines to reflect on how diverse formations of geopower are enabled and mediated, but also challenged in cultural practice. How do conceptual, visual, poetic, or narratological framings of the earth calibrate social approaches to environments? Which marginalized perspectives can be brought forward to develop alternative representations or counter-histories of geopower? How is it imbricated with racializing, (neo)colonial, and cisheteropatriarchal orders? And how might theories of geopower be rethought by attending to its material manifestations or reimagined in literary and artistic experiment?

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# PROGRAM | 4 APRIL

08:30 - 09:00 **Registration.** *Atrium*

09:00 - 09:15 **Opening Remarks.** *Doelenzaal*

09:15 - 10:30 **Keynote, Federico Luisetti.** *Doelenzaal*  
*Moderator:* Dehlia Hannah (Associate Professor, University of Copenhagen)

10:30 - 11:00 **Refreshments.** *Atrium*

11:00 - 12:30 **Panel 1. Tectonic Formations** (pp. 14–15)  
*Doelenzaal*  
*Chair:* Katja K. Kwastek (Professor, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)  
**Edward H. Huijbens**, “Herðubreið- Mountainous geo-power and deep time”  
**Heidi Sohn**, “Geo-anthropogenic Narratives: aesthetic encounters of Terras, Zöe, Bios, Geos and Anthropos along the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt”

11:00 - 12:30 **Panel 2. Rethinking Planetary Representation** (pp. 16–18)  
*Potgieterzaal*  
*Chair:* Colin Sterling (Assistant Professor, University of Amsterdam)  
**Nikos Katsikis**, “Metageographies of the Urbicene”  
**Theo Reeves-Everson**, “Seeing with Sediment: On deep-sea mining and the aquatic perspectives”  
**Sybille Neumeyer**, “Grounding Meteorology – Sensing Geopowers”

12:30 - 13:30 **Lunch.** *Atrium*

13:30 - 15:00 **Panel 3. Narrating Geontologies** (pp. 19–21)  
*Doelenzaal*  
*Chair:* Irene Villaescusa Illán (Assistant Professor, University of Amsterdam)  
**Tem Edwin Nji**, ““Aesthetics of Proximity” and the (Un) Seen Presences in Postcolonial Eco-Narratives: the case of *God was African* and *The Activist*”  
**David Shackleton**, “A ‘fault line of pain’: N. K. Jemisin’s *Broken Earth* Trilogy and Black Planetary Consciousness”  
**Doro Wiese**, “Leanne Betasamosake Simpson’s Noopiming: (W)righting epistemic injustices on and with the land”

13:30 - 15:00 **Panel 4. Visual Ecologies** (pp. 22–25)  
*Potgieterzaal*  
*Chair:* Irina Souch (Lecturer, University of Amsterdam)  
**Wood Roberdeau**, “Solastalgic Aesthetics and Living Extinctions in *SGAAWAAY K’UUNA (Edge of the Knife)*”  
**William Schaefer**, “Fragments, Gaps, Sequences: Photo-books and the Perception of Geological Time”  
**Minna Valjakka**, “Botanical mediations of Agro-Extractivism: (Counter-)Aesthetics of Violence in Contemporary Southeast Asian Art”

# PROGRAM | 4 APRIL

15:00 - 15:30 **Refreshments.** *Atrium*

15:30 - 17:00 **Panel 5. Insurgent Terrains** (pp. 26–29)

*Doelenzaal*

*Chair:* Florence Evans (PhD Researcher, University of Amsterdam)

**Katherine Huber**, ““You will see beauty when this forest grows”: Migration, Environment, and Belonging in

Denise Chaila’s Music Videos *Anseo* and *Duel Citizenship*”

**Elena Burgos Martinez**, “Unhearing fire: a geontopolitics of environmental guardianship and care”

**Julée Al-Bayaty de Ridder**, Appropriating and Subverting the Extractive Zone: Relations between Rivers and Humans in Genevieve Robertson’s *Still Running Water* (2017-19) and Carolina Caycedo’s *YUMA, or The Land of Friends* (2014)

15:30 - 17:00

**Panel 6. Unearthing the Geopolitical** (pp. 30–33)

*Potgieterzaal*

*Chair:* Helen Gilbert (Professor, Royal Holloway, University of London)

**Svitlana Matviyenko**, “The Return of the Steppe: Resourcification, Necropolitics, and Geopower at War”

**Emily McGiffin**, “Selective aesthetics: maintaining strategic geopower through exoticised representations of Burkina Faso’s security crisis”

**Paloma Puente-Lozano**, “Resonant and volumetric territorialities: the aesthetics of outer space”

18:00 **Dinner for presenters and chairs.**

*Brakke Grond, upper floor*

# PROGRAM | 5 APRIL

09:30 - 11:00 **Refreshments.** *Atrium*

9:30 - 11:00 **FSGS—Community Operation: Exchanging Ochre Pigments.** *Potgieterzaal*

Join us in preparing and exchanging Ochre pigments from FSGS surveys in Utah. All are welcome.

11:00 - 12:30 **Panel 7. Planetary Embodiments** (pp. 35–37)  
*Doelenzaal*  
*Chair:* Annette Davison (Senior Lecturer, University of Edinburgh)

**Estefanía Bournot**, “The Re-awakening of the Wakas: Latin American Eco-Feminist Approaches to “Earth Cultures””

**Ida Day**, “The Aesthetics of Geopower in Contemporary Indigenous Poetry of Latin America”

**Lijuan Klassen**, “The Anatomy of the Planet: on *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*”

11:00 - 12:30 **Panel 8. Surveying Extractions** (pp. 38–45)  
*Potgieterzaal*  
*Chair:* Katarina Nesic (Research Assistant, University of Amsterdam)

**Ingrid Halland**, “On Earth, in Air, With Data The Ethics and Aesthetics of Geo Mapping in Dalane, Norway, c. 1840 – 2023”

**Tim Shao-Hung Teng**, “The Art of Prospecting: Visuality, Energy, and Fissures in a Socialist Oil Field”

**Elpitha Tsoutsounakis**, “Field Studio Geontological Survey”

12:30 - 13:30 **Lunch.** *Atrium*

13:30 - 15:00 **Panel 9. Commodifying Geos** (pp. 46–48)  
*Doelenzaal*  
*Chair:* Jeff Diamanti (Assistant Professor, University of Amsterdam)

**Santiago Acosta**, “Culture in the Web of Life: Geopower and the Planetary Metabolisms of Capital”

**Merve Tabur**, “The Aesthetics of Extraction and Planetary Futures in Arabic Climate Fiction”

**Shana Leodar Ye**, “Carbon-Silicon Yellowness: The Aesthetics of Chip Capitalism”

13:30 - 15:00 **Panel 10. Multisensory Environments** (pp. 49–52)  
*Potgieterzaal*  
*Chair:* Tamalone van den Eijnden (PhD scholar, University of Twente)

**Maurice Jones**, “From Soundscape Ecology to Sonic Assemblage: Imagining an Earthly Community”

**Linda Lapina**, “Dancing (with) geopower? Conservaton and destructon, liveliness and dying by Utterslev marsh in Copenhagen”

**Alexis Radisoglou**, “Figures of Geopower”

# PROGRAM | 5 APRIL

15:00 - 15:30 **Refreshments.** *Atrium*

15:30 - 17:00 **Panel 11. Time and Tide** (pp. 53–55)

*Doelenzaal*

*Chair:* Matthias De Groof (Assistant Professor, University of Antwerp & Marie

**Members of The Postcolonial Anthropocene Research Network:**

**Jesse van Amelsvoort**, “Future Europeans on the Run: On Scattered Representations of European Climate Migration”

**Bhagya Casaba Somashekar**, “Emergency Time in the Postcolonial Anthropocene”

**Siddharth Soni**, “Undersea Cables and the Warping of Time: Tade Thompson, Amitav Ghosh, and the Colonial Politics of Infrastructure”

15:30 - 17:00

**Panel 12. Metageographies** (pp. 56–59)

*Potgieterzaal*

*Chair:* Simon Ferdinand (Veni postdoctoral researcher, University of Amsterdam)

**Matt Barlow**, “Reimagining political ecology through volume”

**Laura Op de Beke**, “Growth and Homeostasis in Gaia Games”

**Lilian Kroth**, “Remote Sensing and Geopower: Reassessing Images of the Earth between Contemporary Art and Feminist Critique”

17:00 - 17:15 **Closing Remarks.** *Doelenzaal*

17:15 - 18:30 **Drinks.** *Atrium*

# KEYNOTE FEDERICO LUISETTI

## Beyond Metabolism: On the Pluriversal Bodies of the Earth

In an age of socio-environmental breakdown, the question about planetary metabolism becomes crucial once again, as it was for Karl Marx in the second half of the nineteenth century, when he formulated his critique of capitalist agriculture and industrial labour. Biogeochemical cycles are now disrupted and material, social, and epistemic “metabolic rifts” are scarring the Earth and deepening the Global South/Global North divide. Thinking geopolitics through the lens of this unsettling planetary metabolism captures the proliferation of environmental conflicts (see <https://ejatlas.org/>) and forces critical theory to acknowledge the geohistorical roots of the crisis: the “colonial inhabitation” of the Earth (Malcom Ferdinand) inaugurated by plantations and slave labour.

In my talk, I argue that the category of metabolism is still relevant for political ecology and ecological economics but struggles to engage with the forces of the Earth that are challenging the “Carbon Imaginary” (Elizabeth Povinelli) of extractive capitalism. The fixation on organic bodies and their metabolic exchanges with the environment does not account for the existence of stones, valleys, rivers, and other “earth-beings” that are not biological entities but geobodies. Can we think of aesthetic and political subjects that are not overdetermined by the paradigm of organic life? Acting with earth-beings requires an ecology of the Pluriverse, a vision of geopolitics beyond metabolism. I will show how artistic practices – such as the video installation *Tsunami Boulder* by Shitamichi Motoyuki (<http://m-shitamichi.com/work/tsunami-boulder/>) – can help us reshape our understanding of geopolitics and learn from the pluriversal bodies of the Earth.

**Federico Luisetti** is Associate Professor of Italian Studies and the Environmental Humanities at the University of St. Gallen. He is the author of books and essays on critical theory and the environmental humanities, including *Nonhuman Subjects. An Ecology of Earth-Beings* (Cambridge University Press 2023) and the *The Anomie of the Earth: Philosophy, Politics, and Autonomy in Europe and the Americas* (with John Pickles and Wilson Kaiser, eds., Duke University Press 2015). He is the coordinator of *Unruly Natures* (<https://unrulynatures.ch/>), a collaborative research project and network in political ecology.



Tsunami Boulder #01; Shitamichi Motoyuki.



# PANEL I TECTONIC FORMATIONS

## Herðubreið- Mountainous geo-power and deep time

Edward H. Huijbens

The proposed paper is about the tuya mountain Herðubreið in the Northeast central highlands of Iceland and its nonhuman forcefulness penetrating its rendering by the people present at the campsite Herðubreiðarlindir where I was a warden for 10 days in early August this summer. The paper is framed in relation to our current climate and biodiversity crisis and how it is imperative to determine "...how our species understands the natural world and perhaps, most importantly, conceptualises our own place within it." (Frankopan, 2023, p. 39). Through three vignettes based on photographs of the mountain, the paper explores how geopower intersects with aesthetics through the ways in which the mountain is materially sensed and embodied through the visitors attempting its ascent. The paper will proceed in three parts. The first part following an introduction placing the reader, lays out the speculative realist stance I intend to adopt to make sense of these aesthetic renderings and how these refract around notions of timefulness. The second part offers the three vignettes after a short methodological note. Each vignette starts with an image of the mountain from one of the days I was there. The third and last part before a few concluding points brings timefulness to bear on the speculations offered by the vignettes, reflecting on how the mountain's planetary materialities afford stories, which precede and exceed its discursive framings. I claim that stories such as the ones told of Herðubreið can thus expand our consciousness in the here and now through deep time and thereby mobilise politics and aesthetics of future transformations for the betterment of our culture and liveability on and of the Earth.

## Geo-anthropogenic Narratives: aesthetic encounters of Terras, Zöe, Bios, Geos and Anthropos along the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt

Heidi Sohn

Geomorphology is the manifestation of a continuous alloplastic process that unravels along the deep rhythms of terrestrial time; a time that is inhuman, lithic, primordial, delirious, 'chaosmic'. Like all geogenic expressions, it weaves together the lines of simultaneously beautiful and terrifying stories of eruption and genesis; it orchestrates the flows of energy and matter into waves of violent creation and slow destruction that sediment, stratify and structure the inorganic and organic, articulating life (bi-os-zöe) and non-life on Earth. In this sense, the geomorphological is an index of the encounter of forces between the geogenic and the anthropogenic realms. The geogenic, understood as the performative agency of Earth, its forces, and systems, in its (un) folding, co-constitutes space, environment and horizon. The anthropogenic, understood as the performative agency of humans, their forces and their systems, in its (un) folding, trans/forms spaces, environments and horizons into places, territories, and destinies. When the geogenic and the anthropogenic encounter each other they embody the articulation or clash of different regimes of unimaginable power, of 'geopower'.

The 'geopower' that I will be dealing with in this paper, emerges from the highlands of central Mexico, in the regions contained by the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt, a unique geological formation (a continental arc) that runs through Mexico's midsection, from the Western coast of the Gulf of Mexico to the eastern shores of the Pacific Ocean, effectively separating the northern territories from the southern ones. In this region of Mexico, the geogenic finds expression in the folds of the crust of the Earth, which materialize in swamps and wetlands and their delicate ecosystems, contained within basins surrounded by mountainous ranges peppered with gigantic -extinct and active- stratovolcanoes covered with eternal snow and glaciers. It is also in this region of intense volcanic and seismic activity where the majority of Mesoamerican civilizations and cultures emerged, settled, thrived and disappeared, or transformed into what is today Mexico's most densely populated region. In this paper I will dive into the bowels of different expressions of geopower and the geo-anthropogenic as narrative lines that are recurrent in Mexican landscape painting, muralism, architecture and urbanism.

# PANEL 2

## RETHINKING PLANETARY REPRESENTATION

### Metageographies of the Urbicene

Nikos Katsikis

Metageographies of the Urbicene aims to challenge the dominant representations of urbanization as a city-centric, human-centered condition, which are often obscuring the variegated, more-than-human, more-than-city geographies that support urban life. Building upon the concept of the Urbicene and the agendas of Planetary Urbanization, and World Systems Ecology, this contribution challenges the image of the spiky, urban world, where cities are the centers of economic development, and geopolitical power. It questions the *metageographies* through which such narratives have been constructed – the relatively unexamined and often taken-for-granted ideological frameworks organizing geospatial knowledge. Expanding upon the concept of the Ecological Surplus (grasping the dialectic of capitalization and appropriation of unpaid work in the construction of world ecologies), the presentation attempts to present processes of planetary urbanization as an uneven re-organization of world ecological value, through a series of visualizations that build upon a critical instrumentalization of global geospatial datasets. Settlement spaces, although covering no more than 4% of the earth's surface, are directly interconnected through their bio-geographical interdependencies with the transformation of the rest of the 70% of the total land surface currently used. This “other 70%” mostly hosts more-than-city landscapes of primary production: agricultural, grazing and forestry zones, sites of resource extraction and waste disposal where more-than-human agents are put at work in support of city life. This project aims to shed light upon these largely invisible *operational landscapes* of planetary urbanization, highlighting their critical role in organizing social and ecological surplus in the Urbicene.

### Seeing with Sediment: On deep-sea mining and the aquatic perspectives

Theo Reeves-Evison

Prior to the formation of modern oceanography in the 19th Century very little was known about the abyssal environment. With the scientific voyages of the H.M.S Challenger, not only were several thousand new species of marine life discovered, but the sea floor was shown to contain vast quantities of polymetallic nodules. In the present day, and these nodules are now subject to the extractive gaze of numerous deep-sea mining (DSM) companies, with over 20 mineral exploration licenses having been issued by the International Seabed Authority to date. This paper takes this extractive gaze as its starting point, contrasting the way DSM companies flatten and fix the ocean in their public facing visual materials with artistic projects that aim to preserve its dynamic materiality.

