



Ca' Foscari  
University  
of Venice

# PHD SYMPOSIUM ON PRECARITY POSSIBILITIES FOR HUMANS AND THINGS

**MARCH 29TH-30TH, 2023**





“Precarity is a state of acknowledgement of our vulnerability to others. In order to survive, we need help, and help is always the service of another, intent with or without.”

(Tsing, 2015)



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# KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

## Pietro Daniel Omodeo

Pietro Daniel Omodeo is a cultural historian of science and a professor of historical epistemology at Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy. His main areas of inquiry are the cultural history of cosmology and the politics of epistemology.

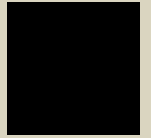
He is the principal investigator of the consolidator grant project EarlyModernCosmology which is funded by the European Research Council (2020, GA 725883), and the FARE project EarlyGeoPraxis, funded by the Italian Ministry of University and Research. He also leads the Max Planck Partner Group in Venice The Water City on Anthropocene Venice.



KEYNOTE  
SPEAKERS

# Eleonora Sovrani

Eleonora Sovrani is a researcher and curator, who serves as art director for We Are Here Venice. She holds a Master's degree in Visual and Multimedia Communication from IUAV in Venice with a thesis on the social and cultural impact of cruise ships in the Serenissima.



# PROGRAM

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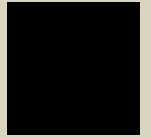
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*Erika Mattio (PhD, University of Spain) "Walking Into Precariousness: a Promenade into the Precarious zone in Venice"*



# PANELISTS





# Arttu Alaranta

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Arttu Alaranta is a PhD researcher in the Doctoral Programme in History and Cultural Heritage of the University of Helsinki. In his dissertation he focuses on the various interlinked demographic, economic, and climatic phenomena occurring in the Later Roman East and their relationship with the growing popularity of the Christian ascetic lifestyle.

**Panel:** 7

**Time:** Thursday, 30th March 2023, 15.00- 15.20 h

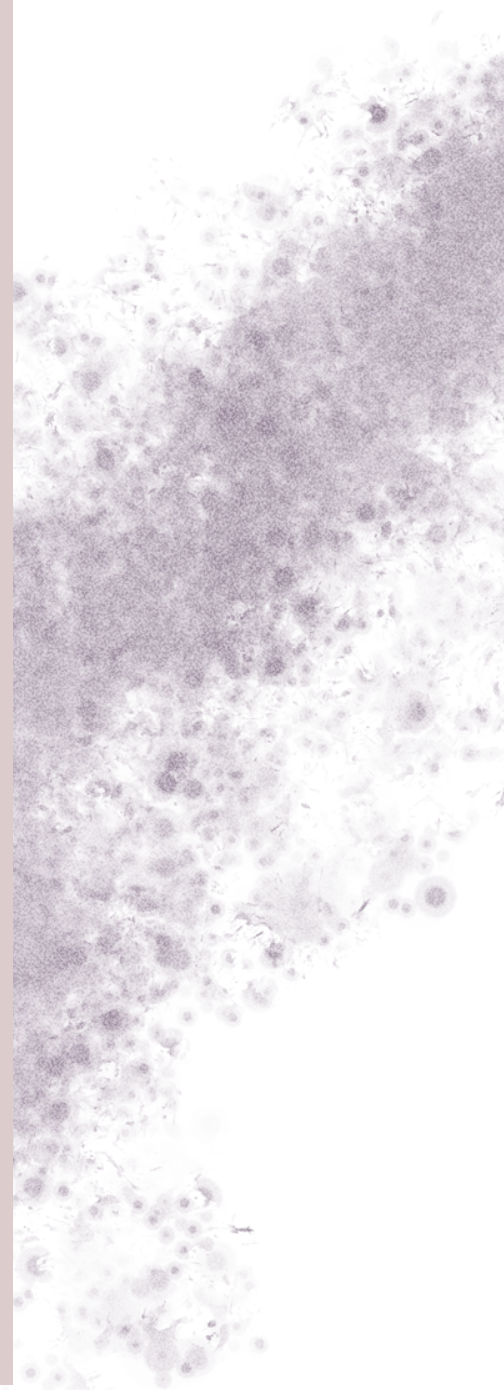
**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro



# The Marginal Majority: The Nearly Invisible Poor of the Later Roman Empire

In this paper, I explore the nature of poverty during the Later Roman Empire and how it is (under)represented in the sources. Although a very real phenomenon, the nature of poverty during Late Antiquity is a much-debated subject that can be viewed in many ways and had many forms.

