

Tracemaking Border Deaths between Erasure and Co-Memoration

**Zagreb
19 – 23 September 2024**

Main seminar venue:
Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research
Šubićeva 42, 5th floor

Introduction

Searching for traces of deceased and disappeared people at borders is essential for clarifying circumstances, establishing responsibilities, or even determining the identities of the deceased. It, therefore, has and should have a privileged position in the understanding of border deaths and struggles related to them. However, searching for traces also implies making traces, since traces are not simply found, but are outcomes of analytical processes that interpret specific marks as traces of something or somebody missing. From that perspective, even an absence of a trace can be a trace: a trace of a non-event but also of an erasure. Finally, searching for traces related to border deaths and disappearances is usually followed by the production of new traces and practices, such as taking care of a burial site or repatriation, documentation, making memorial objects and sites, protesting, reconstructing, narrating, visualizing, mapping, reporting, list making etc.

From a critical and historical perspective – focusing on Europe – border deaths, or as they are also called, migrant deaths and deaths in migration, are seen as an integral element of contemporary bordering practices based on racialized forms of violence accompanied by the advancement of technological tools. This imposes various questions and contradictions in the struggle to identify, address and challenge present and past violence and deaths related to the European border regime. Diverse social agents engaging with different experiences, histories, methods, and practices in this struggle have produced a significant body of knowledge related to tracemaking and co-memorating, which we wish to acknowledge and discuss through this seminar.

With the concept of tracemaking, we aim to grasp both the material (trace) and epistemological (making) aspects of the production of traces. We want to ask how and which traces of people deceased at borders are made by families, friends, local communities, civil groups, state services, researchers, journalists, activists, artists, and others. Furthermore, we would like to ask when and how tracemaking is related to those who deceased and disappeared at the borders framed within broader calls for social justice and transformation or, in the opposite direction, how it contributes to sustaining established exclusionary frameworks, hierarchies and injustices. Finally,

we would like to ask how new forms of co-memoration – with and through tracemaking – help to address active engagement through multivocality and counter-memory, as well as “critical imagination and strategic contemplation and rhetorical feminist tactics, including resistance to hegemonic narratives, re-centering of dialogue over monologue, and reaffirming the value of experience and emotion” (Nancy Small 2020).

This two-day seminar aims to explore abundant tracemaking practices related to border deaths, as well as to expand current discussions about co-memoration, by addressing some of the following questions and beyond:

- How are postmortem traces of the deceased at the European borders produced, erased, and remembered? How are border deaths and disappearances reported, documented, co-memorated, grieved, mourned, and remembered across time and space by different actors and different technologies? How do these different actors take care of the deceased or disappeared, and what type of traces do they produce in that? How are they related to broader social and political contexts or ecosystems?
- How do tracemaking practices and traces of those deceased and disappeared at borders counter or sustain existing hierarchies, invisibilities, discriminations, and marginalizations? Which politics of naming, counting, and grieving do they reproduce or challenge? Which affects, values, knowledge, technologies, traditions, as well as spaces and materials do these practices imply, include, develop, or trigger?
- How do divergent experiences and histories of violence and oppression, as well as counter-practices, intertwine with the contemporary tracemakings related to border deaths and disappearances? How are they connected to the experiences of the communities dealing with the legacies of recent or repeated conflicts? How are they connected to multidirectionality, multivocality and counter-memory or different memory cultures and traditions of, for example, cenotaphs, memorials for unknown soldiers, pauper graves, asylum cemeteries, and conflict textiles related to *desaparecidos*?
- How are notions of care, belonging, responsibility, and justice brought and (re)defined in the framework of burials and graves of people deceased at the border, or exhumations, grief activist mobilizations, artistic interventions, archival practices and practices of counter-mapping, counter-narratives, or list-making? Which epistemological and meth-

odological questions are related to issues of traces and tracemaking? Which ethical questions emerge from “collecting” traces and “translating” the dead and disappeared at the borders into research focal points, statistical outputs, stories, documentaries, reports, actions, or memorials?

Building on the questions about the relationship between violence and traces on one hand, and affects, knowledge, art, and social justice on the other, this seminar focuses on tracemaking, border deaths and co-memoration. It aims to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, practices, and experiences, as well as to provide a space for reflection on alternative imaginaries and possible future direct actions.

Organizers: Marijana Hameršak & Sanja Horvatinčić

Programme

Thursday

19/9/2024

VENUE:

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Šubićeva 42, 5th floor

18:00–19:00

Circle: Naming the Losses and Processing Grief

local group, optional (in South Slavic languages)

“Circle: Naming the Losses and Processing Grief” is an optional session intended for those who would like to participate in creating a safe group space to reflect, process, and learn about fostering coping and resilience when faced with deaths, losses and injustice. The circle is co-organized with **Mirjana Bijelić, selma banich**, and other seminar participants. The second and third meetings (Friday & Saturday) will be in English.

Friday

20/9/2024

(Day 1 of the official COST event)

VENUE:

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Šubićeva 42, 5th floor

9:00–9:15

Registration

9:15–9:30

Welcome words

9:30–11:30

::: LISTINGS AND COUNTINGS

MODERATOR: Marijana Hameršak

Geert Ates

UNITED List of Refugee Deaths

Nidžara Ahmetašević

IOM Missing Migrant Project: What Purpose Does It Serve?

Maurice Stierl and Ahmed Jemaa

What Does It Mean to Count the Dead?

Filippo Furri and Carolina Kobelinsky

Catania's Experience: A Local Database to Find the Identities of Migrant People Buried in the City

11:30–12:00

Coffee break

12:00–13:30

∴ TRACES AND DATA

MODERATOR: Uršula Lipovec Čebren

Phevos Simeonidis

Data Sums and Peri/Post-Mortem Assumptions on Missing and Recovered Border-Crossing Bodies in Greece

Małgorzata Harasimowicz, Natalia Judzińska and Alicja Pałęcka

Monitoring Death at the Polish-Belarusian Border: On the Development of Methodologies in the Activist, Research, and Media Contexts

Giorgia Mirto

Writing on Lampedusa's Cemetery: Ethnography on Tracemaking between Solidarity and Memorialization

13:30–15:00

Lunch break

15:00–16:30

∴ DISAPPEARANCES

MODERATOR: Hope Barker

Gianmaria Lenti

"Desaparecidos": On Invisibilized Border Deaths in the Mediterranean Sea and the Arizona Desert

Michela Lovato

Dealing with the Present of Border Disappearances, Memories of Transit: A Case Study from Morocco

Noemi Magugliani, Valentina Azarova, Isa Krischke, Nefeli Belavila and Varvara Christaki

Collective Grief, Abolitionist Care, and Healing Justice for Border Deaths and Disappearances