Building on work in the ocean humanities that suggests a ‘terrestrial bias’ is applied to the sea (Jue, 2020), the paper will argue that the distinctiveness of the deep sea is played down in the visual culture of DSM. As marine biologists have pointed out, a consequence of mining would be the disturbance of sediment on the abyssal plane. This sediment would be transported in the water column far beyond the zone in which extraction takes place. These environmental effects are impossible to apprehend without taking account of the material dimensions of the ocean as a space of ‘churning’, ‘drifting’, and ‘dynamic fluidity’ (Steinberg and Peters; 2015). Such disturbances are also literally out of sight insofar as they are beyond the limits of human perception. In the absence of direct observation, artistic projects by the likes of Emma Critchley and Armin Linke come to fill the lacuna in the visual culture of deep-sea mining, counteracting an extractive gaze with an immersive and materialist perspective that facilitates reflection on how we experience the abyssal environment in the first place.

## Grounding Meteorology – Sensing Geopowers

Sybille Neumeyer

In her artistic practice and post-disciplinary research Sybille Neumeyer traces stories of weather and changing climates by following multi-species trajectories. Insects, like dragonflies, and shells, birds and sea lions, amongst others, allow to scale perspectives about the climate crisis down to a very bodily, and further not human-centered, dimension. As living ecologies provide possibilities of counter-modeling planetary processes – in both representational and as well co-worlding senses – they also are juxtapositions to remote sensing, thus building a base for what the artist calls ‘grounding meteorology’. Her work examines and underlines the techno-logics and data-driven practices of understanding the climate crisis, while also emphasizing the need for a biocultural perspective on meteorology and the ongoing crisis. Through methods of ‘biocultural hindcasting’ Neumeyer will share non-linear and non-chronological narratives, that open discourses about the colonality of climate sciences, data and resource extractions, the need for multiplicities of sensing and possible more-than-human alliances to re-model planetary atmospheres. The presentation will draw from the works „souvenirs entomologiques #1:odonata / weathering data“ (2020) and „Hindcast“ (2023) and weave fragments together following the above stated topics. Both video works are developed in collaboration and dialogue with scientific institutions, such as the State Museum of Natural History Karlsruhe, the Weltmuseum Wien and the DWD (German Meteorological Services), as well as the DKRZ (German Climate Computing Center) and use methods of collaging ‘operational images’ (Farocki, 2000) with documentary footage and poetic narration. If we decenter human modes and technologies of sensing, which repercussions would that have on different aspects of geopower? Which role do aesthetics and non-visual senses play in shaping decisions upon extraction, conservation and care?

## PANEL 3 NARRATING GEONTOLOGIES

“Aesthetics of Proximity” and the (Un)Seen Presences in Postcolonial Eco-Narratives: the case of *God was African* and *The Activist*

Tem Edwin Nji

This paper examines the various forces of the land, the unseen and seen presences in postcolonial environments that are by themselves various sites of cosmic and geopolitical power in (de)colonial thought. Aware that “the intransient forces of the Earth have often become marginalized as non-operative spaces for politics and thereby excluded” (Yusoff 2019), the essay delves into the various presences of the land: rivers, forests, land surfaces and abstract cosmic forces as agents of power in postcolonial environments. Conscious of Povinelli’s argument on the “coming relationship of the distinction between life and Nonlife” (Povinelli 2014), the essay embraces both Sule Egya’s position on taking postcolonial Ecocriticism beyond the familiar tropes of environmental justice criticism and Iheka’s contention that discussions of agency in postcolonial literature have often been at the detriment of the abstract presences of the land. In this essay, focus is on Nkemngong Nkengasong’s *God Was African* and Tanure Ojaide’s *The Activist* in the light of showcasing how the forces of the land: hills, valleys, forests and god(s) of Lewoh on the one hand, and the rivers and spirits of the Niger Delta are sites in the theorization of power. That way, the paper intervenes in wielding together the seen and unseen presences of the land that together constitute the planetary forces within the various contours of the two different but profoundly similar narratives.

## A 'fault line of pain': N. K. Jemisin's *Broken Earth* Trilogy and Black Planetary Consciousness

David Shackleton

This paper argues that N. K. Jemisin's *Broken Earth* trilogy (2015-17) articulates forms of geological consciousness that reconceptualize geopower in the Anthropocene. Dipesh Chakrabarty influentially suggests that the idea that humans have become a geophysical force necessitates rethinking the concept of human agency: 'the current conjuncture of globalization and global warming leaves us with the challenge of having to think of human agency over multiple and incommensurable scales at once'. Although humans can never experience themselves as a geological force, Jemisin uses the resources of fantasy to imagine 'orogenes' who can 'sess' geological features and forces, become aware of slow processes that unfold on continental scales and over deep time, and can themselves channel colossal forces. Yet unlike many versions of the Anthropocene, such forces in Jemisin's fictional world are not attributed to an undifferentiated 'humanity'. Rather, by drawing attention to colonial modes of inhabitation in bringing about catastrophic environmental changes, the *Broken Earth* trilogy reveals the 'Anthropos' of the Anthropocene to be what Sylvia Wynter diagnoses as the all-too-familiar Western bourgeois conception of 'Man'. Beyond this, the trilogy serves as a warning about hubristic geoengineering projects, which are advocated by certain accounts of a 'good Anthropocene'. In *The Stone Sky* (2017), Jemisin imagines a society called Syl Anagist that has transitioned beyond fossil fuels, yet its technologically advanced cities depend on the forced labour of the orogenes, and it transpires that its geoengineering projects are what have dangerously disrupted the Earth's seasonal cycles. Aligning Jemisin's Black planetary consciousness with a wider Afrofuturist planetary imagination, this paper flags how Afrofuturism draws attention to the ways in which racial capitalism and settler colonialism have created a radically uneven distribution of environmental risk, and starts to imagine how a politics based on environmental justice could secure what Achille Mbembe calls 'planetary habitability'.

## Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's *Noopiming*: (W)righting epistemic injustices on and with the land

Doro Wiese

In this paper, I will discuss how Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg writer, scholar, and musician Leanne Betasamosake Simpson expresses, in her novel *Noopiming* (2021), a relationship with land as "grounded normativity" (Coulthard). I will do so by contrasting the significance of rocks with plastic's "synthetic universality" (Davies). I will argue, relying on Heather Davies' *Plastic Matter*, that plastic shares a strong link to settler colonialism and petrocapiatalism. Furthermore, plastic is part of an assemblage that Glen Coulthard (Yellowknives Dene) calls the "colonial-relation": a dominant relationship between Indigenous peoples and that the state (in Coulthard's cases: Canada) which is primarily based on the dispossession of Indigenous peoples. Coulthard thereby supplements a Marxist understanding of primitive accumulation with a (post-)colonial point-view. For Marx, primitive accumulation designates the violent land dispossession of subsisting people by a ruthless propertied class during early modern times in England. In Marx' historical study, the dispossessed subsequently flock to the cities where they have nothing to sell but their labor, thereby becoming the proletariat, exploited in a capital-relation. Coulthard, however, insists that a colonial-relation dominates Indigenous-state relations, with land as the main source of conflict. I will demonstrate how the colonial-relation is taken up by Simpson, and what alternatives her writing configure by aesthetic means, (w)righting epistemic injustices on and with the land. I will touch upon the deep past and deep future of plastic, demonstrate how Simpson reconfigures the use of plastic and its significations, and show how Simpson's reconfiguration gives rise to a different relationship to materiality that counteracts hegemonic extractivist geopower.

## PANEL 4 VISUAL ECOLOGIES



### Solastalgic Aesthetics and Living Extinctions in *SGAAWAAY K'UUNA* (*Edge of the Knife*)

Wood Roberdeau

From the Latin *extinguere*, the term 'extinction' languished in its pre-modern usage for the quenching of a flame or the paying of a debt. By the eighteenth century, however, this mundane description began to take on the evermore vertiginous rhetoric of the wiping out of species. We are faced with the fact that 'Man's' economics and politics are directly entangled with climate collapse and the rendering of the living earth as uninhabitable for non-human animals and, increasingly, for ourselves. By contrast, it could be argued that '[i]nstability is [...] the source itself of resilience, understood as the capacity for changing without disappearing.'<sup>1</sup> 'Solastalgia', a term coined by environmental philosopher Glenn Albrecht, refers to indigenous communities in a state of suffering and powerlessness in the face of anthropogenically induced crises to their homelands or dwelling places. From the Latin *solacium* (comfort) and *algia* (pain, sorrow), it is 'a form of home sickness one gets when one is still at "home".'<sup>2</sup> In *Edge of the Knife*, it is embodied by a figure (the *Gaagixiid* or Wildman) who is exiled from his community into a wilderness where he transforms, atones, and eventually is redeemed. The film acts as a memorial response to contemporary conditions, primarily by addressing the threat of extinction not only to the topophilic relationship the Haida people have to Haida Gwaii, but also, significantly, to their native language also at risk of being lost. Robin Wall Kimmerer notes, 'born of our fears and our failings, Windigo is the name for that within us which cares more for its own survival than for anything else.'<sup>3</sup> This paper asks, how can such wisdom and modes of resisting oppressive hegemonies inform a reciprocal ecological relationship within the lived environment?

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1 Frédéric Neyrat, *The Unconstructable Earth: An Ecology of Separation*, trans. Drew S. Burk (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019), 77.

2 Glenn Albrecht, "'Solastalgia": A New Concept in Health and Identity', *PAN: Philosophy, Activism, Nature* 3 (2005): 48.

3 Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2013), 305.

## Fragments, Gaps, Sequences: Photobooks and the Perception of Geological Time

William Schaefer

If, as Dipesh Chakrabarty argues, the Anthropocene poses the urgent problem of thinking together vastly disparate scales of geological history and world histories of capitalism, then the question of geopower and aesthetics extends this problem to include the scales of human life, fleeting moments of perception, and the forms of knowledge reached through the senses. This question is even more urgent given the failure Amitav Ghosh (2016) decries of cultural forms, particularly narrative fiction, to imagine in the Anthropocene “forces of unimaginable magnitude that create unbearably intimate connections over vast gaps in time and space.”

This presentation proposes that the photobook has recently become an aesthetic form for picturing together human perception and geological time and force. In *Monuments* (2015), Japanese photographer Takashi Arai practices the Industrial Revolution medium of the Daguerreotype to engage with the catastrophic convergence of nuclear power, the geological force of the Fukushima earthquake in 2011, and human life in its aftermath. Chinese photographer Muge’s *Ash* (2019) connects evanescent moments with geological formations, while the American Ron Jude’s *12 Hz* (2020) explores relations between the deep time of geological and ecological forces and the limits of human perception. Muge’s and Jude’s deep black, monochromatic, nearly-abstract photographs evoke Kikuji Kawada’s intense examination of traces of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima—one of the temporal markers of the “great acceleration” of climate change—in *Chizu* (The Map) (1965).

As photographer Alec Soth has shown, the non-narrative, non-linear sequencing of images (and the gaps between images) shapes the ways time is experienced in photobooks—a process parallel, I claim, to how geological histories are shaped from gathering, piecing together, and finding patterns in fragments of earth. How, then, does sequencing photographs become a means of imagining and making thinkable together multiple scales of momentary perceptions, ecological cycles, and deep geological time, when human agencies have become a geological force?

## Botanical mediations of Agro-Extractivism: (Counter-)Aesthetics of Violence in Contemporary Southeast Asian Art

Minna Valjakka

To what extent do plants and vegetation contribute to the conceptualization of geopower? Understandings of what constitutes non-/inhuman forces and contexts appears to vary from ‘capacities of the earth and minerals’ (Yusoff 2018) to ‘*nonhuman species*, energy flows and ecosystems’ (Luisetti 2019). While both approaches rightfully call for attention to the Earth, planetary perspectives and decolonisation, it seems that the possible role of botanical agency in these equations of geopower and biopower remains generally underexplored.

In Southeast Asia, both past and present forms of ‘agro-extractivism’ (Petras and Vethmeyer 2014) are intertwined with colonial practices that transformed plants and plantations into resource extraction. The violence of extractive imperialism – manifested through armed land acquisitions – subjugated vegetation, people and land, disrupting the existing interconnectedness of human-non-human agency. Imperial visual practices, including photography, lithographs and paintings, reinforced the legitimacy and naturalization of this symbolic violence through the aestheticization of colonial presence (Protschky 2011). As in Latin America, ‘the extractive view’ (Gómez-Barris 2017) rendered the local population and knowledge invisible. In light of this ‘beautification’ in the visual arts of the 19th and 20th centuries, what (counter-)aesthetic practices are contemporary Southeast Asian artists exploring to address agro-extractivism?

This interdisciplinary and locally grounded study draws on emerging debates in critical plant studies (Aloi, Picard and Davis 2018; Gibson 2018), ecocriticism (Ryan 2018) and extractivism in Southeast Asian contemporary art (Bilbao 2013). Through selected case studies of artworks involving plants and plant-based materials, such as Titarubi’s, *History Repeats Itself* (2016) and Khvay Samnang’s *Rubber Man* (2014), I will identify the key aesthetics employed to reveal, restore and redefine the contentious connections to plants and their associated indigenous knowledge related to earth. This paper aims to contribute to efforts to decolonise art discourses and aestheticizations of ‘geopower’ by shifting the focus to plants and the planetary aspects of the Plantationocene that highlight unjust racial and extractivist practices (Wolford 2021).

# PANEL 5

## INSURGENT TERRAINS

**“You will see beauty when this forest grows”: Migration, Environment, and Belonging in Denise Chaila’s Music Videos *Anseo* and *Duel Citizenship***

Katherine Huber

Increasing migration into Ireland in the twenty-first century raises questions about migration, indigeneity, environment, and belonging in postcolonial contexts and diaspora communities in Europe that Black Irish hip-hop helps to answer. Constructions of place and identity across languages, media, and cultural references in Denise Chaila’s 2019 song, *Duel Citizenship*, and 2020 music video, *Anseo*, expose digital and material migratory networks through which humans and nonhumans come to define and redefine perspectives of the world and relationships with each other every day. Drawing on ecomedia studies and postcolonial ecocriticism, my analysis demonstrates how the imagery, lyrics, and materiality of Chaila’s work reframes the history of colonialism in Ireland to reveal a Black Irish understanding of language and land. *Anseo*, for instance, means “here” or “present” in Irish, and the video’s refrain of this word raises questions about understandings of place, migration, and belonging amid Ireland’s complex position as both a European and a postcolonial nation. Chaila wears armor and bears a sword on cliffs that recall both the mythical stories of Queen Maeve as well as the colonial occupation of Ireland in 1169. At these moments, Chaila points to the ground as she asserts that she is not a queen but “a pharaoh, *seo* [here].” Chaila’s gesture and words challenge the viewer to reexamine both the cultural assumptions of place and identity in Ireland as well as the material ground. The video goes on to expose how the land itself, which has such strong cultural meanings in Irish traditions, is also the source of colonial and neocolonial extraction projects and wealth accumulation that inform relationships to land today. Attending to material environments in *Duel Citizenship* and *Anseo* opens conversations about how we honor, teach, and theorize intersections of race, migration, and environment in Black cultural production in complex European histories.