The society of Late Antiquity was deeply unequal economically and there are signs of increasing concentration of wealth. Although the poorer classes living near, at, or below subsistence comprised the majority of the society, they are only marginally present in material and literary sources. It is easier to detect wealth through archaeological findings and often the poor emerge only from the ancient texts. These, however, were produced by members of the elite with their own agendas, and it can be unclear what kind of 'poverty' they are actually referring to. There were few opportunities for the absolute poor who had fallen outside the social structure. Those 'poor' labourers who lived on subsistence but had a home, family, and some possessions could easily be knocked into societal margins by disease, debt, or famine. Paradoxically, embracing the voluntary poverty of Christian ascetic lifestyle could offer a means of survival, livelihood, and even one of the few ways to unofficially climb the Later Roman social ladder.



# Santiago Alarcón-Tobón

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Santiago Alarcón-Tobón is a PhD Candidate in Lingue, Culture e Società Moderne at the Università Ca' Foscari in Venice, Italy. He is currently a holder of a PON scholarship for green topics funded by the Ministry of Universities of the Government of Italy and the European Union. His current research project revolves around the relationship between culture and environment, specifically the Magdalena River in Colombia and the Po River in Italy. Santiago holds a bachelor's degree in History and a master's degree in Latin American Literature.

**Panel: 5**

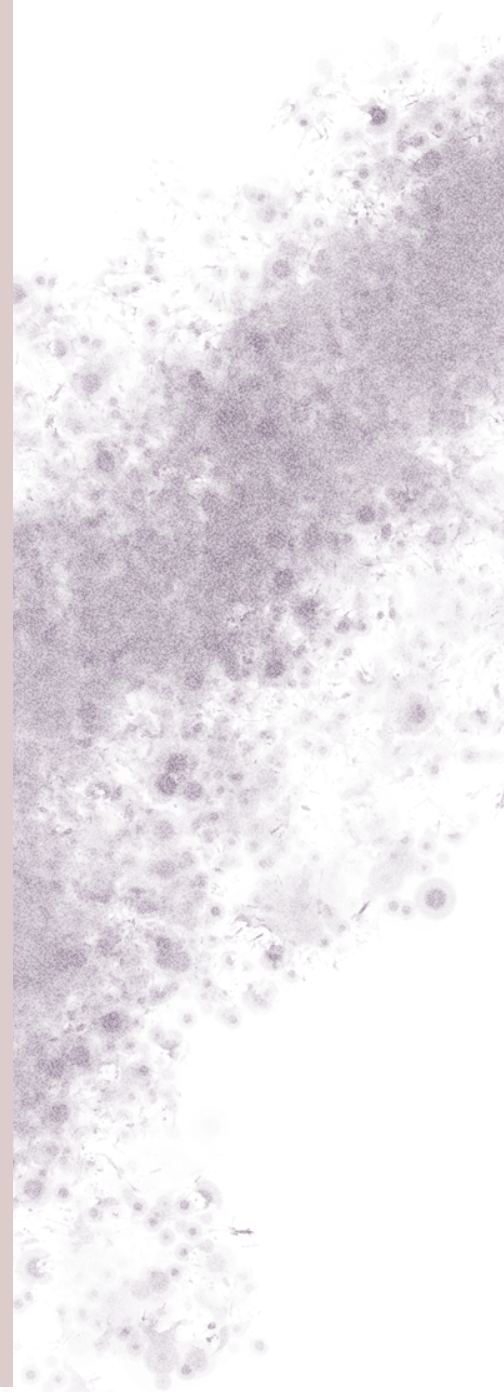
**Time:** Thursday, 30th March 2023, 9.30 - 9.50 h

**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro

# Living on the Edge: Magdalena River between live/death human bodies, hippos, and water



The Magdalena River has been named the spine of Colombia for several centuries as a critical communication route and a raw material pantry. Its economic importance resonates until today, grouping in its basin around the 85% GDP and 80% population of modern Colombia. However, the Magdalena River has been considered a "no man's land" a bioregion with a systematic lack of State presence, historically crossed by multiple violences -guerrilla, paramilitary, narco, governmental- and recurrent environmental injustice. This paper will focus on the middle section of the river, bringing into light the different intra-action between human and non-human bodies that happen in its water and margins. Following Nancy Tuana's "viscous porosity", the Magdalena River waters work as a membrane crossed by these bodies that live on the edge in a state of precarity. Like the 'no-identified' human bodies floating down the river victims of guerilla/paramilitary violence in Puerto Berrio, the hippos bodies submerge in the river water charging a narco legacy in Doradal or the petroleum that emerge from the bottom of the river bank with a legacy of corruption and irresponsible environmental exploitation in Barrancabermeja. This paper will intend to show how to bring any kind of justice it is necessary to focus on the materiality of these bodies. For these I would use a material ecocriticism perspective starting from the cultural production around these places, like Juan Gabriel Vasquez's novels, Maria Mercedes Carranza's poems, Laura Gomez's short stories, and Patricia Nieto's chronicles.