17:00–18:30

Circle: Naming the Losses and Processing Grief
green group, optional (in English)

Saturday

21/9/2024

(Day 2 of the official COST event)

VENUE:

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Šubićeva 42, 5th floor

9:30–11:30

::: FORENSICS AND JUSTICE

MODERATOR: Daniel Palacios González

Alexandra Staniewska

Tracking the Social Impact of Dead Migrants

Nives Ladina

Bodies out of Place: A Reading on the Forensic Care of Migrant Matters and Memories

Cristina Del Biaggio

Becoming a “Spatial Detective” and Generating the Missing Images of a Deadly Event at the French-Italian Border

Hope Barker

Hidden Currents: The Dual Role of the River in Concealing and Revealing Traces of Border Deaths

11:30–12:00

Coffee break

12:00–14:00

::: LIVING AND DEAD

MODERATOR: Francesca Ruzzetta

Bernardo López Marín

Swimming across Life and Death at the African Doors to Europe: On Border Deaths and Tracemaking in Ceuta, Spain

Uršula Lipovec Čebren

Those Who Remain: Gestures of Solidarity in the Border Death Regime

Álvaro Ramírez-March, Dimitris Papadopoulos and Valentina Azarova

Reparations for Migrant Deaths: Enforced Disappearance, Border Abolitionist Horizons, and Reparations from Below

Emina Bužinkić

Tribunal: The Politics and Ethics of Bringing Witnesses to the Table

14:00–15:00

Lunch break

15:00–17:00

∴ **TIME AND SPACE**

MODERATOR: Sanja Horvatinčić

Serdar M. Değirmencioglu

Border Deaths: From Erasure to Possible Commemorations

Théo Lefort

The “Living Death”: Approaching Afghan Narratives of Death at the Border and Beyond through Relations to Landscapes and Non-Human Lives

Janina Pescinski

The Contested Traces of Lampedusa Shipwrecks

Yara Haskiel

Assembly of Sleepless Matter

17:30–19:00

Circle: Naming the Losses and Processing Grief

blue group, optional (in English)

Sunday

22/9/2024

VENUE:

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Šubićeva 42, 5th floor

& zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85752431319?pwd=mOvQE3VfgMBN4Jq8u9PzELzHAcCeKm.1> (Meeting ID: 857 5243 1319, Passcode: 375715)

11:00–13:00

∴ **WORKING SESSION, HYBRID**

FACILITATOR: Emina Bužinkić

Towards Establishing the Transbalkan People’s Tribunal: Pedagogies of People’s Deliberation on Structural Violence and Migrants Atrocities (optional)

In this session, we aim to extend the labor of collective grappling with the ethical, methodological, safety and legal questions critical for shaping the Transbalkan tribunal for justice. The session is based off of the grounding framework of the initiative’s commitments and intentions as formulated in the [Manifesto](#).

PARTICIPANTS:

Abdeljalil Daraibou, survivor

Nihad Suljić, witness

Caroline Norton, witness, Second Tree

Monday

23/9/2024

VENUE:

Association of Croatian Architects, Trg bana Josipa Jelačića 3/1

18:00-20:00 ***Making Monuments from Mass Graves in Contemporary Spain: Resistance through Remembrance***

(Amsterdam University Press, 2024)

Sanja Horvatinčić in conversation with Daniel Palacios González, the author of the book (optional)

The book narrates how, beginning in 1936, bodies buried in mass graves during the Spanish War and subsequent dictatorship were turned into monuments. The book describes how the production of monuments evolved and what forms this process and these monuments took; it examines how the monuments were incorporated into society and used to influence public opinion; and it argues that this process was not simply based on the formal logic of tradition but instead reflected a conscious plan with a specific and rational end goal. As such, this book puts forward the idea that the monument as a material object became an expression of the historical consciousness of its producers, relating how different actors communicated their memories into meaningful gestures while limited by the material reality of integrating the bodies into a novel artefact. Finally, it contends that the people creating these monuments did not just bury their dead according to a funerary tradition but also sought to influence society.

Daniel Palacios González is a Postdoctoral Researcher and Lecturer at the UNED, and previously, he was a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Birkbeck, University of London. He got his PhD at the Universität zu Köln as an MSCA Fellow and is a member of the research project NECROPOL at the Universitat de Barcelona. His book *De fosas comunes a lugares de memoria* (CEPC, 2022) received the Memory Studies Association First Book Award 2023.

ANYTIME

Audio tour Railway from Another Perspective

designed by Bojan Mucko and Romana Pozniak

The tour **Railway from Another Perspective** is created on the basis of field notes of researchers gathered by the project “European Irregularized Migration Regime at the Periphery of the EU: from Ethnography to Keywords” (IEF, HRZZ, 2020-2024). It is conceptualized as a form of presentation of the research insights related to the period of flexibilization of transit in Croatia, from mid-2022 to mid-2023, which has occurred after years of intensive police violence, as well as a tool for independent ethnographic research of public space.

The tour takes place around Main Railway Station in Zagreb and lasts for about 45 minutes. Participants are invited to explore the tour individually or in smaller groups by use of their phones, headphones and by following instructions available online at [e-ERIM: an online network of keywords of the European irregularized migration regime at the periphery of the EU](#), keyword “Railway Station from Another Perspective”.

Abstracts & Bios

Nidžara Ahmetašević

Independent scholar

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IOM Missing Migrant Project: What Purpose Does It Serve?

Since 2014, the International Organisation for Migrations (IOM) has been running the Missing Migrants Project. Part of the project is a website and yearly report on the number of deaths based on IOM data, with a focus is on people who die while trying to cross borders. However, they do not mention death in IOM or UNHCR-run camps or anything about the reasons why people are forced to use dangerous routes. This paper investigates the Missing Migrants Project and its yearly reports while analysing sources and the purposes of this type of reporting and counting of deaths.

Nidžara Ahmetašević is a journalist and independent scholar from Sarajevo. She has written about migrations since 2015.