## Unhearing fire: a geotopolitics of environmental guardianship and care

Elena Burgos Martinez

‘Since you have been here, we can’t hear Merapi anymore’. After that sentence, my own journey through earth’s knowledges took a sharp twist and I ventured further than my geological background had allowed up until then. This piece is a tribute to those knowledges deemed unintelligible by the intrusion of science and the possibilities a more attuned collaboration between scientists and local experts can bring. Through vignettes spanning from 1998 to 2015, I will try to unpack some of the tensions between geontological powers populating the slopes of Gunung Merapi in Yogyakarta, Jawa, Indonesia. Uncritical scientific knowledge can function as a sort of ‘white noise’ - muting and deeming more ancient knowledges inaudible. What are the implications of such silences, absences and forms of ontoepistemic discrimination for today’s environmental degradation? In the blink of an eye, a scientific report about volcanic activity, risk and preparedness could serve to legitimise land-grabbing activities intended to benefit mining projects. At the same time, the residues of external knowledges and powers are often resisted through slow, everyday, invisible geontological alliances holding the space for Merapi to speak. Through reflective storytelling (as an anti-colonial method and ethics), and with a focus on everyday orality (sounds, hearing and unhearing), I will explore notions like guardianship and the care in the context of Merapi’s alliances between Mbah (volcano caretakers), Pasar Bubah (a market of ghosts) and female Dukun (healers). How can science learn from ancestral geotopolitics of care? How can the rumble of scientific knowledge be re-negotiated as it intrudes in spaces regulated by inhuman and more-than-human relations and lifeways? How can an geotopolitics of crisis (and of environmental care) help navigate the environmental injustices we inhabit and perpetuate today?

## Appropriating and Subverting the Extractive Zone: Relations between Rivers and Humans in Genevieve Robertson's *Still Running Water* (2017-19) and Carolina Caycedo's *YUMA, or The Land of Friends* (2014)

Julée Al-Bayaty de Ridder

As a method to decrease greenhouse gas emissions and the global reliance on nonrenewable resources, hydroelectric dams are commonly seen as a sign of progress towards a more environmentally conscious future. Ironically, what are often obscured or overlooked are the severe impacts dams have on the environment in surrounding areas, on indigenous communities and on geopolitics. Furthermore, building dams as an alternative energy resource implies the commodification of water, which radically differs from indigenous meanings and perceptions of waterways. This research focuses on the commodification of and the extractivist activities in the Magdalena River (Colombia) and the Columbia River (Canada and USA) by examining artistic representations that critique such attitudes and activities.

Carolina Caycedo's *YUMA, or The Land of Friends* (2014), from her series *Be Dammed*, is a mural consisting of printed satellite images portraying the El Quimbo dam, which fundamentally relocated the Magdalena River and the local indigenous communities. Satellites typically surveil the Earth's surface, and their images are used by dam construction companies to regulate the territory; however, Caycedo manipulated and distorted these images to create an abstract mural where the El Quimbo dam is barely recognizable. Genevieve Robertson's video *Still Running Water* (2017-19) displays similar themes as it follows the full length of the Columbia River, from its source, along its many dams, to its mouth in the Pacific Ocean. Along the way, the aerial stills portray the river from an isolated top-down perspective; however, it occasionally dives into the river, providing what Macarena Gómez-Barris calls an intimate, "submerged perspective" on water as bubbles, sediment and particles float by.<sup>1</sup>

Caycedo's *YUMA* and Robertson's *Still Running Water* play with and challenge visibility and perspective by manipulating the alleged 'objectivity' of images, whether they are made by satellites or cameras. This 'objectivity' assumes power over its subject matter; yet, by manipulating it, that assumed power is called into question. As Gómez-Barris has shown, these submerged perspectives

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1 Macarena Gómez-Barris, *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), 92.

emerge "within the extractive zone" and question the zone's practices and technologies that are geared towards objectifying, observing and monitoring the Earth.<sup>2</sup>

Instead of creating either/or distinctions between nature/culture, subjective/objective and immersed/isolated, Caycedo's manipulations and Robertson's submersions allow for fluctuations to occur between the above-mentioned extremities. These oscillations invite possibilities for perspectives to emerge that importantly coexist alongside other perspectives. In turn, these oscillations illuminate how rivers are complex ecosystems that are intimately entangled with humans, other-than-human species and environments. Conceptualizing rivers as such, provides ways of rethinking human interactions and practices with waterways.

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2 Ibid., 4.



# PANEL 6

## UNEARTHING THE GEOPOLITICAL

### The Return of the Steppe: Resourcification, Necropolitics, and Geopower at War

Svitlana Matviyenko

This paper will discuss the connection between the imperial legacies embedded in the Soviet Union's military-industrial complex and its resourcification of water and land that are currently exploited for weaponizing energy infrastructure during the Russian War in Ukraine. It will focus on the Soviet drama *Poem about the Sea*, written by Oleksandr Dovzhenko and directed by Yulia Solntseva in 1958, that reflects on constructing the Kakhovka hydroelectric station on the Dniro River at the cost of flooding many Ukrainian settlements to address the necropolitical return of the steppe after the destruction of the Kakhovka dam, spilling the poisonous residue of the Soviet industrialization into the *terror environment* shaped by the current war.

The paper will begin by discussing the destruction, on June 6, 2023, of the Kakhovka dam, a seminal event during the ongoing war, the aftermath of which made it, at the moment of writing this proposal, Ukraine's "worst ecological disaster since the Chernobyl nuclear meltdown." This event has been also recognized as indicative of genocidal intent and described as ecocide by environmentalists worldwide, which may – hopefully – lead to a long-overdue recognition of ecocide as a 5th war crime against peace in the Rome Statute by the ICC.

The construction of the dam among other Soviet hydroelectric facilities of Stalin's 1948 Great Plan for the Transformation of Nature was similarly catastrophic and resulted in the disappearance of Dniro's wetlands as the traditional territories of the Big Meadow went under the Kakhovka water reservoir. A century earlier, the Russian colonialist subsumption of these territories began with erasure of the former Cossack settlements in 1775 in the process of the imperial "unification" by Russian Empress Catherine II. In the end of the 19th century, the natural resources of these territories were mapped for the Russian Imperial Academy of sciences by Ukrainian geologist Volodymyr Vernadsky under a supervision of the founder of the Russian modern soil

science Vasily Dokuchaev: it was there, in the tallgrass steppe of Eastern Ukraine and Western Russia, Dokuchaev "discovered" the abundance of rich in organic matter fertile soil, which he bluntly termed by a similarly "unifying" term of "Russian chernozem" (Russian black soil), that would be aggressively transformed in the following decades by the Russian and then Soviet industrialization. Because the Kakhovka dam is part of the nuclear energy infrastructure, with its reservoir supplying water to cool the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant's reactors, its destruction also occupies an important place in my research on *nuclear terrorism* during the current war, conducted both at the levels of ideas or information and material environment, which frames this discussion.

## Selective aesthetics: maintaining strategic geopolitics through exoticised representations of Burkina Faso's security crisis

Emily McGiffin

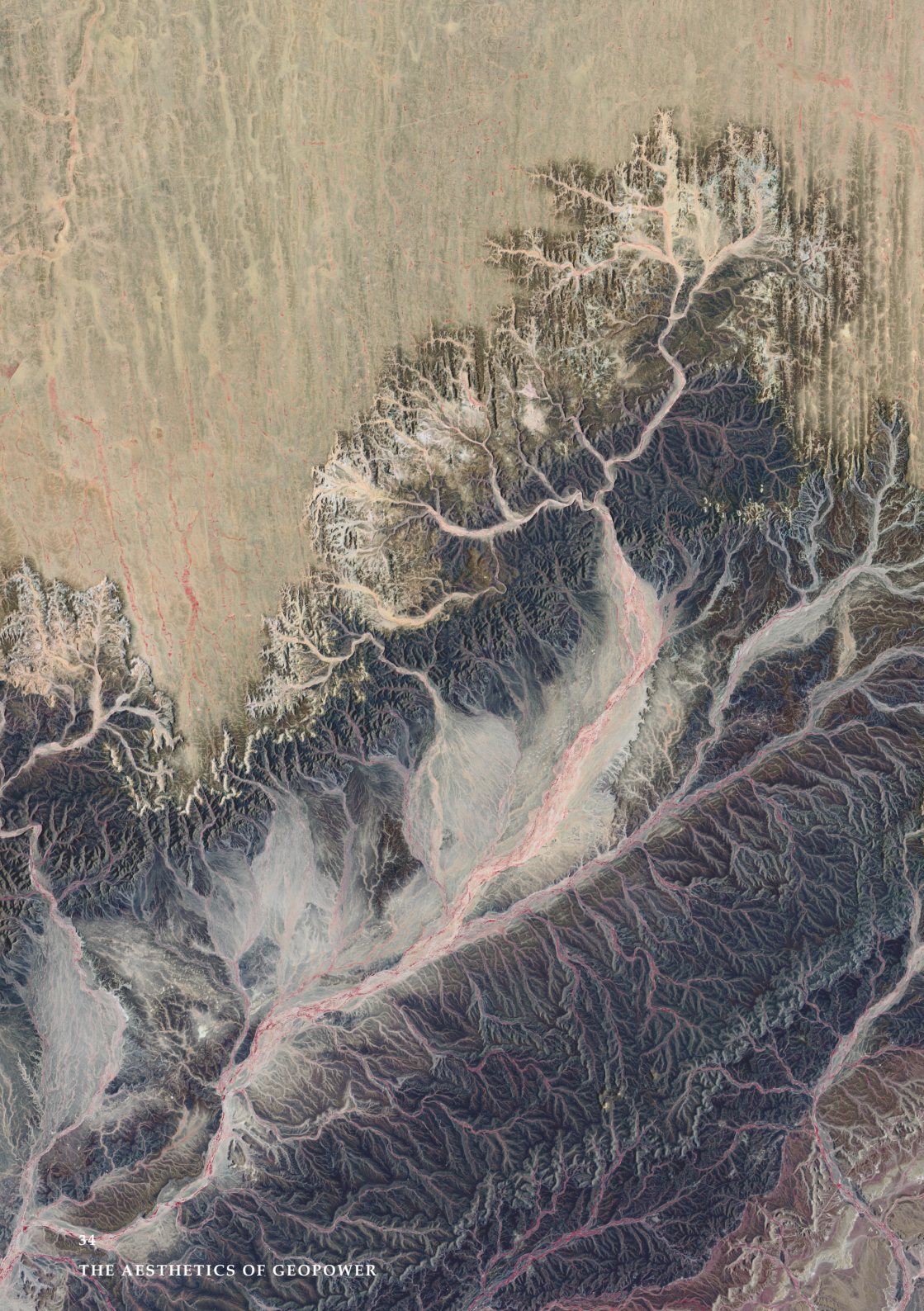
Colonialism and the plantation, through their modes of objectification, hierarchization and extraction, have (con)formed the modern world at both underneath and topography layers. These violent geologies of modern societies culminate in an enduring crisis of planetary existence. In this paper, I engage with the living legacies of quilombo, drawing inspiration from the counter-colonial theories and practices of Beatriz Nascimento and Nêgo Bispo dos Santos. Historically, quilombos emerged as land-based communities formed by Afro-diasporic persons who had escaped captivity under plantation slavery. These counter-colonial coalitions often encompassed the participation of Indigenous peoples and a few white deserters. Beyond surviving anti-Black genocide, the quilombo tactics of fugitivity persistently cultivate (im)possible modes of existence, sociability, and ecology, while contesting the entrenched white-cis-heteropatriarchal extractivist order inherent in colonial and postcolonial geographies. Moving beyond official archives and national legislations, this work endeavors to think with and speak nearby the ecologies and poetics of quilombo as a living practice. The analysis delves into visual, oral, and written works that engage with the legacies of quilombo, with a focus on the contributions of Beatriz Nascimento, Afro-Brazilian historian, poet and militant co-founder of the Black Unified Movement, and Nêgo Bispo dos Santos, a quilombola poet, farmer and land rights activist in the region now known as Brazil. In the ongoing abolitionist struggles for unworlding, I speculate the possibilities and limitations of re-imagining other geographies of liberation and worldmaking. Given the confluence of concerns regarding the significance of land and planetary forces in decolonial thought and practice, I strongly believe that this project would both benefit from and contribute to the questions proposed by this inspiring conference.

## Resonant and volumetric territorialities: the aesthetics of outer space

Paloma Puente-Lozano

Recent scholarship has recast territory as a volume to the extent that an increasingly vertical (both subterranean and stratospheric) extension of practices of control, management, and extraction has been underway over the last decades. Discussions as to how processes of functional territorialization are brought to bear on these new realms have then followed (Collis, 2017; Lambach, 2019). Within this framework, outer space has received renewed attention (Gangale, 2009; Leib, 2015; Kumar, 2015; Klinger, 2019) and critical popular geopolitics (Dittmer and Dodds, 2008) has sought to address current shifting patterns in geopolitical imaginations on outer space.

Against this backdrop, this paper aims at analysing the way China (PRC)'s geopolitical imagination about outer space is being rapidly informed by nationalist codes and an expansive sense of territory. The paper thus aims at uncovering the meaning of the visual, aesthetic and rhetoric strategies underwriting China's national audiences imaginations of outer space. Whether it is tourist-oriented and educational Mars analogue sites, social media emotionally charged reporting on lunar rover Yutu or citizens contests on poster design in the annual's PRC Space Day, outer space recurringly seems to be construed (i.e., represented, visualized, anesthetized) in a way that allows for creating an imaginary and material continuity alike between experiences of Earthly territory and outer space.



## PANEL 7

# PLANETARY EMBODIMENTS

### The Re-awakening of the Wakas: Latin American Eco-Feminist Approaches to “Earth Cultures”

Estefanía Bournot

While the extractive logics of late capitalism have coopted the semantics of the geological as equivalent to “natural resources”, in Latin America, indigenous cosmologies have long considered rocks, mountains and minerals as sacred beings: the *wakas* (Marisol the la Cadena). The connection between the body and the territory in the context of indigenous people in Latin America is deeply ingrained in their cosmologies, spiritual beliefs, and cultural practices. It represents a profound understanding of the interdependence of human well-being and the health of the natural world, and it forms the basis for their ecological stewardship and resistance to threats against their territories.

This paper seeks to expand the discussion on “geopower” by exploring the burgeoning body of work by Latin American indigenous women artists who engage with geological materials—stones, minerals, soil, fossils—as expressive mediums. For this purpose I delve into ecofeminist conceptualizations of “cuerpo-territorio” (body- territory), as developed by indigenous intellectuals and activists, such as Lorena Cabnal and Yasnaya Aguilar, who challenge essentialist notions of gender and the division between humans and nature. Drawing inspiration from the artistic contributions of Guadalupe Miles, Eliane Pontiguara, Tania Bruguera, and Regina José Galindo, I introduce the concept of “cosmogeology” as a radical practice of anti- colonial and anti-patriarchal resistance. Through their creative endeavors, these women amplify the silenced voices of inanimate matter, subverting the reproductive logics of “earth cultures” that have historically served capitalist-extractive systems.

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## The Aesthetics of Geopower in Contemporary Indigenous Poetry of Latin America

Ida Day

The focus of my paper is the ecological perspective of Hugo Jamioy Juagibioy, a Colombian writer, whose bilingual collection of poems, *Danzantes del viento/ Bínjibe oboyejuayjäng* (2005, in Spanish and Kamëntsa), redefines human relationship with the natural environment. The poems communicate a deep spiritual connection that exist between the Kamëntsa people and their native Valley of Sibundoy, the Andean-Amazon region in the south- west of Colombia. The land and the plants here are presented as living beings, who have a spirit, memory, and voice. Such an attitude towards nature serves as a model of resistance against unlimited economic growth and modern forms of economic colonialism. Jamioy Juagibioy's artistic work represents indigenous perspectives on planetary forces, contributing agency to ecological entities, such as land, water, as well as fauna and flora of his native region. His concerns coincide with those of other writers and activists of Latin America, who resist the impact of globalization on communities and environments.