# Maria Vittoria Arnetoli

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Maria Vittoria Arnetoli is a PhD candidate in the XXXV cycle of the “Sustainability and Innovation” course in the Architectural Technology curriculum. She graduated in 2018 with honors from the School of Architecture of the University of Florence. She carried out two Erasmus mobility periods at ENSA-Montpellier and Atelier43 in Lyon. She has collaborated in national research on urban adaptation to climate change, post-disaster temporary housing and COVID-19 impacts on health facilities. She is also co-founder of the “TEMP-“ inter-university research network. Currently she is a guest scholar at the Division of Risk Management and Societal Safety at Lund University.

**Panel: 8**

**Time:** Thursday, 30th March 2023, 16.20 - 16.40 h

**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro



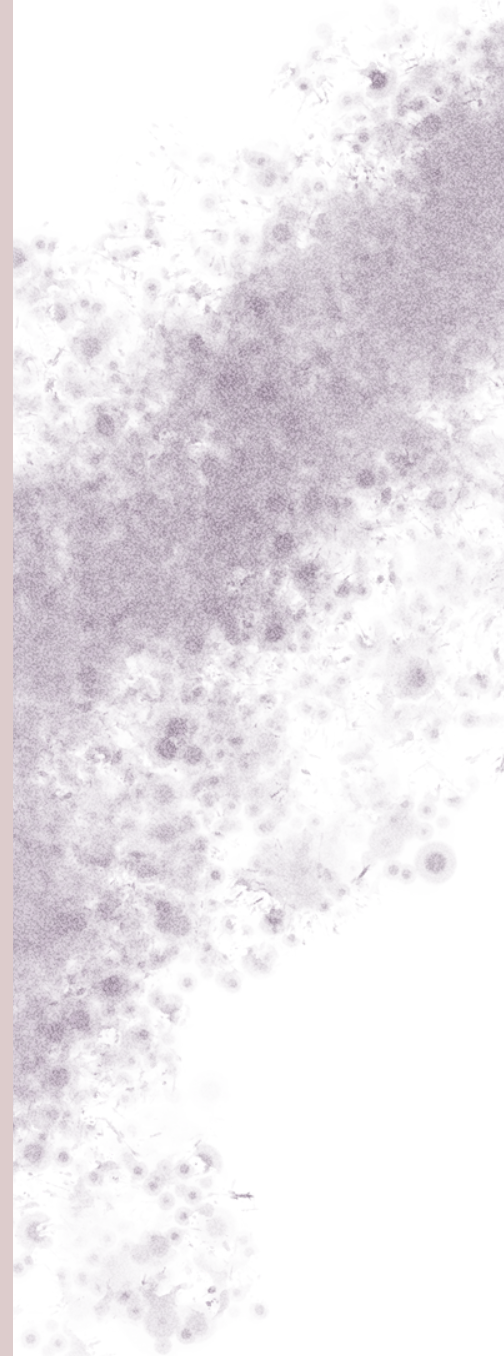
# Post-disaster temporary living as a form of chronic precarity

The multiple emergencies - environmental, social, economic, health, humanitarian - that overlap in contemporary society lead to a condition of “permanent emergency”, which occurs at different spatial temporal scales. In the Anthropocene time, emergency loses its exceptional character and becomes a chronic condition.

Urban systems, which are increasingly vulnerable, are exposed to global-scale phenomena that undermine the normal functioning of local contexts: destructive events, such as earthquakes, are compounded by the impacts of climate change, which make the need for transitional living a challenging priority for the design.

The research investigates the long-term temporal dimension of post-earthquake emergency settlements, assuming temporary housing as a paradigmatic form of marginalisation and precariousness. The lack of preventive planning, capable of looking at these assets not only as an urgent response but as part of the development of the affected territory, leads to the paradox of permanent temporariness. Emergency responses, provided as temporary, remain in the years and decades after the event exacerbating the pre-existing social vulnerabilities, with even impacts on the landscape and waste of environmental and economic resources. The Italian context is analysed as a privileged field of study in which environmental risk, social marginality and urban vulnerability characterise time cycles of ordinary, emergency, and post-emergency condition.