Geert Ates

UNITED for Intercultural Action – campaign secretariat
“Fatal Realities of Fortress Europe”

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UNITED List of Refugee Deaths: Fatal Policies of Fortress Europe – 30 Years Research

“Fatal Policies of Fortress Europe” is an ongoing advocacy campaign spearheaded by the European activist network UNITED. Since 1993, UNITED has meticulously documented the devastating impact of Fortress Europe policies, which encompass border militarisation, asylum regulations, detention practices, and deportations. The “UNITED List of Refugee Deaths” reveals a grim toll: from 1993 to 2024, over 60,200 refugee deaths have been recorded, and tens of thousands more people were never found. Through this campaign, UNITED aims to spotlight the responsibility of our societies in safeguarding those fleeing from war, persecution, poverty, or natural disasters. It underscores systemic flaws within asylum and immigration frameworks, which repeatedly compromise human dignity. Whether in transit to Fortress Europe, confined in detention centres or identification camps, in the process of deportation proceedings, or upon their repatriation, countless asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants meet untimely ends. The compiled list exposes a myriad of causes and circumstances, stemming from an increasingly complex, dysfunctional, and unjust system. Europe’s exclusionary policies have made lawful entry nearly impossible, forcing migrants into irregular and perilous routes to safety. Despite diverse circumstances, these tragedies share a common root cause: the relentless tightening of EU asylum policies. This has sparked a race to the bottom among European member states, marked by increasingly harsh asylum measures and collective efforts to curb immigration. Sadly, EU migration policies prioritize targets over basic humanity. The annual UNITED List, drawn from an extensive Filemaker database, serves as a vital resource for researchers, artists, journalists, museums, cartographers, churches, and activists worldwide. It stands as a testament to collective action, research, and remembrance. The List was printed as a 60-page supplement by The Guardian newspaper and by several national newspapers in other countries. Its archival preservation at the International Institute of Social History ensures that the lessons learned from this tragic saga are passed down for future generations.

Geert Ates, co-founder of UNITED for Intercultural Action, served as the network director from 1993 to 2019. UNITED is a pan-European grass-root network dedicated to combating nationalism, racism, and fascism and advocating for migrants and refugees, with support from over 550 organizations spanning 48 European countries. In this capacity, he represented the network at key institutional gatherings such as those of the EU, Council of Europe, UN, and OSCE. Additionally, he coordinated numerous pan-European projects tackling various issues related to anti-discrimination and migration. Since 2019, he has taken on the role of campaign coordinator at the Amsterdam campaign secretariat for the “Fatal Policies of Fortress Europe” campaign. He works and lives in Amsterdam.

Hope Barker

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Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Zagreb
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Hidden Currents: The Dual Role of the River in Concealing and Revealing Traces of Border Deaths

Geographical landscapes of deserts, seas, rivers, and mountain passes have long been harnessed by states and (intra-)state authorities to both prevent and deter the arrivals of people on the move and to obfuscate accountability and responsibility for their deaths (Reineke and Anderson, 2016; Lynn Doty, 2011). This research will investigate the specific dynamics of rivers at border regions, emphasising their dual function in both concealing and revealing traces of border deaths. Rivers at the EU's external borders have become sites of missingness and death for people traversing the so-called Balkan Route every year (Pavlidis and Karakasai, 2019). Rivers can obscure the evidence of lives lost, complicating the search for and identification of the deceased. Swift currents, sediment islets, and disputed territorial claims play significant roles in concealing bodies and belongings, making it challenging for activists and families to recover and identify remains. This concealment perpetuates uncertainty and grief, highlighting the river's role in erasure.

Conversely, rivers also act as revealers. Natural processes like erosion, seasonal water level changes, and debris movement can eventually expose remains and personal items. This can support in the documentation and memorialisation of the deceased (see Identifying the Displaced Project).

The study will focus on the Evros River as a case study, drawing on the researcher's six-year history of working on deaths and disappearances in the region. It will look at who reports on these cases, who documents and memorializes the dead and disappeared, and what resistance looks like in these spaces. By analysing rivers' dual roles, this paper aims to contribute to the understanding of border deaths and the ongoing struggle for human dignity and rights at borders.

Hope Barker holds an MSc in International Social and Public Policy from the London School of Economics. Hope has been working in solidarity with people crossing borders for six years, starting in Greece, where she was involved in both grassroots direct aid structures as well as engaging in advocacy work, and the publishing of analytical publications on EU migration policy for the Border Violence Monitoring Network. She currently works as the EU/UK Senior Strategic Communications Associate for the Global Strategic Communications Council. She is also pursuing her own research independently, currently in the areas of deaths and disappearances at EU borders and the use of new technologies to facilitate rights violations at "EUropean" borders.

Becoming a “Spatial Detective” and Generating the Missing Images of a Deadly Event at the French-Italian Border

In May 2018, the body of Blessing Matthew, originally from Nigeria, was discovered in the French Hautes-Alpes near the border with Italy. The Gap court opened an investigation but eventually dismissed the case in February 2021 without shedding light on the circumstances of her death or determining responsibility for it. I took part in the consortium, led by the Border Forensics agency which conducted a counter-investigation and reconstructed the events leading up to Blessing’s death. Confronted with the absence of traces on the ground, the members of the collective became “spatial detectives” (Bennett and Layard 2015) and generated the missing images of the event; they materially “made traces” of an event that did not leave any. The missing images constituted the main evidence that was transmitted to a court of law in an appeal to reopen the investigation. With a negative answer by the European Court of Human Rights in January 2024, the judicial process has been closed indefinitely. The refusal of official institutions to uncover the truth now reshuffles the cards of possibilities and opens up new questions about how to keep the images and evidence we produced alive: when the value of traces or the value of survivor/victim testimonies are not recognized by the State, in what other arenas can they circulate so that the quest for social and spatial justice can continue? How can this “tracemaking” serve other victims and collectives to support their quest for truth and justice?

The aim of this paper is not to provide definitive answers to these questions, but to set out the constituent elements of this attempt, which officially failed, as well as to seek justice for Blessing, with the aim to open a discussion on what can be learned from this process in order to contribute to co-memoration actions and counter-narratives on border deaths in general.

Cristina Del Biaggio is an assistant professor in geography at the Université Grenoble Alpes and the Pacte research laboratory. She is interested in the geographical, political, and social dimensions of migration. Her research currently focuses on the ways in which migrants cross Alpine borders and the lethal consequences of increased border controls in the Alpine region. She is also interested in local and urban forms of reception and their structuring into networks at the national and trans-local levels.

Emina Bužinkić

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Tribunal: The Politics and Ethics of Bringing Witnesses to the Table

My research focuses on tracing feminist methodologies and ethics in alternative justice seeking by deploying an analysis of the Women's Court from 2015 as a regional feminist model of alternative justice seeking in the era of impunity for war crimes and severe human rights violations. The research also includes an example of the application of feminist principles in the work of the Coalition for the Regional Commission for Establishing the Facts about War Crimes and Other Serious Human Rights Violations in the former Yugoslavia from 1991 to 2001 (RECOM). At the centre of my interest is understanding and documenting the methodological and ethical complexity and approaches used by these two regional examples of alternative justice seeking, particularly the preparation of witnesses for public hearings, their safety, and the formats and impact of public hearings on broader processes of social justice. With the findings of this research, I aim to support the establishment of the Transbalkan People's Tribunal in the making that strives to create migration and social justice inspired by the itineraries of local, decolonial, and transnational feminist praxis.