My paper explores how indigenous aesthetics (poetry) contributes to the contemporary manifestations of geopower by challenging our anthropocentric assumptions about humanity's superior position on the planet. As the Anthropocene climate crisis invites a reflection on the centrality of human beings in the planetary system, I argue that Jamioy Juagibioy's view offers a more comprehensive and holistic perspective. The author moves beyond human-centered approaches, and sees nature not as a commodity for consumption, but as a living organism. His artistic production inspires reflection on the role of nature in indigenous thought, which in contrast to Western ethics of dominance over the natural world, emphasizes a mutual respect with local ecosystems, as well as an awareness of planetary interdependence.

## The Anatomy of the Planet: on *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*

Lijuan Klassen

The foregrounding of non-human and earthly processes in the formulation of "geo-power" constitutes an important supplement to the focus on human bodies and populations in Michel Foucault's writings on "biopower". However, in this presentation, I wish to instead highlight a key continuity between the bio-political production of human bodies and the geo-political transformation of Earth systems through the question of "planetary health".

While "planetary health" has gained increasing currency since its first mention in the Lancet medical journal in 2014, its conceptual roots can be traced throughout the Western metaphysical tradition, but more recently to the popularisation of notions such as "eco-system" or "earth health". U.S. environmentalist movements in the 1970s frequently employed the representation of the Earth as a living entity or body (for example with rainforests and deserts as its organs (Lovelock, 1971)), as a metaphor through which abstract processes such as global warming could be articulated as "planet fever". These metaphors, however, are not simply neutral, and the "organismic" understanding of the Earth often presupposes a universal humanity as both the Earth's disease, and its doctor, who is responsible to administer a proper diagnosis and treatment, a treatment to be proscribed by experts rather than the public (Thomson, 2019).

I will seek to elaborate on how the management and transformation of earth systems conducted in the name of planetary health is enabled by the representation of the Earth as an anatomical body. Further, by way of an analysis of Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Véréna Paravel's film *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* (2022), which dislocates conventional perspectives on human bodies, presenting them in a thought-provoking and uncanny way, as unlikely *landscapes*; I ask, how can such disembodied perspectives of the body help to "de-naturalise" some of the dominant conceptions of not only the human body, but also, and perhaps most urgently, our conceptions of planetary bodies and health?

# PANEL 8

## SURVEYING EXTRACTIONS

On Earth, in Air, With Data

The Ethics and Aesthetics of Geo Mapping in Dalane, Norway, c. 1840 – 2023

Ingrid Halland

In the 1840s, the young Norwegian entrepreneur Johan Fredrik Feyer (1821 – 1880) walked the ground in the geologically complex area of Dalane, Norway, seeking hidden underground treasures—minerals and ores—hoping to find a new profitable use of what he described as a rugged wasteland. After years of searching, he discovered a large clay ore at the farm Leidland and drew a two-dimensional map of the farm’s property boundaries in his notebook (fig. 1). The discovery of the ore was the starting point of the successful mining industry in Dalane.

In December 1953, a photographic device was attached to an aircraft that flew over Dalane hoping to find a new ore of the valuable mineral ilmenite to intensify the production of titanium dioxide (TiO<sub>2</sub>) for a growing global market. The aeromagnetic survey—conducted by the British company Hunting Geophysics, Ltd.—gathered data from magnetization beneath the surface to produce three-dimensional blockdiagram maps depicting the depth of the underground ore (fig. 2). The Tellnes Ore in Dalane is the world’s largest ilmenite ore, and the discovery was the starting point of an *extractive efficiency* for increasing the global hegemony of the chemical compound titanium dioxide (a pigment used in nearly all artificial surfaces).

In 2023, there is a new logic to the geo mapping in Dalane. Architect Maximilian Schob uses artistic methods to generate simulated digital images by synthesizing big data, satellite images and historical maps (fig. 3). The aim is to create a new sublime aesthetics—a simulated uncanny image that surpasses both space and time—that can spur awareness of the consequences of how the logic of mining modernity and extractive efficiency have as created a permanent wound in the rugged wasteland.

This paper unpacks three aesthetic paradigms of mapping the surface of the earth, in order to show how the mountain is mapped for three different purposes: in the first case for local extraction productivity, in the second, for planetary efficiency, and finally, for limiting the extractive logic.

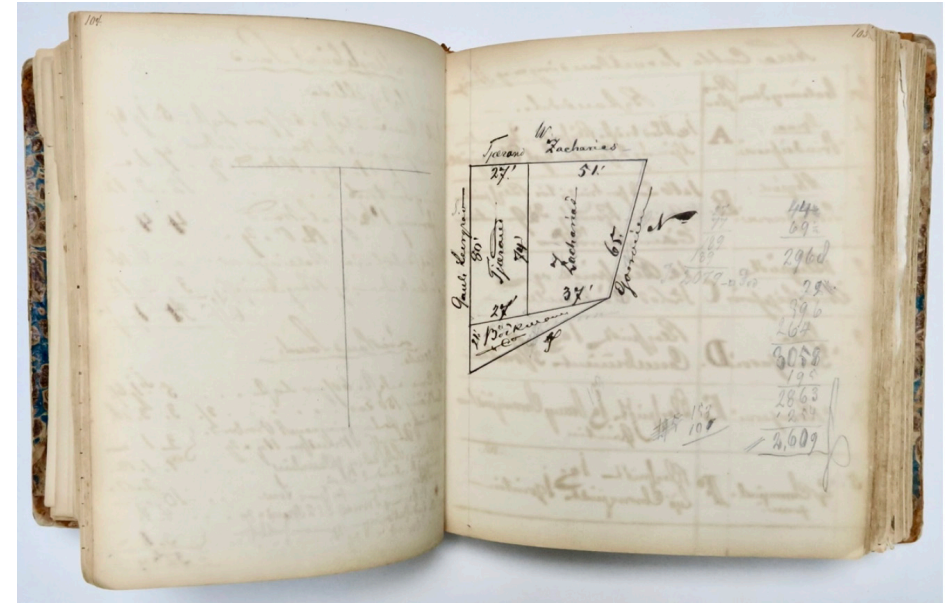


Figure 1 - Johan Feyer’s notebook 1840 - 1850s. Dalane Folkemuseum’s Archive.

Photo: Marte Johnslie (2022)

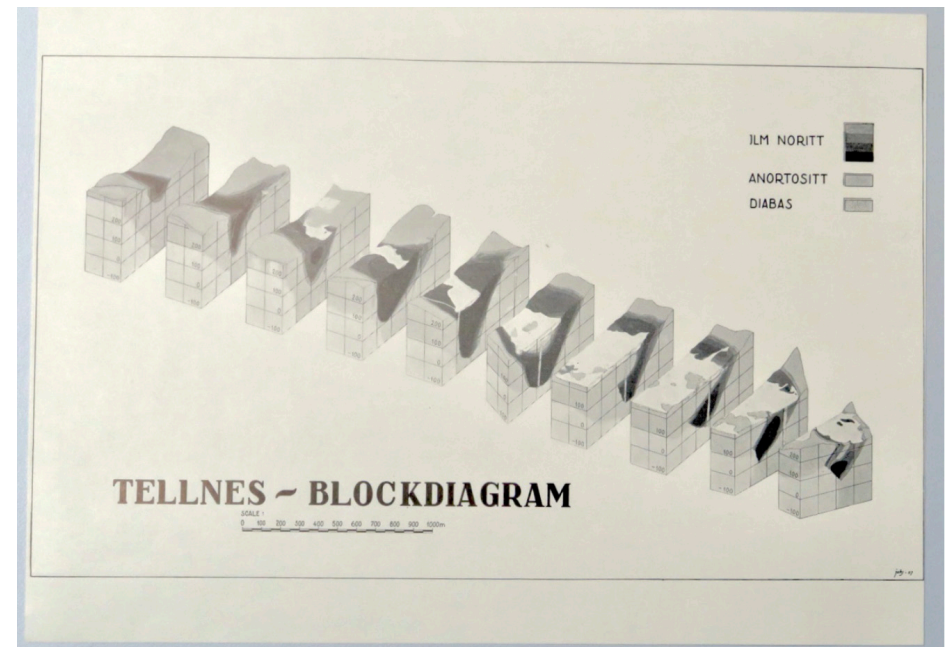


Figure 2 –Verksdirektør Dybdahls arkiv, Ec-L-0012. Box: «Innhold fagsaker 1916. 1970». Folder: Geologiske undersøkelser 1952 – 1960, Statsarkivet i Stavanger.

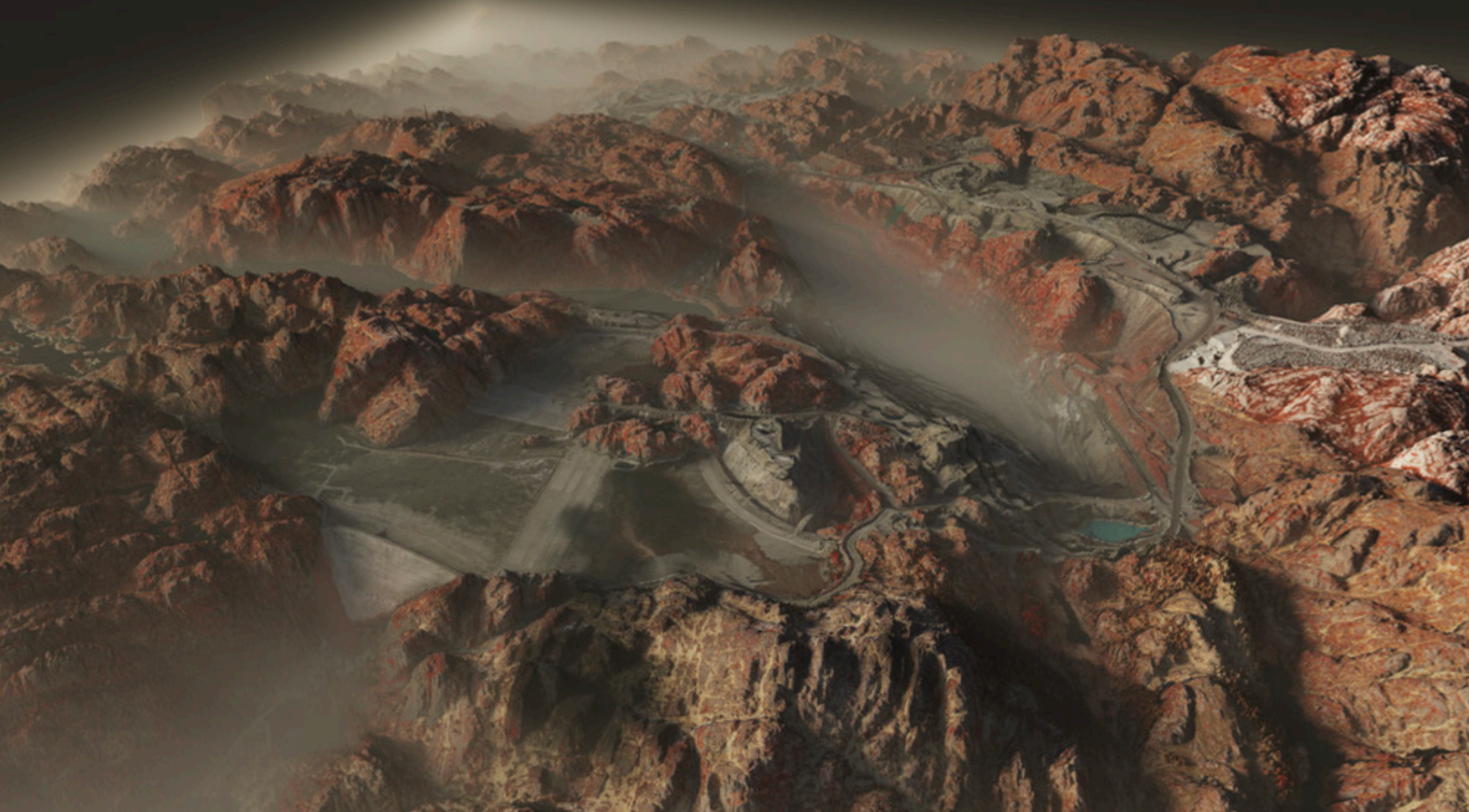


Figure 3 – Maximilian Schob, digitally generated image of the mine Titania AS and the Tellenes Ore (2023)

## The Art of Prospecting: Visuality, Energy, and Fissures in a Socialist Oil Field

Tim Shao-Hung Teng

Following the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the mass mobilization of soldiers and civilians did not come to an end but reached a new fever pitch. In the bid to locate oil reserves within China's vast territory, tens of thousands of veterans, students, citizens, and workers were mobilized in guerrilla fashion to the frontiers, vowing to defeat the new national enemy that is the Earth. This energy war soon found its battleground in the petroliferous Northeast terrain known as the Songliao Basin, where numerous oil prospecting activities were conducted and an oil field called Daqing was built. For New China, oil prospecting was not merely a technical exercise but also a political heuristic on which hinged the hopes and visions of a young nation.

This paper approaches oil prospecting in the Daqing Oil Field as both a political and an aesthetic project. Oil prospecting at the frontier was a fitting theme for socialist realism, an officially sanctioned artistic style aiming to invoke the sublimity of the socialist state. While this aesthetic foregrounded the heroic worker as a model to invoke the political sublime in Chinese citizens, I argue that in the case of oil drilling, subject formation was also subject to the subliminal forces of geological matter. I first discuss prospecting as a question of visuality in Maoist culture, wherein the socialist realist gaze found in films and posters is reoriented to become "earthbound gazes" characterized by their physical proximities to earth and intense fixation on data collection. This then leads me to revise the metaphor of socialist subject as mold, seeing oil workers instead as energy reserves receptive to the thermodynamic fluxes in the malleable drilling environment. In concluding, I draw attention to underground fissures—the micro-openings in rock layers in which oil is stored—and reflect on their contemporary relevance in the controversial practice of hydraulic fracking.

## Field Studio Geontological Survey

Elpitha Tsoutsounakis

The United States Geological Survey, established in 1879, has surveyed, mapped, and catalogued the U.S.—and the world—extensively and completely, translating earth matter into anonymous "natural" resource. As a colonial practice and capitalist endeavor of American nationalism, its manipulation of geopower mediates our human relation to the more-than-human.

The Field Studio Geontological Survey (FSGS) is a design research collective wielding USGS tactics—survey, map, catalog, archive—towards a future feminist Ochre imaginary. We join a global community enacting care for Ochre as we translate geopower through creative practice. FSGS is a contemporary model of thinking with Ochre, often referred to as the world's oldest, or first, "art material".

Originating from ancient, stellar corpses, cosmic Iron becomes our planet (geos, nonlife) and our bodies (human, inhuman, bios, life). Ochre is the combination of iron and oxygen to produce a multivalent, polyphonic material yielding as many uses as it has colors. FSGS surveys Ochre from sites of industry and extraction through collective practice in Field, Community, and Studio Operations. In addition to Ochre workshops, FSGS facilitates pigment exchanges as a critical mapping of biunivocal human/more-than-human relations. Ochre bodies, pigments, swatches, and the maps/artifacts produced with them, are archived at [UnknownProspect.org](http://UnknownProspect.org).

I will present Ochre and FSGS practice as an "articulation of earth's materiality" and epistemic tool beyond aesthetic representation. In addition to slides, I will perform an Ochre demonstration with samples from past surveys.

Ochre practices demonstrate that geopower is not only articulated in art, it is the very ground(s) artistic expression is made of—mineral pigment, or color made of Earth. *Ochre is geopower is art is iron is geo is life*. FSGS performs the assemblage of Ochre—which is the material substance of geopower—and in turn, extends its many forms (body, pigment, swatch) to the production of artifacts expressing the content and narratives of geopower through aesthetics of color.