Emina Bužinkić is a researcher, activist, and writer at the intersections of migration, refuge, education, transnational solidarities, and feminist praxis. She earned her doctorate in critical educational, cultural, feminist, and human rights studies from the University of Minnesota in the USA. She is a member of the editorial collective for the journal AGITATE! – Unsettling knowledges, and the organizations IMISCOE, Comparative International Education Association (CIES), and American Education Research Association (AERA). She publishes in both local and international journals.

Uršula Lipovec Čebtron

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Those Who Remain: Gestures of Solidarity in the Border Death Regime

The border death regime consists of a multiplicity of actors “guided by different principles and motivations, which contribute in different ways and to different extents to create the conditions for deaths to be more or less likely to occur or be prevented” (Cuttita 2020; Cuttita, Häberlein, Pallister-Wilkins 2020). In this complex and contested context, some of these actors (e.g., governments, the border security industry) are actors of control, as opposed to the actors of mobility that they try to discipline (e.g., people on the move, activists). While some of these actors are particularly exposed and play a crucial part in border spectacle (De Genova 2002), others remain less visible to the public, but have a significant role, especially in the post-mortem phase.

On the basis of the ethnographic research carried out within the framework of the project *European Regime of the Irregularized Migrations at the Periphery of the EU: From Ethnography to Keywords – ERIM*, I analyse the role of three different actors facing border deaths in their local community in Slovenia. First, in the case of the burials in Bela Krajina, I show how bureaucratic rigidity can be overcome within institutional frameworks; second, in the case of the deaths of three young men buried in Ljubljana, I analyse the shifting of institutional responsibility onto the shoulders of a person from a non-governmental organization; and third, in the case of the drowning of the girl in the Dragonja river, I demonstrate the importance of the solidarity shown by a local farmer. These scattered, isolated, and individualized acts by those who witness border deaths directly and remain important actors in post-mortem practices might be seen as an example of active resistance against collective indifference (Basaran 2015) and organized hypocrisy (Cusumano 2019).

Uršula Lipovec Čebtron is a professor at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. Her research interests are in the areas of anthropology of migration and medical anthropology, with a special focus on fieldwork in Slovenia, Italy and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In her scientific work, she deals with health aspects of migration as well as cultural and other barriers to healthcare access. She has been a leader and researcher in different national as well as international projects (ERIM, MoST, WHOLE, WebWise, SH-CAPAC, MIPEX etc.), where she researched intercultural mediation and cultural competence in healthcare, as well as COVID-19 vulnerability assessment in the framework of the Sonar-Global project.

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Border Deaths: From Erasure to Possible Commemorations

Bodies in advanced decay keep surfacing in the Aegean Sea. Early in May, an official announcement read: "In the morning hours today, the Port Authority of Mithymna was informed about the existence of a man's body, in a stage of advanced rot, on the rocky coast of Agios Dimitrios in Skala Sykaminea, Lesvos." The corpse was not identified.

In September 2015, a two-year-old boy from Kobane (Syria) drowned in the Aegean. His body was found on the beach near Bodrum (Turkey). He was initially identified as Aylan Kurdi. (It later became clear that his name was recorded as Alan Kurdi in Turkey. His original name was Alan Shenu.)

Alan's image was on the front pages of newspapers. His name was mentioned across the world in mainstream media. The death of Alan and his mother and brother became a serious issue in Canada, where the family's application for asylum had been rejected by the government.

The unidentified man found in the northeast of Lesvos was most likely a refugee who had died trying to cross the Aegean. Unlike Alan, he is one of thousands of nameless dead refugees. The discovery of his body received little attention in the mainstream media in Greece and elsewhere. Only the followers of the Aegean Boat Report learned of the discovery.

These two deaths offer important lessons. First, border deaths must be reported. Second, it is far more difficult to report border deaths when they occur at sea or in very remote and uninhabited areas. Third, reporting is important no matter how deaf mainstream media might be. Fourth, images matter: they make the border deaths undeniable and a fact to be reckoned with. In other words, they prevent erasure.

Only if erasure is prevented can tracemaking and co-memorating become possible. Inspired by the Stumbling Stone (Stolperstein) Project, this paper imagines a decentralized, web-based commemoration effort for fortress Europe.

Serdar M. Değirmenciöğlü holds a PhD in developmental psychology. He is also an expert in community psychology and peace psychology. He signed the Academics for Peace manifesto in January 2016. As the regime targeted the signatories, he was fired in April that same year. He was banned from public service for life in 2017. Forced into exile, he has held visiting positions in Egypt, Italy, Belgium, and now in Germany. In 2021, he was awarded the Philipp Schwartz Fellowship for displaced scholars. His visiting position at the Institute of Human Geography is ending in July 2024.

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Catania's Experience: A Local Database to Find the Identities of Migrant People Buried in the City

Filippo Furri, an anthropologist, has been working on research on missing persons in migration and identification practices since 2013. In particular, his interest is in capacity building for agency and the co-construction of research tools available to families and involved civil society actors. He is a member of the Migreurop network and is a fellow of the Institute Convergences Migrations in Paris. He has worked as a consultant for the ICRC forensic section in Paris.

Carolina Kobelinsky is a CNRS (French National Centre for Scientific Research) Research fellow in anthropology at the Laboratory of Ethnology and Comparative Sociology, University of Paris Nanterre. Her current research concerns the material and symbolic treatment of dead migrants at Europe's southern borders.

Together with Carolina Kobelinsky, we recounted in a recent book the experience of a group of volunteers from the Red Cross in Catania who, in collaboration with local authorities, built a database that brought together all the information collected or produced by the various actors related to the 270 bodies disembarked in the city between 2014 and 2018. In Italy, as elsewhere, most of these bodies are buried without names despite the presence of information gathered by investigators and forensic scientists and through survivor testimony that might allow them to be given an identity.

Faced with the difficulty of finding and involving families in retrospective research, the intuition was to start from the traces left by these bodies in order to reassemble biographical elements that could suggest an identity and thus allow for the reconstruction of family ties. The painstaking work of collecting and interconnecting these data has already made it possible to "find" some of these names and engage with families in local commemoration practices. This technical work of data collection has, at the same time, generated emotional bonds and forms of relationships between the volunteer group, local institutions, and these bodies, taken into custody and cared for while waiting for the "missing families" to one day find their loved ones. In this presentation, we want to emphasize the originality of this experience and the possibility of applying it elsewhere at a local level, as a fundamental complement to activities carried out at national and transnational levels.

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Monitoring Death at the Polish-Belarusian Border: On the Development of Methodologies in the Activist, Research, and Media Contexts

By reason of the urgent need to monitor and document violence on the Polish-Belarusian border, a group of activists from Grupa Granica, Fundacja Ocalenie, and Badaczki i Badacze na Granicy established the Inter-Organizational Team for Monitoring Deaths at the Border, the main task of which is to register border deaths for commemoration, archivisation, and advocacy purposes. Methods of working with data regarding fatalities on the Polish-Belarusian border have been developed since the beginning of the humanitarian crisis (summer 2021). The methodology adopted by our team is the result of the process on which we would like to reflect during our presentation. We will deliberate the crucial factors determining the directions we undertook when working on the list, and how we decided to resolve (or leave unresolved) ethically and methodologically challenging aspects of our work.

Małgorzata Harasimowicz, a biologist by training, currently studies cultural studies at the College of Interdisciplinary Individual Studies in the Humanities at the University of Gdańsk, Poland. She is an activist at the Polish-Belarusian border with Grupa Granica and a co-creator of the Inter-Organizational Team for Monitoring Border Deaths. She is interested in the intersections of ecological sciences, cultural studies, anthropology, and philosophy.

Natalia Judzińska is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Slavic Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences. She is a cultural studies scholar and activist. Her research interests focus on Holocaust studies and the material dimension of the humanitarian crisis on the Polish-Belarusian border. She is co-initiator and part of the coordination committee of the group Researchers on the Border, and part of the Inter-Organizational Team for Monitoring Border Deaths. Since Fall 2021, she has provided humanitarian support for People on the Move on the Polish-Belarusian border.

Alicja Pałęcka is a sociologist and researcher, currently working as an assistant at the Faculty of Sociology at the University of Warsaw. Since 2021, she has been involved in the activities of the Ocalenie Foundation on the Polish-Belarusian border. Author of the foundation's report, "State Violence and Grassroots Activities", as well as the editor and co-author of the report, "No Safe Passage. Migrants' Deaths at the European Union-Belarusian Border". She is a member of the Inter-Organizational Team for Monitoring Border Deaths.

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Assembly of Sleepless Matter

My practice-based research, "Assembly of Sleepless Matter," investigates minoritarian memory, rebellious mourning, and the border crisis in post-austerity Greece through video essays, interviews, and archiving. Starting from the vanished Jewish cemetery in Thessaloniki and the recent so-called refugee cemetery on the island of Lesbos are contested sites that point to reminiscences of traumatic traces and the production of nomadic matter through cities and landscapes. The border, difference, and racialisation are inevitable aspects of migration and diaspora history that persist in their singular memory despite attempts at erasure and neoliberal abandonment. Fragmented gravestones and neglected cultural material of the dead become legacies of racial violence that circulate through the soil and oral histories of local agents. This results in resonances that relate traumatic histories to each other, thus creating a sensitivity for different (transgenerational) effects that make critical memory work in conjunction with struggles for transnational justice possible. My research, situated at the intersection of multidirectional memory studies (Rothberg 2009), philosophy, and cultural studies, illuminates the pressing question of responsibility between the dead and the living. It traces a complex interaction between cartographies, sites, and cultural matter through registers of affect. I investigate cemeteries as cartographies and burial grounds as sites to challenge neoliberal carelessness, racial amnesia, "implicatedness" (Rothberg 2019), and places of transcultural (co-) figurations. By questioning necropolitical theoretical fields (Mbembe 2003; 2019) with materialist philosophy (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 1987, 1992, and 2009), I consider the following: How does port-austerity shape transcultural memory activism? What affects are produced by violating the dead and their resting places? And how do "grievability" (Butler 2009) and the need for memory activism from below shape ethical imbrications?

Yara Haskiel is a video artist and researcher. She studied Experimental Film and Art at the University of Arts in Berlin and Hamburg. She holds a master's in museology and critical theory from the Independent Studies Programme (PEI) at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona (MACBA) in collaboration with the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB). The central themes of her work are the connections between memory and (dis-)placement of minor memories, rebellious mourning, and their transgenerational affective constellations. She further focuses on micropolitics, class, and precarity. Yara Haskiel generates video essays based on long-term research using feminist methodologies.

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What Does It Mean to Count the Dead?

In 1993, activists began to count the “dead and disappeared” of migration in connection with the “EUropean” border. The ever-growing “List of Deaths,” published by UNITED Against Refugee Deaths, documents 52,760 deaths over the last thirty years, thereby creating an archive of migrant traces. Although the list carries the subtitle, “Death by Policy – Time for Change”, the political change that would effectively reduce the number of deaths at EU borders is nowhere in sight. Over the past decade, several other death counts have emerged. Although they aim to improve existing data practices and make statistics on migrant death more reliable and accurate, different knowledge practices have produced considerable discrepancies in death counts. With the establishment of the International Organization for Migration’s (IOM) Missing Migrants Project in 2013, the counting of deaths has become increasingly monopolized, given the organisation’s considerable resources and global reach. Some scholars have been critical of this development, suggesting that the IOM would appropriate and depoliticize a data practice that had previously been a means of resistance against the EU border regime (Heller and Péroucoud 2019). In our paper, we discuss the contours of a novel research project we have recently begun that examines the changing practices and meanings of death counts, particularly in the Atlantic border region where existing statistics offer widely different figures. Drawing on scholarship from the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS), we consider the “performativity of knowledge practices” (Scheel 2021: 43) in relation to migrant death and disappearance, noting how different death counts produce different migration realities “out there”.

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Bodies Out of Place: A Reading on the Forensic Care of Migrant Matters and Memories

Over the last two decades, the number of people who have died or disappeared while trying to cross the liquid border of the central Mediterranean has risen dramatically. The corpses that reach the southern shores of Sicily have two possible fates: they are either buried without a name after an external inspection or, if a crime is suspected, they become the subject of an investigation. In the second case, the remains of these people are examined to determine whether they are shipwreck victims or victims of murder. The main objective of forensic work of this type is the reconstruction of the cause of death and, as an indirect aim, identification, which is made possible through biological samples extracted by doctors and delivered to the judicial authorities. This implies the creation of DNA traces that can be compared with those of family members of missing people. However, the families' reactions may be ambivalent to a technology that is based on something not visible to the naked eye and therefore requires a kind of "act of faith". The purpose of this contribution is to consider, in conjunction with the circulation of biological samples, the production of additional traces by doctors and forensic experts in the course of their practices. Indeed, during their work, they produce photographs of the clothing and objects found on the corpses, images of the bodies and their organs during autopsies, and, finally, extensive medical reports and written records describing their activities and conclusions. Medical examiners are the last ones to be able to touch and view these bodies before they are buried, and the question we will address is: can we interpret their actions as acts of care?

Nives Ladina is a PhD candidate in History, Anthropology, and Religions at Sapienza University of Rome. She received her bachelor's degree in philosophy at the University of Milan and her master's degree in anthropological and ethnological sciences at the University of Milano-Bicocca. In the same city, she completed her education with a postgraduate course in Critical Theory of Society. Her research interests concern victims of borders, torture, and intentional violence crossing the Central Mediterranean; the intersection of forensic disciplines, legal medicine, and migration; and human and material remains.