Photograph by Russel Albert Daniels; 2022



Photograph by Russel Albert Daniels; 2022



Photograph by Josh Edgar; 2021



Ochre swatches underlie their respective ochre bodies. Photograph by the author; 2023



# PANEL 9

## COMMODIFYING GEOS

### Culture in the Web of Life: Geopower and the Planetary Metabolisms of Capital

Santiago Acosta

In recent years, the concept of geopower has emerged to illuminate the relationship between the cultural, political, and material processes that place the earth in the service of capital. Yet, many current theorizations have primarily focused on direct interventions such as terraforming and geoengineering, leaving unattended the expansive and indirect socio-ecological impacts of the global extractivist capitalist system as a whole. In this presentation, I call for an expanded understanding of geopower through the eco-Marxist lens of “metabolism” as articulated by scholars like Jason W. Moore, Fernando Coronil, and Martín Arboleda. By conceptually aligning geopower with global metabolic flows of nature-into-capital and capital-into-nature, it can more effectively be theorized as the set of material and cultural processes that channel the energies of the earth into the specific arrangements that transform them into capital. While these mechanisms may not always seem directly linked to environmental transformations, they often shape wider developments like deforestation, urbanization, and extensive infrastructure projects. In these dynamics, I argue, culture—understood as a vast field of practices, institutions, and ideologies, within which “the aesthetic” is only one restricted moment—plays a central role. In order to illustrate this point, I will refer to intersections between cultural forms and projects of resource extraction across the global south, focusing on the case of the Venezuelan oil-financed cultural field of the 1970s and 80s. I contextualize my examples against the backdrop of various cultural programs and aesthetic forms within the postcolonial, nature-exporting regions of the global south. By reframing the notion of geopower in relation to the role of culture within capitalism’s metabolic flows, I seek to shift the discussion back toward the networked dynamics of capitalist extraction, abstraction, and value creation.

### The Aesthetics of Extraction and Planetary Futures in Arabic Climate Fiction

Merve Tabur

In the past decade, Arabic and Arab-Anglophone cultural production has become increasingly more attentive to the entangled questions of environmental justice and futurity. This paper examines the aesthetics and politics of extraction that inform literary speculations on the ecological futures of the Middle East. Building upon discussions on postcolonial ecocriticism, bio/necropolitics, and futurisms, I offer a comparative reading of three short stories from the anthology entitled, *Iraq+100: Science Fiction Stories from a Century After the Invasion* (2016). *Iraq+100* identifies the 2003 invasion as a pivotal moment for envisioning the ecological futures of Iraq, radically transformed by the (neo)colonial extraction and depletion of natural resources. The stories depict local futures of ecological destruction that are articulated within planetary discourses on climate change and energy futures. I examine how the stories historicize and allegorize extractivism by asking the following question: How do extraction and extractivism, as environmental legacies of European colonialism and U.S. imperialism in the Middle East, impact futuristic imaginaries in Arabic and Arab-Anglophone literature? I argue that the aesthetics of extraction in *Iraq+100* draws attention to how bodies become “extractive zones” (Gómez-Barris) within ecologies of war and occupation. The stories depict concurrent colonial and neoliberal processes of extraction, alienation, and commodification, which transform the human body into a natural resource that can be extracted, transmuted, and expended. I end my paper with a brief discussion on the possibilities and limits of Arabfuturisms as a theoretical framework for interpreting the changing poetics and politics of Arabic and Arab-Anglophone fiction.

## Carbon-Silicon Yellowness: The Aesthetics of Chip Capitalism

Shana Leodar Ye

This paper analyzes the visual use of nature and space in the promotional videos of Huawei's latest smartphone to explore relationship between the inhuman aspect of geopolitics and the aesthetics of chip capitalism.

Three years after the US cut China's tech giant Huawei's access to 5G chips, the Chinese company released its newest high-end smartphone Mate 60 on August 28th, amid US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo's China visit. Clearly as a "political attestation," the product stirred up international discussions on its "mysterious" chip and its world's first cellphone satellite calling. Different from utilizing the color red, Huawei's low-key coming back is metonymized through the visual-aural dramatization of China's four natural landscapes in Tibet, Xinjiang, Yunnan and Qinghai in its promotional videos, corresponding to the four colors of the products. The tranquility, magnificence, and timelessness of the non-human forces, as well as the simple and elegant colors, seem to guest the transcendence of the "chip war" caused by human geopolitical conflicts, in Huawei's narrative, evoking the feeling of (high-class) wounded nationalism on the one hand and felt obligations of patristic consumerism on the other. But interestingly, these four sceneries are all troubled areas associated with transnational extractive capitalism, forced labor, ethnic genocide and environmental deterioration, perhaps can be captured by the yellowness of the silicon – both as in the silicon mining in the deserts and as in produced by the "yellow labor" (for example in the Uyghur region that houses the majority of China's silica factory or in Arizona, the new location of the high-end fabs of Taiwan Semiconductors Manufacturing Company). Therefore, this paper proposes the concept of carbon-silicon yellowness as an alternative framework to Sino-US chip war in order to understand chip capitalism from complex relationships of geopolitics, geopower and the fungibility of racialized labor and body.

## PANEL 10 MULTISENSORY ENVIRONMENTS

Maurice Jones

The inherent entanglement of technological advancements and ecological devastation is at the heart of the current existential crisis humanity is facing. Technology destroys the very ecology it is constituted of, while at the same time techno-solutionism is propagated as the cure for this self-generated crisis (Mbembe, 2022). To address this most fundamental of issues Achille Mbembe (2022) calls for reenvisioning human/non-human relationality as an *Earthly Community*, which views human and non-humans including nature and technology as co-inhabitants bound not by universality but by the *in-common*. Presented as a spatial, generative AI audio installation, this research-creation project mobilizes the concept of sonic assemblages to reenvision the cohabitation of humans, nature, and technology rooted in their *in-common* sonic character.

The notion of sonic assemblage is rooted in soundscape ecology, which sees our natural sonic environments constituted of biological sounds, such as plants or animals (biophony), geophysical sounds, such as water or wind (geophony), human-made sounds, such as speech, (anthrophony), and technological sounds, such as machines (technophony). The move from soundscape ecology to sonic assemblage underlines the relational intersubjectivity of the sound emitting actants, which I refer to as sonic agents. Artificial sonic agents driven by realtime, generative, and interactive AI audio co-inhabit the spatial audio environment to recreate soundscape ecologies as sonic assemblages.

In addressing questions of techno-ecological devastation, the first iteration of *Soundscapes of an Earthly Community* self-reflexively addresses the issue of precious metal mining, which is the basis for the digital infrastructures powering AI. Specifically situated within the Canadian context, the installation deploys a multiplicity of sonic agents, which jointly generate a soundscape of the mined minerals (geophony), the Caribou displaced by mining activities (biophony), the many human communities affected by mining activities (anthrophony), and the disturbing noise of mining machineries (technophony).

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## Dancing (with) geopower? Conservaton and destructon, liveliness and dying by Utterslev marsh in Copenhagen

Linda Lapina

Drawing on my ongoing movement practice with Utterslev marsh, this performance paper explores how governance of “nature” and nonhuman forces intertwine in the lively and dying ecologies of the marsh. I inquire how multi-sensory engagement can open for broader attunement with multi-species lives and deaths in the context of slow violence (Nixon, 2011). Inspired by critical time studies, scholarship on embodiment and affect, and feminist and queer new materialist re-calibrations of “human”, “culture” and “nature”, I examine how dance as embodied listening can enable new apprehensions of “eventfulness” (Povinelli, 2016) in being and becoming with wounded multispecies ecologies.

I approach Utterslev marsh as a saturated and multi-layered nature-culture, shaped by seemingly contradictory politics of conservation and destruction, accumulated over time. Made up of a series of lakes and bogs, the marsh is the second largest so-called natural area in Copenhagen. It is home to up to 220 species of birds, as well as various fish, plants and insects. The marsh was used to extract peat, fish and drinking water since the Middle Ages. Already in 1925, Copenhagen Municipality decided to preserve the marsh as a nature area. However, even after being converted into “protected nature”, the marsh was continuously polluted by untreated wastewater and phosphorus- well into the 1960s. In 1970, Utterslev marsh was declared biologically dead. While the conditions have improved, a thick layer of toxic sediment still covers the bottom of the lake. There are recurrent mass death events in the marsh, latest in 2014, when 80-90% of all fish died due to asphyxiatooon.

The paper explores how embodied-sensorial artistic engagements, and dance in particular, open up for apprehending and articulating these seemingly contradictory spatiotemporal logics and manifestations of geopower. In my talk, I will use multi-sensorial stimuli, including sound recordings and images from the marsh.

## Figures of Geopower

Alexis Radisoglou

Contemporary cultural production, I observe in my paper, is marked by a proliferation of texts in which an engagement with tentacular sea creatures (such as the giant squid, the octopus, and the sea walnut) is conjoined with stories about family relations, filiation or kinship. Bearing in mind the potentially problematic nature of such a conjunction – the pitfalls of an anthropomorphizing or allegorizing mode of representation – I focus on the productive potential of what I describe as an articulation of an eco-logical with an *oiko*-logical dimension (from Ancient Greek *oikos*: the house, family, kinship).

In proposing to read them as ‘figures of geopower’, then, I argue that such sea creatures, as depicted in recent cultural texts, allow us both to interrogate the complexities and ambivalences of the very concept of geopower itself, as described in the Call for Papers for this conference, and to imagine a reconfiguration of geopower towards what I call a planetary or eco-relationality. Crucial to such a conceptual, epistemological and material reconstitution of geopower, I argue, is a comprehensive process of ‘queering the *oikos*’ that sits at the heart of the cultural texts I examine in their depiction of how ‘human and nonhuman forces [are] shaping and emerging from the earth’ (CfP). Of particular relevance, thereby, is the question to what extent any such reconfiguration will need to be predicated on a new ‘aesthetics of geopower’ that gives rise to novel modes of representation, narrative forms, and other articulatory practices.

# PANEL I I TIME AND TIDE

## Time and Tide: Planetary Temporalities in Crisis

### The Postcolonial Anthropocene Research Network

A recurring problem in cultural work on the Anthropocene concerns the limits of existing representational strategies in conveying the severity of the planetary climate crisis (e.g., Chakrabarty, Johns-Putra, Bould). This panel adds to existing conceptualizations of this problem by combining a postcolonial perspective with the study of time and temporalities. In other words, our concern is not the geographical scale of the hyperobject that is the Anthropocene (cf. Morton 2013), but the relation between past, present, and future that is also at stake in environmental collapse and the relationship between humans and planet. Writing about locations as diverse as India, Nigeria, and Europe, the speakers in this panel think through what it means to inhabit the radically changing time that is our contemporary postcolonial moment. The experience of time across these locales is out of joint and in crisis: as anthropogenic climate change announces the return of past emissions, the stability of the future is cast in doubt. Whether it is sentient life only slowly catching up with planetary changes (in C. S. Bhagya’s paper), time becoming material in undersea cables (Siddharth Soni), or Europeans confronting the possibility of becoming climate migrants (Jesse van Amelsvoort), aesthetic representations rush to catch up with these changing planetary tides.

## Future Europeans on the Run: On Scattered Representations of European Climate Migration

Jesse van Amelsvoort

As changing climate patterns are destabilizing lifeworlds across the planet, the frame of ‘climate migration’ is increasingly presenting itself in societal discussions. The acuity and pitfalls of this frame notwithstanding (cf. Ahuja 2021, Boas et al. 2019), it is no surprise that writers and artists have started reflecting on the possibility of Europeans themselves becoming climate migrants. In this contribution, I want to survey a number of such representations, focusing especially on how they incorporate conflicting notions of temporality and futurity in addressing postcolonial concerns about global interdependence and histories of exploitation and dominance.

I draw on three case studies. In Spain, the COP25 summit in November 2019 provided space for artists to reflect on future water supplies in a country already suffering from aridity and desertification. Secondly, Dutch writers and academics have started to grapple with living in a delta where rising sea levels threaten familiar lifestyles, locating these in the future. Sámi artists, lastly, reflect on the impact of climate change that’s already manifesting on Scandinavian societies’ internal colonialism vis-à-vis Sápmi. Where the Spanish art was made and occasionally also created for the COP25 Summit, thus confront contemporary international governance with its historically colonial roots, and the Sámi art addresses the relation between especially Oslo and Norway’s indigenous population, in its focus on continental European Netherlands, the Dutch case in fact exposes a postcolonial blind spot. Taken together, these case studies tackle anew questions of Europe and its borders—both now and in the future.

## Emergency Time in the Postcolonial Anthropocene

Bhagya Casaba Somashekar

Shaunak Sen’s Oscar-nominated documentary film *All That Breathes* (2022) tracks the lives of two brothers in Delhi who run a makeshift centre to treat injured black kites. Kites have started to fall from the skies due to the high levels of air pollution in Delhi, a city notorious for constantly faring the worst globally on the air quality index. Sen’s portrayal of the beleaguered black kites and Muslim minorities in the film is predicated on the critical unpacking of the multi-temporal urban fabric of Delhi where the rhythms of the city—and its accelerated pace of progress—throws up in dark contrast the failure of various life forms to keep up. I will argue that non-human inhabitants of the city, like the black kites, are marked off as asynchronous beings painfully opposed to this pace. This crisis temporality produced by environmental collapse in the postcolonial Anthropocene in Sen’s film operates in tandem with the crisis time of neoliberal India under the growing right-wing anti-minority politics of the present government.

Sen’s documentary is part of a postmillennial cultural turn towards climate narratives in film and literature. In this paper, I will contextualise Sen’s documentary within this corpus by briefly juxtaposing it against two other key texts which engage with the crisis time of climate disaster. These include *Emergency* (2022), a novel by Daisy Hildyard, which is a realist meditation on climate change set in pastoral England, and also Tade Thompson’s postcolonial speculative fiction trilogy *Wormwood* (2016) set in future Nigeria. I will argue that these latter texts formally negotiate the crisis temporality of planetary catastrophe by holding narrative timelines in tension with the development of plot (or lack thereof), whereas Sen’s visual aesthetics starkly foregrounds the apocalyptic Delhi sensorium to situate emergency time in relation to both politics and planet. In Sen’s film, I will show, this is achieved by emphasising slowness, both of the “slow violence” (Rob Nixon) of environmental degradation, and the jarring incongruity of the slow time of sentient life—both human and non-human—in the Indian megacity.

## Undersea Cables and the Warping of Time: Tade Thompson, Amitav Ghosh, and the Colonial Politics of Infrastructure

Siddharth Soni

The global connected society is catastrophically reliant on one of the industrial age's oldest and most polluting transcontinental infrastructures—the sub-oceanic cable. As scholars like Alan Liu, Nicole Starosielski, and Tang Hui-Hu have argued, sub-oceanic cables, which colonise millions of square miles of the ocean bed today, are not merely an introduction of large quantities of inorganic matter into the sea, but also participate, through their role in networking, in the warping of temporality at a planetary scale. Be it transatlantic telegraphy in the mid-19C or split-second exchange of digital information today, the undersea network forms the material and industrial substrate of an otherwise ethereal and mute connected society. It subtracts from us the very need to be conscious of geographic and planetary time.

In this paper, I consider Tade Thompson's *Wormwood* (2016-19) trilogy, as well as Amitav Ghosh's genre-defying 'postcolonial science-fiction' *The Calcutta Chromosome* (1995) to examine how the materialities of informed capital's characteristic 'time warp' elude and stymie literary representation. As nations go dark, infrastructures collapse, and pollutants emerge from the ocean after centuries, the ecological motifs and networked aesthetics of the texts at hand come to the fore, and through a study of these I attempt to re-theorise temporality. I show how time is treated as experiential 'matter' in crisis with environmental capitalism.