Furthermore, Nives participates in the Italian network Death and Oblivion NIMO.

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The “Living Death”: Approaching Afghan Narratives of Death at The Border and Beyond Through Relations to Landscapes and Non-Human Lives

Many experiences of violence and death on the journeys of people on the move towards Europe are embedded in non-urban landscapes. This violence and death does not result from the natural hostility of these landscapes but rather from the direct consequences of their weaponization (Stefanos & Levidis 2020) in the production of “slow violence” through nature (Schindel 2022). These experiences produce common knowledge and individual memories of violence and death that inform the discourses and practices of people on the move towards these landscapes well beyond their crossings. Based on ethnographic fieldwork with Afghan people on the move in Pakistan, Turkey, and Western European countries, I propose to approach the topic of death through their narratives of “nature” at the border. Fieldwork conversations point notably to the ambivalence of border landscapes as places of death and places in which forms of solidarity and resistance emerge, as well as to how this impacts, in the long term, relations to daily-life landscapes in Europe. Friends and relatives of deceased people on the move talk of the difficulty of grieving when bodies are purposely made to disappear in the landscape or, conversely, are doomed to remain visible to future people attempting to cross through the same routes. Life in Europe and the asylum-seeking processes of those who have arrived have been described as a form of “living death” (marg-e-zenda). The persistent risks of deportation and suicide blur the spatiotemporal boundaries of border death, while dreams, visions, and more-than-human encounters play the role of non-human forms of living in border deaths. Memories of dehumanizing violence from the journey brought back into daily life in Europe prompt conversations on what it means to be alive and human.

Théo Lefort is a PhD Candidate in Anthropology and Sociology at the Graduate Institute, in Geneva. After studies in political science and international relations in France, Iran, and Turkey, he is pursuing a dissertation project looking at the ambivalence of relationships that emerge between Afghans on the move, landscapes, and non-human forms of living along their migration journeys. Alongside the dissertation, he is exploring visual ethnography through projects of photobook and ethnographic film.

“Desaparecidos”: On Invisibilized Border Deaths in the Mediterranean Sea and the Arizona Desert

While the legal channels of migration and asylum seeking are accessible only to a small number of privileged people, border control mechanisms are increasingly sophisticated and difficult to circumvent, forcing racialized migrants to undertake perilous journeys on a thin line between life and death. Consequently, the natural environments of migrant routes have been converted into deadly territories, often erasing any trace of those who perish along the way. By attributing migrant deaths to “hostile environments” and “ruthless smugglers” while blaming migrants for their own misfortunes, numerous Western politicians have justified stricter border policies that hinder northward mobility, claiming these measures reduce border fatalities. However, the harsh living conditions in migrants’ countries of origin remain unchanged, prompting individuals to continue seeking a different future despite the risks involved.

The reported numbers of border deaths are alarming, but they significantly underrepresent the reality. The term *desaparecidos* (politically-disappeared people) was coined during the dictatorships that afflicted Latin America between the 1960s and the 1980s. Even though migration scholars have sometimes adopted this terminology to describe the uncertainty surrounding the disturbing number of people whose traces were lost or erased along international journeys, its use has also raised controversy. Critics argue that the lack of direct liability in these deaths differentiates them from the *desaparecidos* who lost their lives at the hands of State authorities.

As a counter to this argument, this presentation draws on a decade of ethnographic research in various migratory contexts and relevant scholarship on border and mobility studies. By taking the Mediterranean Sea and the Arizona Desert as case studies for the analysis of border deaths, it formulates a critique of border regimes’ tacit role in migrant disappearances and the dominant discourses that absolve the West and its colonial relationships with neighbouring countries of all responsibility for global migration apartheid.

Gianmaria Lenti has a PhD in Social Anthropology from the National School of Anthropology and History in Mexico City and is currently appointed as an honorary adjunct of the Department of Social Inquiry at La Trobe University in Melbourne. His primary research explores the experiences and emotions of migrants in Mexico and Turkey, and he has also conducted fieldwork in Morocco, Greece, and Spain. After finalizing a BA in Languages and Cultural Mediation at the University of Roma Tre, he completed an MSc in Social Science in Development and International Relations at Aalborg University in Copenhagen, with a specialization in Global Refugee Studies.

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Swimming Across Life and Death at the African Doors to Europe: On Border Deaths and Tracemaking in Ceuta, Spain

Following the further sealing of the Moroccan-Spanish border in Ceuta during the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of people from various nationalities attempting to swim towards the Spanish enclave from Morocco has been rapidly increasing. This has led to a rise in border deaths and disappearances at sea. The case of Ceuta is peculiar due to its geopolitical position on the African continent and its land border with Morocco. While migrants and asylum seekers continue to fall victim to structural violence perpetrated by Europe's border regime, identification mechanisms are often complicated, and families who are not entitled to enter Spain can hardly access the bodies of their loved ones. Many communities are left wondering what happened to their members who risked swimming during storms and bad weather.

This presentation critiques and sheds light on how Spain and the European border regime spend significant amounts of funding to stop irregular migration, yet allocate insufficient resources for search and rescue operations, corpse identification, repatriation, or burial in Ceuta. The complexity of Europe's border regime also makes it impossible for families to cross borders, a reality that is exacerbated by the lack of bilateral agreements between Spain and Morocco to address these issues. For individuals from sub-Saharan countries, these circumstances are even more critical. The city of Ceuta allocates limited resources to handle the number of bodies constantly found at sea and on beaches. Meanwhile, a local mosque registers details for tracemaking and provides services when deceased bodies are found at sea. Moreover, a few Christian organizations in Ceuta systematically call for social justice and accountability from the Spanish state. Together, they aim to uphold memory, condemn border violence, and commemorate those who lost their lives in the migration attempt.

Bernardo López Marín is a post-doctoral researcher working on the "Contesting Migration" project at Durham University, UK. He received a PhD from La Trobe University, Australia, presenting a comparative study about the subjective experience and the development of emotions, feelings and sentiments of people on a journey in transit through Mexico and Morocco. Bernardo completed an MSc in Social Anthropology at the National School of Anthropology and History (ENAH) in Mexico City and a BA in Native American Indian Languages and Cultures at the University of Copenhagen. His research interests include irregularized and forced migration, human displacement, border regimes, social exclusion, violence, racism, postcolonial studies, State-Society relations, and collective memory.