## PANEL 12 METAGEOGRAPHIES

### Reimagining political ecology through volume

Matt Barlow

Following Stuart Elden's call to "secure the volume" (2013), there has been a turn in critical geography, the social sciences, and the environmental humanities more broadly toward three-dimensional volumes rather than two-dimensional surfaces. Much of these studies aim to critique and better understand state-based surveillance and security measures above and below the ground (Billé 2020). While these studies advance volumetric analysis in several generative ways, they leave aside an analysis that engages with political ecology. In this paper, I propose a political ecology that is attendant to the ways in which both contestations over environments are increasingly engaged in volumetric dynamics. Whether it is off-world access or minerals in the deep sea, commercial activity and the advocacy networks emerging to contest such activities are moving further into non-terrestrial realms (Childs 2020; Sammler and Lynch 2021). These expanding capitalist frontiers demonstrate that activities in outer space and the deep-sea are environmental justice issues on Earth, and demand an approach to environmental research that is inter-scalar and which recognises the colonial power of the cartographic imaginary (Kaplan 2018; Hecht 2018; Klinger 2021). Such a political ecology of volume would extend current research on volumes beyond a state-centred approach on national borders (Hung and Lien 2022), while simultaneously moving political ecology further beyond its terrestrial bias (Mostafanezhad and Dressler 2021). It would also encourage researchers to move beyond territorial analogues and forge new methods of apprehending and representing geopower and environmental justice in three-dimensional ways (Squire, Adey, and Jensen 2022; Jackman and Squire 2021).

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## Growth and Homeostasis in Gaia Games

Laura op de Beke

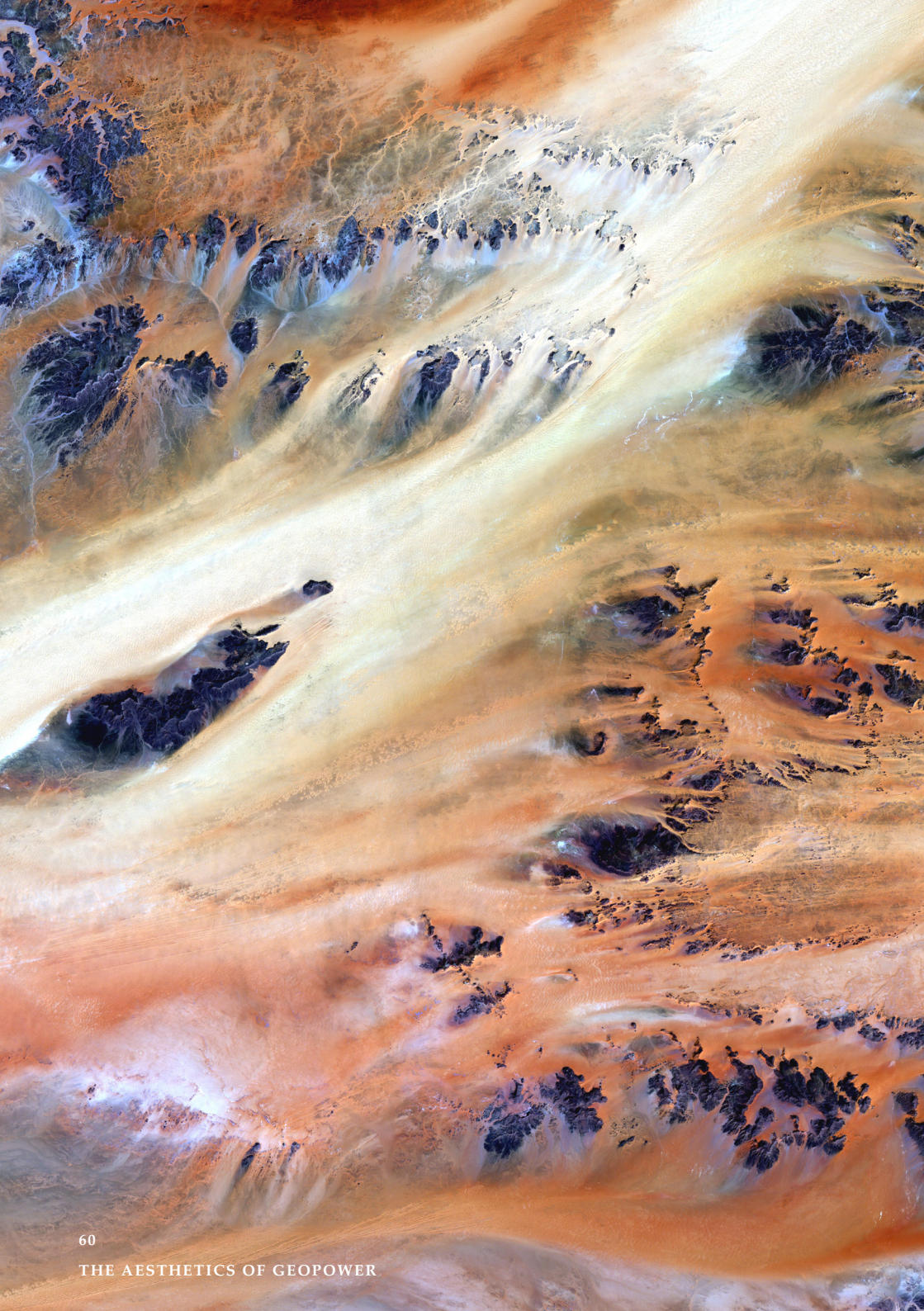
In this paper I engage in the study of a particular game genre that has tackled most overtly the newfound relationship between humanity and the planet in the Anthropocene: the Gaia game. Gaia games are god games that engage overtly with ecological principles, and specifically with a certain planetary ecological awareness that dawned at the beginning of the environmentalist movement, when images of the Earth taken from space were first disseminated. Gaia games do so mainly by establishing a chronotope of the planet—a time-space that encompasses the entire globe and in which the evolution of civilization within the ecological limitations of the planet is dramatized. As I will argue this chronotope emerges from gameplay and interface conventions that have been a long time in the making. However, the more recent generation of Gaia games that I analyze in this chapter—*The Universim*, *Before We Leave*, and *Imagine Earth*—draw selectively from these conventions. They increasingly frame gameplay in moral terms distinguishing between that which is good or bad for the environment; and, significantly, they demonstrate via ecological feedback loops that what is bad for the environment, is bad for humankind. But they have also started to incorporate a more progressive gameplay structure which they pace using the trope of the tech tree, which is deeply encoded with techno-futurist assumptions. Gaia games trace the development of a people as they reach ever higher levels of scale and complexity. The ecological limits of the planet put in place constraints that slow or complicate this growth, but they rarely stall it entirely. Resources may run out, feedback loops may turn the climate hostile and the soil less fertile, but the reliable techno-futuristic bent of history will continue to offer solutions until at some inevitable moment humanity leaves the Earth and its challenges behind. The temporality of this spatio-temporal complex amounts to a struggle between growth and homeostasis that is increasingly decided in favor of the former.

## Remote Sensing and Geopower: Reassessing Images of the Earth between Contemporary Art and Feminist Critique

Lilian Kroth

The Earth is surrounded by a constantly growing number of satellites forming its metallic belt. These ‘eyes in the sky’ serve as instruments to gather data about environments and human actions from afar. Remote sensing technologies, thus, are not only instruments measuring the Earth’s geopower, they also crucially *form* it. The way in which they perform this power, has, however, been a cause for debate since the beginnings of remote sensing.

In this presentation, I would like to look at selected works of the artist collective Troika, Susan Schuppli, and Julian Oliver in its specific relationship with remote sensing technologies from the background of the shifting territories of feminist critique of satellites. The development of feminist critique of remote sensing since the 1990s, its conceptual shifts, and its implicit arguments about the meaning of geopower will be the background of reading these contemporary artistic positions. Starting off from (eco)feminist critiques of the masculinist underpinnings of remote sensing technologies and whole Earth images (Garb 1990; Roberts and Schein 1995; LiQin 1997), I will draw on a debate in the late 1990s and early 2000s of how feminists can and should intervene in discourses on remote sensing and GIS without dismissing them as such (Schoorman and PraU 2002; Openshaw 1997; Kwan 2002). Since then, there is a striking shift perceivable towards a reassessment of the objectivity of satellite images in connection with their ‘objectifying’ character and possibly affirmative role of distance in feminist ways of seeing; what is considered ‘critical remote sensing’ therefore co-evolves with the question of its aesthetics (Bennet et al. 2022; Engelmann et al. 2022; Grevsmühl 2017). I will focus on how the artistic works implicitly and explicitly respond to the shifting territories of feminist critiques of remote sensing, and how they redefine the idea of geopower’s gazing.



## BIOGRAPHIES

### Santiago Acosta

Santiago Acosta is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at Yale University. He specializes in modern and contemporary Latin American literature and visual arts, which he examines through the lenses of cultural studies, political economy, and environmental theory. His book manuscript, *We Are Like Oil: An Ecology of the Venezuelan Culture Boom*, explores how literature and the visual arts interacted with the environmental shifts of the 1970s oil boom in Venezuela.

### Jesse van Amelsvoort (*The Postcolonial Anthropocene Research Network*)

Dr Jesse van Amelsvoort is Lecturer in modern European culture at the University of Amsterdam. His research focuses on the contribution of literature and the arts to discussions on matters of common concern, such as belonging, climate change, and public health. His essays have appeared in or are forthcoming from *Continuum*, *Parallax*, *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* and *Critical Multilingualism Studies*. In 2021, he published *Loft en lân. Gesprekken over Tsjebbe Hettinga*.

### Matt Barlow

Matt Barlow is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the School of International Relations at the University of St Andrews. His research draws on environmental anthropology, feminist science and technology studies, and critical geography to investigate how colonial environmental imaginaries influence efforts to address environmental crises. He holds a PhD in Anthropology from The University of Adelaide for the thesis 'Waste in the tropics: (post)colonial infrastructures and urban environments in Kochi, India'. His article 'Burning Wet Waste: Material Specificity, Environmental Particularity, and the Universality of Infrastructure' won the 2022 Nadel Prize for Ethnographic Writing from *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*. Matt has also been a member of The Conversations in Anthropology podcast and the TopEndSTS collective.



## Laura op de Beke

Laura op de Beke is Assistant Professor of Interactive Media, Screens, and Interfaces at Utrecht University. She obtained her PhD from the University of Oslo, with a dissertation called *Anthropocene Temporalities in Videogames*. Laura's research focuses on games and cultures of play, specifically in the context of the climate crisis. She is the editor of *Ecogames. Playful Perspectives on the Climate Crisis*, a book that will be released this winter by Amsterdam University Press. In the past, Laura headed an experimental project called *Playing With Deep Time*, that brought together people interested in the exploration of deep time using playful storytelling practices like Nordic LARP and other forms of role-play. Finally, she is also the founder of [www.un-earthed.group](http://www.un-earthed.group), a monthly, online environmental humanities reading group.

## Estefanía Bournot

Estefanía Bournot is a Research Affiliate at the Centre for Inter-American Studies of the University of Bielefeld (Germany) and APART-GSK Grant holder of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Her work focuses on contemporary cultural expressions from the Global South comparative Latin American and African literatures and environmental humanities. *Topographic Turns: (Re)Writing Space in Latin American 21st century Narrative* (2022, Potsdam UP) is her first monograph. She has co-edited the special cluster on [Geo-Semantics: Earthly memories and Inhuman Becomings in the Global South](#), at the ASAP/J online platform, and is currently co-editing with Azucena Castro the special issue "The Geological Turn in Latin America: Inhuman Mediations from the Critical Zone".

## Ida Day

Ida Day is Associate Professor of Spanish at Marshall University (Huntington, West Virginia), specializing in Latin American, Indigenous, and Environmental Studies. Her recent publications include four book chapters in *The Art of Translation in Light of Bakhtin's Re-accentuation* (nominated for Best Edited Multi-Author Scholarly Author Prize in 2023), *The Poetics of Avant-garde in Literature, Arts, and Theater* (2020), *Ecofictions, Ecorealities and Slow Violence in Latin America and the Latinx World* (2019), and *Ecological Crisis and Cultural Representation in Latin America* (2016). She is also a co-author of an edited volume, *Female Friendship: Literary and Artistic Explorations* (2022). Her articles on ecocriticism

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## Ingrid Halland

Ingrid Halland (b. 1988) is an architecture historian and art critic based in Oslo, Norway. She is associate professor at the Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages at the University of Oslo and Associate Professor II at the Oslo School of Architecture and Design, where she teaches in the PhD program. Halland is founder and editor in chief of the publishing platform *Metode* and her academic articles have appeared in *Log*, *Journal of Design History*, and *Aggregate*. The book *Ung Uro: Unsettling Climates in Nordic Art, Architecture & Design* (Cappelen Damm Akademisk) was published in 2021. Together with artist and researcher Marte Johnslie, Halland is the leader and principal investigator of the research projects "TiO<sub>2</sub>: How Norway Made the World Whiter" and "TiO<sub>2</sub>: The Materiality of White."

## Katherine Huber

Katherine (Kate) Huber, Ph.D., is Assistant Professor of Digital Art, Ecology, and Communication in the Department of Culture Studies at Tilburg University. Kate specializes in postcolonial environmental justice, cultural analysis, eco-media theory, and postcolonial studies, with a focus on anglophone Irish, African, and Caribbean literatures and cultures, including diaspora cultural production in Britain. Kate's first book project draws on literature, film, and archival photography and radio to explore how development projects shape social relations, material landscapes, and cultural production in postcolonial Ireland. Kate is also on the Executive Council of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) as the Contingent/Independent Advocacy Officer. Read more about Kate's teaching, research, and public writing at [www.katehuber.org](http://www.katehuber.org).

## Edward H. Huijbens

Edward H. Huijbens (b. 1976) is an Icelandic geographer, scholar of tourism, professor and chair of Wageningen University cultural geography research group. Edward finished a B.Sc. in Geography at the University of Iceland in the spring 2000, MA and later a PhD in Cultural Geography mid-year 2005, both at Durham University, England. From 2006 – 2015 he directed the Icelandic Tourism Research Centre and developed a holistic research agenda for tourism during a period of the industry's exponential growth in Iceland. From 2015 till 2019 Edward was a professor at the school of social sciences and humanities at the University of Akureyri, where he also served as department head for the faculty of social sciences and law from 2017 till February 2019. Beyond regular academic mentoring and course teaching Edward has taught twice on the prestigious programme Semester at Sea, run by the Institute of Shipboard Education from the US, autumn 2016 and autumn 2018. Edward is the author of over 40 articles in several scholarly journals in both Iceland and internationally and has co-edited *Technology in Society/Society in Technology* (2005, University of Iceland Press), *Sensible Spaces: Space, art and the environment* (2007, Cambridge Scholars Press) and *The Illuminating Traveller* (2008, University of Jyväskylä), *Tourism and the Anthropocene* (2016, Routledge) and is one of two authors of the book *Icelandic Tourism* (Forlagið, 2013 and 2024). Edward most recent book *Developing Earthly Attachments in the Anthropocene* was published in April 2021 by Routledge.

## Maurice Jones

Maurice Jones is a critical STS researcher, curator, and producer based in Tiohtià:ke/Montréal, Canada. He's a PhD student at Concordia University, Montréal, under Dr. Fenwick McKelvey, where he investigates cross-cultural perceptions of AI, public participation in technology governance, and techno-ecological entanglements. From 2016 to 2023, he was the Artistic Director of MUTEK.JP festival of electronic music and digital arts in Tokyo. In 2021, Maurice joined MUTEK's Montréal headquarters in developing the program of the professional MUTEK Forum and leading the transnational Future Festivals research project. Maurice produces audiovisual works including the Iwakura full-dome performance together with visual artist Ali M. Demirel and ambient musician Kazuya Nagaya and the AI-driven multichannel sound installation Soundscapes of an Earthly Community.