Dealing with the Present of Border Disappearances, Memories of Transit: A Case Study from Morocco

Taqadoum is a neighbourhood on the periphery of Rabat with a strong presence of sub-Saharan communities that have settled there over time. Taqadoum is also a transit area for sub-Saharan PoM attempting to cross borders to Europe – it is therefore marked by waiting, preparation, and return. In Taqadoum, people wait either for the return of comrades who have decided to attempt the crossing or for news of their *boza* (“victory”). But what of the comrades that neither return nor arrive? Taqadoum becomes a space where research is conducted from a distance, where facts are reconstructed to achieve clarification, and where mediation is carried out with families seeking information. Taqadoum becomes a space of struggle for the memory of dead comrades and for the truth about missing ones. It occurs within a context where the mobility and presence of sub-Saharan PoM are subject to border control measures and practices, thus necessitating constant negotiation with respect to both space and movement.

This study aims to observe the practices of seeking truth and justice in cases of disappeared PoM in the context of transit. By reading such practices, we seek to understand how solidarity networks and survival strategies are intertwined with urban space and migration. Drawing from a multidisciplinary perspective encompassing migration and border studies, solidarity studies, and transitional justice studies, this study delves into the narratives and strategies employed by affected communities and advocacy groups to commemorate the lives lost and seek accountability.

Through qualitative research methods including interviews, participant observation, and analysis of memorialization initiatives, this study elucidates the diverse forms of remembrance and resistance enacted by PoM communities and solidarity actors. It investigates the role of memory in challenging impunity, fostering solidarity, and advocating for systemic change in policies and practices relating to migration and human rights in Morocco.

Michela Lovato is a PhD candidate in the SOLROUTES Project at the University of Genoa. She has a background in International Sciences – Conflict and Peace Studies at the University of Turin. She is working on a research project that aims to observe the dynamics and actors of solidarity towards unauthorized movements in Morocco. In this project, she is also working on border disappearances and mobilizations for truth and justice in Morocco.

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Collective Grief, Abolitionist Care, and Healing Justice for Border Deaths and Disappearances

The authoritarian political nature of enforced disappearance policies and the political group-based repression and persecution that is entailed by such actions make recourse to state justice impossible. Against this impossibility, this intervention reflects on our embodied experiences and practices of accompanying families searching for loved ones in the Greek-Turkish borderlands as forms of healing and transformative justice that centre collective grief and mourning for the (necro)violence and enforced disappearances produced by borders. What notions of care, belonging, responsibility, and justice are co-created by such rituals, practices, and relationalities and what future horizons do they enact? In what ways does truth-seeking and memory activism around the (necro)violence at/of borders further border abolitionism (Tazzioli and De Genova)?

As part of the posthumous struggles for the “reappearance” of those lost to borders, collective grief and mourning practices have been mobilized subversively in no-borders activism—as trauma-informed, queer modes of trace- and sense-making and of epistemic and

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Isa Krischke (they/them) is an activist involved in the struggle against border and state violence towards people in transit along the Balkan route. In recent years, they have been involved in practical support for families of people who have been disappeared during transit.

Nefeli Belavila (she/her) is based on Lesbos. Her main professional focus is the criminalisation of people on the move. She engages in monitoring trials, trying to support migrants, and raising awareness around the topic of criminalization. She is also interested in the topic of the death and disappearance of people on the move. Nefeli is interested in practical and emotional tools regarding death and disappearances.

Varvara Christaki (she/her), based in Lesbos, has studied psychology and social anthropology of gender. Currently, her main professional focus is related to practical support and awareness-raising regarding the criminalisation of people on the move, border necroviolence and the necropolitics of detention centres on the Greek borders.

transformative justice seeking that centre affective, emotional, and relational way of worlding the world. Calling border deaths “enforced disappearances” is not only about tracing and returning remains, but also about recognizing the collective harm and trauma reproduced by the violence of racializing border regimes: a “mode of protest” that “is about exposing the embodied losses—of bodies, communities, and possibilities—that haunt the common intelligibility of memorable life” (Athanasidou).

Centring collective grief for the violence of borders and what/who legal (juridical justice) struggles against borders have made im/possible and in/visible, this intervention envisions a queer, affective archive of grieving practices and posthumous struggles. Tending to relational injustices – those produced by migrant remains abandoned in borderlands, lives violently torn from migrant communities (Gündoğdu), and bordering communities living with the ghosts of killed migrants (Gordon) – posthumous struggles seek rupture with the state racist violences of juridical justice systems of humanitarian “saviorism”, human rights and hyper-scientific techno-solutionism. Through (re)new(ed) counternarratives of abolitionist care, healing and transformative justice, such struggles invite us to embody our collective responsibilities to deborder our relationalities, visions and struggles for justice and liberation.

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Writing on Lampedusa's Cemetery: Ethnography on Tracemaking Between Solidarity and Memorialization

For more than 30 years, the southern Italian island of Lampedusa has been spectacularized as a border on which human and material remains accumulate along the coastline. In the political aftermath of death, truth-telling has a part to play in the translation of these bodies and materials and the public exposure of a common, community-conjuring truth.

This paper focuses on the efforts of a group of local activists on the island, known as the Forum Lampedusa Solidale network, who have spent a decade engaging in acts of counter-memory and tracemaking. They strive to memorialize border deaths by attending burials at the local cemetery and guiding tourists and researchers to reinterpret the significance of these sites as emblematic of the recent history of Lampedusa, Italy, and the Mediterranean. To preserve and disseminate the memories they uphold, the Forum enlisted me in a research project for a book on the cemetery.

In my presentation, I will share my ethnographic experiences with this activist group, aimed at compiling tangible and intangible traces of border deaths. These traces include bureaucratic records, forensic evidence, oral testimonies from cemetery workers, accounts from shipwreck survivors, and interviews with television crews and researchers. This ethnographic process relates to the layered memorializations that have unfolded at the cemetery. The dissemination of these traces through various archives and reconstruction efforts encourages reflection on how these diverse traces can communicate with one another. They are recognized as symbols in their relational context—they represent both someone and something—and form a point of intersection within a complex web of relationships. My ethnographic work contributes to the discussion about the ethical considerations that arise from collecting traces, in order to expose them to a broader public and to translate the experiences of the deceased and missing at border crossings into acts of counter-memorialization.

Giorgia Mirto, a border death researcher and anti-racist activist from Sicily focuses on mourning practices and the political role of border deaths. Her PhD project at Columbia University explores responses to migrant maritime disasters on the Sicilian coast, analyzing treatment of bodies, relatives, material remains, and reliquary traces. For 15 years, Giorgia's research has delved into the Italian management, burial, and identification procedures for migrant bodies in the Mediterranean. Her activism supports families of disappeared migrants, contributing to truth and justice initiatives across the Mediterranean.