## Nikos Katsikis

Nikos is an urbanist working at the intersection of urbanization theory, design and geospatial analysis. His research seeks, through conceptual and cartographic experimentation, to contribute to a geographical understanding of the socio-metabolic relations between agglomerations and their operational landscapes. He is currently Assistant Professor at the Urbanism Department, TU Delft and Researcher at Urban Theory Lab Chicago, and Future Cities Laboratory, ETH, Zurich. Previously he was Research Tutor at the Royal College of Arts, London and Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Luxembourg. He holds a Doctor of Design from Harvard Graduate School of Design (GSD), where he was on the editorial board of the *New Geographies* journal and co-editor of *New Geographies 06: Grounding Metabolism* (Harvard University Press, 2014). At the GSD he has served as Instructor in Urban Planning and Design and Teaching and Research Associate. He holds a professional degree in Architecture with highest distinction (2006) and a Master of Science in Architecture and Spatial Design (2009) from the National Technical University of Athens. His recent work includes contributions in *Harvard Design Magazine*, *New Geographies* and *MONU*; book chapters in *Implosions / Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization* (ed. Neil Brenner); *Doing Global Urban Research* (ed. Michael Hoyler); *The Horizontal Metropolis* (ed. Paola Vigano); the edited volume *Manhattan: Grid for Ordering an Island* (with Joan Busquets), and *Positions on Emancipation* (with Florian Hertweck); and the forthcoming book (with N. Brenner), *Is the world urban? Towards a Critique of Geospatial Ideology*.

## Lijuan Klassen

Lijuan Klassen holds a doctoral research position at the Rachel Carson Centre for Environment and Society, at LMU in Munich. Her dissertation is an analysis of the subject of planetary health from an environmental humanities perspective. Drawing on critical theory, political ecology, and philosophy, her research explores how current and historical representations of planetary health have shaped public and scientific understandings of the concept. Before working in the Dutch cultural field and until recently at Gropius Bau, Berlin, she graduated from the research master in Cultural Analysis, at the University of Amsterdam, where she explored the ecological entanglements and histories of "camouflage".

## Lilian Kroth

Lilian Kroth is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Fribourg, where she works on critical perspectives on remote sensing. Her PhD project at the University of Cambridge engages with Michel Serres's philosophy of limits and its passages between philosophy of science, aesthetics, and critical theory. Since 2021, she has been associated with the research groups "Critical thinking in the plural" and "Energy and climate" at the Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin. She is one of the organizers of the CRASSH research network "Remote Sensing. Ice, Instruments, Imagination" in Cambridge. Prior to that, she studied Philosophy at the University of Vienna (BA, MA) and Fine Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Her research interests include philosophy of nature and law, the history and philosophy of science, critical theory, art, and aesthetics. Recent publications include "Entropy and Entropic Differences in the Work of Michel Serres" (*Theory, Culture & Society*, 2023), "Infrastructure, Translation, and Metaphor" (Chapter in *Broken Relations: Infrastructure, Aesthetics, and Critique*, 2022), and "The Topology of Difference. Deleuze's Nietzsche in his Politics of Folded Spaces and Subjects" (Chapter in *Nietzsche and the Politics of Difference*, 2022).

## Linda Lapina

Linda Lapina works as an Associate professor of Cultural Encounters and Global Humanities at Roskilde University in Denmark. She is also a dancer and a psychologist, and sometimes a performer. Her work is based in intersectional feminism, paying attention to power, inequalities and differences. In recent years, Linda has engaged with more-than-human and indigenous knowledges. Her research interests include difference in changing urban spaces; differentiated whiteness; urban nature-cultures; intergenerational and more-than human memory; ecological grief; and food. She works with sensory- and autoethnography, memory work and arts-based methods, aiming to integrate personal, collective and ecological modes of feeling and knowing. She grew up in Latvia, where she learned to talk to and harvest plants and mushrooms from my grandparents. At the university, she strives to open more spaces for collaboration, healing, regeneration and nourishment.

## Elena Burgos Martinez

Elena Burgos Martinez is a geologist turned environmental anthropologist in the search for more coherent approaches to knowledge co-creation in contexts of environmental crises. She is based at Leiden University (the Netherlands), where she teaches courses about ecofeminism on and around islands, political ecology, environmental politics in South and Southeast Asia, anti-colonial methods in the study of waste, and decolonisation in academia. For the past fifteen years, she has carried out critical qualitative research engaging with the non-human and the more-than-human. She usually works in conversation with 'small' islands, grassroots environmental activists and 'monsters' (i.e., hybrid beings bridging the worlds of the living and others). Elena is also interested in intertidal spaces, such as seaweed fields and floating patches in general (often transversing the organic and inorganic). In her work she tries to transcend the boundaries of the academe and work closely with those whose knowledge goes beyond institutionalised. She tries to do this at the point of inquiry, conceptualisation and design of research and not just as an attached performative exercise. This requires a collective unpacking of ontoepistemic biases, baggage and untenable power relations. Elena is currently working on her first manuscript entitled *Skins: Shapeshifting and the Possibilities of the Inhuman* (title is work-in-progress) with Duke University Press.

## Svitlana Matviyenko

Svitlana Matviyenko is Associate Professor of Critical Media Analysis in the School of Communication of Simon Fraser University and Associate Director of the Digital Democracies Institute in Vancouver, Canada. Her research and teaching are focused on information and cyberwar, media and environment, infrastructure studies, and history of science. Recently she writes about the Soviet and the post-Soviet techno-politics, nuclear cultures, nuclear colonialism, and weaponization of energy infrastructure, focusing on the Chernobyl and Zaporizhzhia NPPs, during the Russia-Ukraine War. She is a co-editor of two collections, *The Imaginary App* (MIT Press, 2014) and *Lacan and the Posthuman* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), and a co-author of *Cyberwar and Revolution: Digital Subterfuge in Global Capitalism* (Minnesota UP, 2019), a winner of the 2019 book award of the Science Technology and Art in International Relations (STAIR) section of the International Studies Association and of the Canadian Communication Association 2020 Gertrude J. Robinson book prize.

## Emily McGiffin

Emily McGiffin is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Multidisciplinary and Intercultural Inquiry at University College London where her research examines extractivism in West Africa and cultural responses. Recent publications include articles in *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and the Environment*, *Comparative Literature Studies*, *Research in African Literatures* and *Third World Thematics* and a monograph (University of Virginia Press, 2019). Her current book project examines the long durée of the European extractive project in West Africa and its centrality to contemporary imperialisms.

## Sybille Neumeyer

Sybille Neumeyer is an interdependent artist, curator and researcher focusing on environmental issues and eco-logical relations. Her work is based on post-disciplinary research and collaboration. Through polyphonic (hi)storytelling, installations, walks, performative talks and video essays, she explores the intersections between the loss of biocultural diversity, the health of the planet and the climate crisis. She is searching for transformative narratives, forms of rootedness and collective action for social, ecological and cross-species justice. Her work has been shown internationally and most recently presented in “motores del clima” 2023, LABoral Gijón; “winds of the anthropocene” 2023, Heidelberger Kunstverein; “weather engines” 2021, Onassis Stegi Athens; “critical zones” 2020, ZKM Karlsruhe; among others. Sybille Neumeyer was guest researcher in the department “Humanities of Nature (HoN)” at Museum für Naturkunde Berlin, fellow at Jan van Eyck Akademie, artistic fellow at IASS (today RIFS) – Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies Potsdam, as well as invited artist for the EU Project TAKING CARE. Currently, she is a postgraduate fellow at the Berlin Centre for Advanced Studies in Arts and Sciences at the Berlin University of the Arts. She is co-founder and member of the interdisciplinary collectives ‘fictopus’ and ‘collection<>ecologies’.

## Tem Edwin Nji

Tem Edwin Nji holds a PhD in African Literature from the University of Buea, Cameroon. His PhD thesis titled *Bio/Necropolitics and Ecocritical Existence in Contemporary African Poetry* draws on Niger Delta and Cameroon Anglophone poetry to show how Michel Foucault’s Biopolitics and Achille Mbembe’s Necropolitics,

particularly their conception of resource violence and death, find expression in the context of oil exploration in Nigeria and deforestation in Cameroon. Some of his articles have featured in Tunisia, India and Portugal. Contact: njitem105@gmail.com.

## Paloma Puente-Lozano

Paloma Puente-Lozano is currently Lecturer in Geopolitics at the Carlos III University of Madrid (Spain). She holds a PhD in Humanities (2011) from the same university and has been appointed as teacher or researcher at Autonomous University of Barcelona (2011–2014), University Antonio de Nebrija (2015–2017) and Comillas Pontifical University (2016–2017). Her research interests lie at the intersection of historical geography, political philosophy, and geopolitics, with special focus on the historical transformations of geographical and political concepts (such as territory, border, sovereignty and place/space). She has extensive international experience as researcher and has published in journals such as *Geoforum*, *Progress in Human Geography* or *Journal of Historical Geography*.

## Alexis Radisoglou

Alexis Radisoglou is Assistant Professor in German Studies at Durham University, and currently a Visiting Fellow at the Leibniz Centre for Literary and Cultural Research in Berlin (2023-24). He is working on two larger research projects titled, respectively, ‘Post-Global Aesthetics’ and ‘Eurozone(s): Literary Imaginaries of Contemporary Europe’. For the latter project, he received a Leverhulme Research Fellowship in 2022. Recent publications include a programmatic essay titled ‘Ethnoplanetarity: Four Theses and a Postscript on a Contemporary Decolonial Constellation’; a special issue for *The Germanic Review* on ‘Post-Global Perspectives on German Literature’; a discussion of the complexities of an ‘Anthropocene Realism’; and a long journal article titled ‘What is the EU Novel? Arche-Teleology, Queer Temporality, and the Contested Domain of Europe in Robert Menasse’s *Die Hauptstadt* and Angela Dimitrakaki’s *Aeroplast*’. Besides his activities in the field of German Studies, he is an inaugural member of the international research network ‘Greek Studies Now’, initiated in 2019 by the Universities of Oxford and Amsterdam.

## Theo Reeves-Evison

Theo Reeves-Evison is a writer, researcher and Senior Lecturer in Theoretical and Contextual Studies at Birmingham School of Art, where his research focuses on the critical imbrications of art, ecology and speculation. From 2018-22 he was the principal investigator on the Leverhulme funded research project ‘Speculative Natures: Contemporary Art and Interventionist Ecology’, which resulted in several publications, workshops and curated events. He holds a Ph.D. in Cultural Studies from Goldsmiths College and an MA in Critical Theory from the University of Nottingham. He is the editor, together with Jon K. Shaw, of *Fiction as Method* (Sternberg, 2017), and has published articles in journals such as *Parallax*, *New Formations* and *Critical Inquiry*. In 2018 he edited a special issue of the journal *Third Text* on the theme of ‘ethico-aesthetic repairs’ with Mark Rainey, and his first monograph on the *Ethics of Contemporary Art* was published in 2020 by Bloomsbury Academic Press. As a speaker, he has made invited presentations and chaired discussions at institutions such as the Southbank Centre, MACBA, and the Gerrit Rietveld Academie’s Studium Generale. Projects currently in development include a second monograph entitled *The Future in Five Acts: Art and Ecology in a Warming World* (under review with University Minnesota Press) and a long-term research inquiry into ‘The Political Ecology of Volume’ together with Lydia Cole, Matt Barlow and Yolande Ariadne Collins.

## Julée Al-Bayaty de Ridder

Julée Al-Bayaty de Ridder is a research master’s student in Art & Visual Culture and Social & Political Philosophy at Radboud University, Nijmegen, and focuses on environmental-political topics such as water pollution, attitudes towards the environment, responsibility and relations between humans and other-than-human species in contemporary art. In the Autumn of 2023, she was a visiting scholar at the Posthumanism Research Institute at Brock University, Canada (under the supervision of dr Christine Daigle), where she researched artistic representations of watersheds in the Americas and developed creative writing pieces that are inspired by being situated in the environment. She aims to further explore and experiment with alternative writing styles and their potential to (re)imagine the Anthropocene.

## Wood Roberdeau

Wood Roberdeau is a Senior Lecturer in Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths, University of London (UK), where he co-leads the Critical Ecologies Research Stream. His research turns to cultural production in climate crisis that explores a poetics of encounter, observation, and participation. Wood has published widely and internationally on contemporary visual practices as complex systems for eco-critical thinking.

## William Schaefer

William Schaefer is Associate Professor in Chinese Studies and Visual Culture at Durham University. His current book project, *Photographic Ecologies: Nature, Culture, and Contemporary Photography in China, Japan, and the West*, argues that photography is a crucial site for staging fundamental questions of the relations between culture and nature in the present moment of environmental crisis and mass displacement—and thus for learning to picture the Anthropocene. The photographers the book explores reconceive both media and subjectivity in radically environmental terms: they have understood photographs not to be mere representations of environments, but rather that the very materiality and forms of photographic images are emergent from interactions of ecological processes. Portions of the book have been published as essays in *Representations*, *ASAP/Journal*, and *October*. Schaefer’s first book, *Shadow Modernism: Photography, Writing, and Space in Shanghai, 1925-1937* (Duke University Press, 2017), explores the transformation of Chinese modernist visual and literary culture by photography during the 1920s and 1930s. Through a montage of close analyses of artistic, vernacular, and scientific photographs, paintings, cartoons, advertisements, and literary and critical texts from the Shanghai print media, the book argues that in Shanghai—the center of China’s media culture during the 1920s and 1930s—images and ideas about images formed a contested ground of debate about culture, the past, and modern China’s place in the world. Schaefer’s essays have also appeared in *PMLA* and *Positions: Asia Critique*, and he was guest editor of a special issue of *Positions: Asia Critique* entitled “Photography’s Places.”

## David Shackleton

David Shackleton is a Senior Lecturer in English Literature at Cardiff University, having previously taught at the University of Exeter and the University of Oxford.

His first book, called *British Modernism and the Anthropocene: Experiments with Time*, was published by Oxford University Press. His work has also appeared in *Modernism/modernity*, *The Review of English Studies*, and *Victorian Literature and Culture*.

## Heidi Sohn

Dr. ir. Heidi Sohn is Associate Professor of Architecture Theory, and head of the Architecture Philosophy and Theory group of the Theories, Territories and Transitions section at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment of the TU-Delft. She received her doctoral title in Architecture Theory in 2006. She is member of the Borders & Territories, and the Ecologies of Architecture research groups of the Architecture Department. Since 2017 she is committee chair of the 'Theories of Architecture Fellowship Program', an intersectional initiative that hosts visiting international scholars in the fields of architecture theory, philosophy and design. Since 2012 she has been the PhD mentor of the Architecture Department. She has been visiting professor of architecture theory in Anhalt, Dessau and Umeå School of Architecture. She belongs to the 'Philosophy and The City' international research network. Her areas of expertise are guided mainly by her interest in the Leitmotifs of 'process', 'the monstrous', 'heterotopia' and 'difference', and are thus, eclectic. These range from their articulation with critical and intensive cartographies and shifting theoretical landscapes since the postmodern turn, including different modes of expressions of culture, materiality, spatiality and time on the lived environment and milieu to a host of worlding dynamics. She is equally interested in understanding the expressions of politico-economic forces on (in)habitation patterns, including housing as well as on their impact on bordering processes and movement-induced ontologies. Her current research work deals with anti-essentialist and new materialist philosophical and theoretical inquiries and their intersection in posthuman, inhuman and more-than-human agencies and material-discursive practices and their intersection with time-space continuums. Contact: h.sohn@tudelft.nl.

## Bhagya Casaba Somashekar (*The Postcolonial Anthropocene Research Network*)

Bhagya Casaba Somashekar is Lecturer (Education) in English at Brunel University London. Her academic work has been published or is forthcoming in the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *Wasafiri*, *Oxford Research in English*, *Postcolonial Text*,

*Contemporary Literature*, and *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Indian Literatures*. Her pedagogy-focused writing can be found (or will be appearing) in the *English Review* magazine, *Teaching South Asian Anglophone Diasporic Literature* (MLA Options for Teaching series), and the open educational resource hub *Writers Make Worlds*. She is co-convenor of The Postcolonial Anthropocene Research Network.

## Siddharth Soni (*The Postcolonial Anthropocene Research Network*)

Dr Siddharth Soni is the Isaac Newton Trust Fellow at Cambridge Digital Humanities, University of Cambridge. His first book *Monstrous Archives*, winner of the 2023 Ideas Prize for Non-Fiction, will be published by Profile Books

## Merve Tabur

Merve Tabur is a lecturer in Comparative Literature at Utrecht University and a researcher affiliated with the ERC-funded CoFutures at the University of Oslo. Tabur's research examines representations of ecological crisis in speculative fiction and visual arts from the Middle East and its Anglophone diasporas. She works with Arabic, Turkish, and Anglophone sources that address issues such as climate change, extractivism, and biodiversity loss. Her research critically engages with the discourse of the Anthropocene and demonstrates how cultural production in the Middle East challenges and redefines universalist conceptualizations of the term. Her current book project examines conceptions of futurity and environmental justice in the Middle East from a comparative perspective. Tabur has received her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Penn State University. She is a co-creator of the "Unraveling the Anthropocene: Race, Environment, and Pandemic" podcast series, run by the Liberal Arts Collective at Penn State. Tabur also translates academic books and articles on topics such as gender politics, cultural history, and literary theory.

## Tim Shao-Hung Teng

Tim Shao-Hung Teng is a doctoral candidate in East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University. He is at work writing a dissertation titled "Earthbound Mediation: Geological Entanglements in Sinophone Extractive Zones," which studies the sites of earth material extraction and their entanglements with media technology from hinterland

China to archipelagic Taiwan throughout the twentieth century. His work has appeared in peer-reviewed journals including positions: *asia critique*, *Screen*, *New Review of Film and Television Studies*, *Journal of Chinese Cinemas*, and *Concentric: Literary and Cultural Studies*, and is forthcoming in the edited volume *Chinese Animation: Multiplicities in Motion*.

### Elpitha Tsoutsounakis

Elpitha Tsoutsounakis (she/her) is a Cretan-American designer, printer, and educator based in so-called Salt Lake City, Utah in the United States. She completed a bachelor of science in architecture at the University of Utah and a masters of architecture at the University of Texas at Austin. She is an assistant professor and founding faculty in the Division of Multi-disciplinary Design at the University of Utah where she teaches design studios and research methods. Her scholarship combines community based design research in “Public Lands” and rural places with creative practice in Ochres and more-than-human entanglements. Elpitha was named a 2023 Utah Design Arts Fellow by the Utah State Division of Arts and Museums, and is currently a fellow at Granary Arts in Ephraim, Utah. Her work with the Field Studio Geontological Survey has been featured in *Southwest Contemporary* and the *New York Times*. She has published, exhibited, and facilitated Ochre workshops internationally. Her installation, *Siderophillic Siderophile, Siderophilliac*, is currently on display in the *Time Space Existence Exhibition* hosted by the European Cultural Centre concurrent to the Venice Architectural Biennale. Her favored geological strata are the Chinle Formation in the Upper Triassic. She lives with her family at the western edge of the Colorado Plateau.

### Minna Valjakka

Dr. Minna Valjakka is an art historian focusing on varied forms of East and Southeast Asian contemporary arts in relation to public spaces and civil society formation. She is a passionate researcher and has pursued to develop a multi-sited and comparative research through two ethnographic fieldwork and archival research in numerous locations across the region during the past two decades. She has also lived and worked in China, Japan, South Korea and Singapore. Through locally-embedded, long-term research at the intersection of art studies, urban studies and environmental humanities, she examines artistic practices as a response to the distinctive trajec-

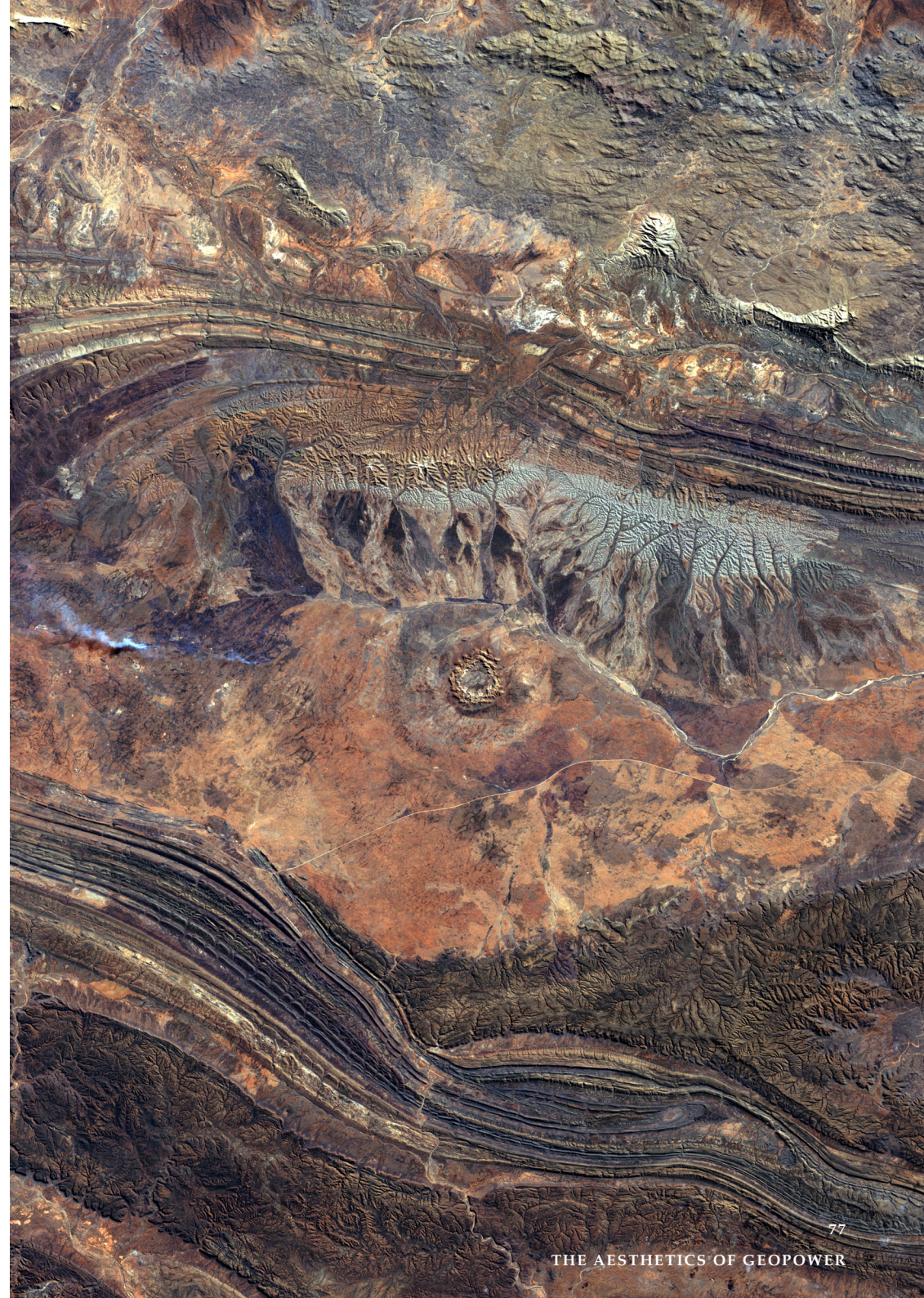
ries of environmental crisis, geopolitical circumstances, and translocal mediations. Minna is currently a researcher and associate professor of art history at the University of Helsinki, Finland. She is building up a new interdisciplinary research project on environmentally engaged art and its responsibilities on an intercontinental scale, a spin-off from her previous project *Shades of Green*, funded by the Research Council of Finland (2022-2021). She is also working on a monograph on plants in Southeast Asian contemporary art. Minna has published extensively, including journal articles and special issues in *Critical Asian Studies*, *Cultural Studies*, *City*, *Culture and Society*, *Urban Design International*, and *China Information*, among others. She has also written book chapters, exhibition essays, and co-edited volumes, such as *Visual Arts, Representations, and Interventions in Contemporary China. Urbanized Interface* (AUP, 2018). Besides her academic work, she also collaborates with art spaces and museums in terms of research, exhibitions, and events.

### Doro Wiese

Doro Wiese, PhD, is an assistant professor at the department of languages and cultures, Radboud University Nijmegen. Facilitated by various grants such as a Marie Skłodowska Curie scholarship and a WIRL COFUND grant of the European Union, she was trained in literary studies, film studies, and cultural studies at the University of Hamburg, Utrecht University, and the University of Warwick. She holds a PhD cum laude from Utrecht University. In her multifaceted research, she investigates how aesthetics is a manner of drawing people into an effective relation with the lacunae of knowledges and histories. In *The Powers of the False* (Northwestern UP 2014), she explores how literature can help to represent histories that would otherwise remain ineffable. *Faust* (Textem 2018) examines how and to what effect different media affect the human body. In her current project, titled *Side by Side: Reading Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Literature*, she asks which epistemological, formal, and thematic distinctions and connections are present in post-war fiction on Native North America on both sides of the Atlantic. This study helps to develop cross-cultural and cross-epistemological research fields in literary, historical, and cultural studies, and touches upon research fields like the Environmental Humanities or political economy. Doro Wiese evinces a strong commitment to the study of colonialism, epistemic injustices, transcultural epistemology, the relationship between literature and historiography, or nature and culture. She is inspired by insights formulated in Indigenous Studies.

## Shana Leodar Ye

Shana Leodar Ye is Assistant Professor of Historical and Cultural Studies at the University of Toronto Scarborough and the Women and Gender Studies Institute at the University of Toronto. Her research areas include transnational feminism, queer and trans studies, postsocialist studies, and global China. Her monograph *Queer Chimerica: A Speculative Auto/Ethnography of the Cool Child* is forthcoming in 2024. Shana also writes about trauma, death, and speculative fictions.







# THE ORGANIZERS

## Simon Ferdinand

Dr Simon Ferdinand ([www.simonferdinand.com](http://www.simonferdinand.com)) is a Veni postdoctoral researcher in Literary and Cultural Analysis at the University of Amsterdam. His work explores the politics and poetics of geographical representation, focusing particularly on cultural visions of the planetary environment. Recent publications include *Mapping Beyond Measure: Art, Cartography, and the Space of Global Modernity* (University of Nebraska Press, 2019) and the edited volumes *Heterotopia and Globalisation in the Twenty-First Century* (Routledge, 2020, with Irina Souch and Daan Weselman) and *Other Globes: Past and Peripheral Imaginations of Globalization* (Palgrave, 2019, with Irene Villaescusa-Illán and Esther Peeren). His current project, *Untimely World Pictures* (2021- 25), is funded by a Veni grant from the Dutch Research Council.

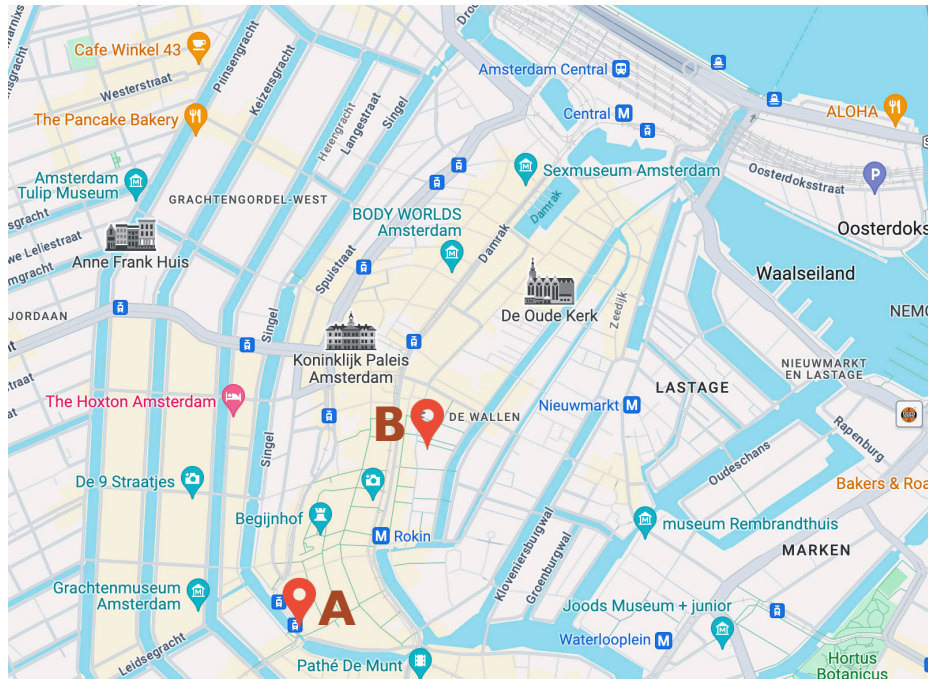
## Katarina Nestic

Katarina Nestic is in her final year of the Bachelor's of Literary and Cultural Analysis at the University of Amsterdam. She is interested in geographies and infrastructures of extraction in mountain environments.

## Colin Sterling

Colin Sterling is Assistant Professor of Memory and Museums at the University of Amsterdam, where he teaches across heritage and memory, museum studies and artistic research. He is Programme Coordinator of the BA in Global Arts, Culture & Politics, and a member of the Amsterdam School for Heritage, Memory and Material Culture. Colin's research critically examines heritage and museums through the lens of art and ecology. He is currently Principal Investigator on two projects looking at the emergence and implications of new ecological approaches across the cultural sector. He is the author of *Heritage, Photography, and the Affective Past* (Routledge, 2020) and co-editor of *Deterritorializing the Future: Heritage in, of and after the Anthropocene* (Open Humanities Press, 2020). He is co-editor of the journal *Museums & Social Issues*.

# CONFERENCE LOCATION



Conference venue (A):  
University Library Singel,  
Singel 425  
1012 WP Amsterdam

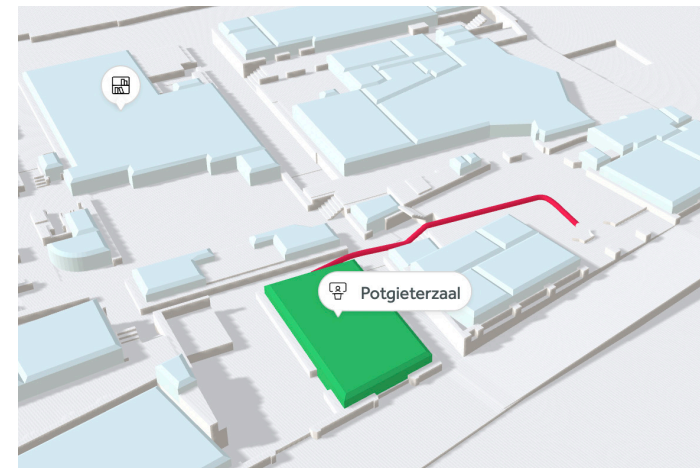
Restaurant Location (B):  
De Brakke Grond  
Nes 45  
1012 KD Amsterdam

From Schiphol airport you can take a train directly to **Amsterdam Central Station**.

Trams from Central Station to the University Library Singel: 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 16, 20, 24 and 25.

Nearby tram stops: **Spui** or **Muntplein**.

A simple way to plan trips within the Netherlands is the app **9292**, which has an English function.



## Accessibility Information

Although the main access to the conference rooms involves a few steps, there is also a step-free alternative route. Should you require step-free access or have any other accessibility needs, kindly email us at [aestheticsgeopower@gmail.com](mailto:aestheticsgeopower@gmail.com) in advance so that we can make the arrangements with the facilities team.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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(+31) 641205761

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[aestheticsgeopower@gmail.com](mailto:aestheticsgeopower@gmail.com)

Queries regarding ECT attendance:  
[geopowerects@gmail.com](mailto:geopowerects@gmail.com)

This conference has been made possible by the generous support of the Dutch Research Council, Netherlands Institute for Cultural Analysis, and Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis.