The Contested Traces of Lampedusa Shipwrecks

The year 2023 marked the tenth anniversary of the 3 October shipwreck just off the coast of Lampedusa, in which 368 people were killed by the European border regime. The physical traces of the shipwreck itself have been removed from the island; there is no physical evidence left and none of the victims of the shipwreck were buried there. However, the survivors and local residents keep the memory of the event alive and a series of commemorations are held each year. New material traces are created: a memorial with the names of 366 victims on a ceramic tile was placed on the steps of the library to serve as a “stumbling stone”, similar to those that name victims of the Holocaust in European cities.

In these processes of erasure and tracemaking, the political significance of the event is at stake in contested narratives. The institutionalized narratives of the government and the European Union decouple the deaths of migrants at sea from EU policies that construct the sea as a dangerous border, instead framing these deaths as a tragedy. On the other hand, migrants themselves and solidarity activists engage in various tracemaking practices to demand justice and hold authorities to account. The latter practices are referred to by many activists as “commemorations”, as illustrated by another event a week later demanding justice for a second shipwreck that happened on 11 October 2013. This paper, based on six months of ethnographic fieldwork in Lampedusa, explores the various practices concerning the traces of migrant deaths in Lampedusa and the political demands they raise, arguing that dignity for the migrant dead is an essential aspect of ensuring rights for the living.

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Reparations for Migrant Deaths: Enforced Disappearance, Border Abolitionist Horizons, and Reparations from Below

In the context of ever-expanding and increasingly deadly border regimes, there is an urgent need to hold states accountable for border violence. This article addresses the question of reparations in the face of migrant deaths and disappearances by examining various cases in which reparations for border violence are currently being enacted in the present. We begin this essay by acknowledging the important recent developments in international legal struggles around the application of the law on enforced disappearances in the migration context. As we review here, the pursuit of accountability through this legal framework is limited by the political analysis of the border violence(s) constituted and reproduced by the international institutions and processes of human rights and transitional justice and their particular conceptions of truth-telling and memory politics/activism. These struggles thus face the dilemma that the means and forms of reparation they are able to seek are prefigured by the colonial histories of violence that shaped them and the processes that reproduce them. In this paper, we draw on current discussions in the fields of transitional justice, Black and racial reparations, and prison and border abolitionism to propose the notion of reparations from below. With this lens and vision of justice, we seek to capture reparations not only as demands, but also as pre-existing practices/praxes and

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is an interdisciplinary social researcher with a background in critical social psychology. His main areas of interest are critical border and migration studies, social movements, affect, memory, and qualitative and participatory methodologies. He is currently (2022-2024) working on a postdoctoral project dealing with reparation politics in the face of border violence along EU borders. He holds an MSc in Psychosocial Intervention and Research, and a PhD in Social Psychology, both from Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB).

counternarratives of migrant communities and their allies that are aligned with a no-borders horizon of global mobility/migration justice.

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Data Sums and Peri/Post-Mortem Assumptions on Missing and Recovered Border-Crossing Bodies in Greece

When searching for, and investigating, the missing, the disappeared, and the found and recovered, the researcher often has to concede a number of conditions that transcend their work: Those missing have a wish to be found, as do their relatives. The disappeared were disappeared by force and against their will. And a body found must correspond to a lost and missing body. While there's evidence in the field and the literature to suggest these assumptions are true, the scope of assumptions widens and extends to the ways in which the authorities and the respective state agencies treat the remains of recovered bodies.

This paper, based on fieldwork conducted in the Greek borderlands in the vicinity of the Evros between 2020 and 2022, examines the assumptions made by the authorities and the material traces produced by such assumptions in the form of the paperwork that describes and accompanies human remains recovered along the Greek-Turkish border.

These assumptions, created, performed, and archived by a range of state actors, including but not limited to police officers at the point of recovery and actors in the judiciary and forensics, not only define the remains as belonging to those attempting to cross the border, but are also used to initiate, and often justify, a range of other processes concerning the treatment of these remains. Finally, turning the gaze inwards, a series of ethical questions are raised that often confront the researcher in the field or online when dealing with such data, but also at those moments when the use and communication of such information becomes necessary and seemingly unavoidable, both for the purposes of the research and for the recovery, identification, and/or repatriation of human remains.

Phevos Simeonidis is an OSINT & audiovisual forensics researcher, an archivist, and a PhD candidate in the School of Government and International Affairs in Durham University. He is an MA graduate of the Centre for Research Architecture of Goldsmiths, University of London, the former director and co-founder of Disinfaux Collective in Athens, Greece, and a frequent collaborator of -among others- Forensic Architecture, FORENSIS, Lighthouse Reports, The Manifold, and OmniaTv. His work examines and investigates far/alt-right narrative creation and performativity online, militarized border regimes and surveillance, and human rights violations in the external borders of the EU.

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Tracking the Social Impact of Dead Migrants

I propose the analysis of the social and spatial impact of the dead bodies of migrants who lost their lives during the crossing. A particular focus will be on Spain, where I will conduct ethnographic fieldwork on this topic. The main idea of my study is that the post-mortem movement of dead bodies should be analysed in a similar framework as any other form of migration, taking into account its dynamism and social agency. By following the bodies from the places where they are found to their burial sites, I plan to identify how they leave traces in local communities and what change they create in the social fabric. This includes considering the ways in which the bodies of migrants are cared for and remembered locally, the functioning of the places where they are found and buried, and the impact of these bodies on tourism. Most importantly, I am interested in determining whether direct (physical) and indirect (symbolic) relations with migrants' bodies contribute to changes in individual and public views of migration.

Alexandra Staniewska is a social anthropologist with a background in forensic biology. Currently, she is finishing her doctoral thesis on exhumations of mass graves conducted in Spain, which she expects to file in the coming months. Recently, she received funding for a new project related to studying the social impacts of the mobility of dead bodies, specifically migrants' bodies. She is also a member of the Migrant Disaster Victim Identification (MDVI) COST action project, aimed at developing international standards and tools for identifying dead migrants. As such, she is involved in investigating the difficulties of collecting, documenting, and sharing forensic traces and the troubles experienced by the families searching for their missing relatives.

Local organizer: Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research Zagreb

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Publisher: Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Zagreb, Croatia

For the publisher: Iva Niemčić

Editors: Marijana Hameršak and Sanja Horvatinčić

Proofreading: Kevin Kenjar

Zagreb, 2024

This workshop is funded by TRACTS COST Action (20134) Traces as Research Agenda for Climate Change, Technology Studies, and Social Justice.

TRACTS



This work was made as a part of the research project of the Institute of Art History in Zagreb Digital network, spatial and (con)textual analysis of artistic phenomena and heritage of the 20th century (DIGitART, 2023–2027) funded by the European Union – NextGenerationEU.

This work was made as a part of the research project of the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research in Zagreb Poetics and Politics of Ethnography Today (EPP, 2023-2027) funded by European Union – NextGenerationEU.