The article discusses the role of the project as an exploratory and creative tool to imagine how the existing state could evolve according to multiple trajectories, dealing with uncertainty with a systemic and circular approach and an inter-disciplinary and inter-sectorial perspective.



# Andrea Boccardi

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Andrea Boccardi is a third-year PhD student in East Asian Studies at the University of Leeds. His research interests lie in the field of Okinawan literature and, more broadly, Japanese literature, minority representations in media, colonial and postcolonial studies in an intersection between literary representation and geography in the making of individual and community identities. His current PhD project explores the oeuvre of Okinawan-born writer and public intellectual Medoruma Shun in its spatial perspective to investigate the decolonial possibilities of his fiction and shed light on the imbrication between literature and colonial discourses in Okinawa.

**Panel:** 3

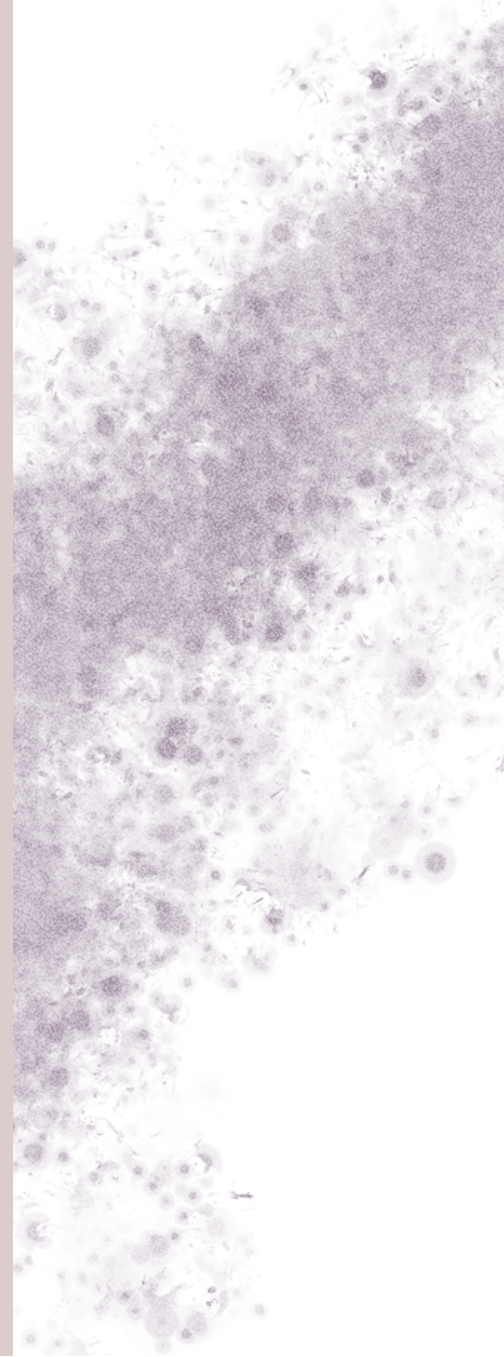
**Time:** Wednesday, 29th March 2023, 14.30 - 14.50 h

**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro

# Nuclear Threat in the Japanese Centre: Space in Transition and Precarious Relations in Yu Miri's JR Shinagawa Takanawa-guchi



Zainichi Korean writer Yu Miri started writing her 'Yamanote Line series' in 2007, a series of novels where the main characters live and interact with the famous circular train line in Tokyo. According to the author, the two central themes of the books are the 'emperor system as a symbol of unity between Japanese citizens and the nation-state' and the March 11th Fukushima nuclear disaster that affected the lives of Japanese people within the prefecture and outside. Yu discusses the positionality of the Yamanote Line surrounding the Imperial Palace and the circular movement of Japanese citizens around it as a pivotal element for understanding how urban spaces create intimate relationships between train passengers and the city centre and form (dis)connections in Japanese society. Through a textual analysis of the dialogic and geographical depiction of spaces in the novel JR Shinagawa Takanawa-guchi (2016), this paper investigates Yu's literary portrayal of Tokyo's spatial and acoustic characteristics as affecting the characters and their interaction with the sociopolitical layers of the city. In doing so, it examines the city, and specifically the Yamanote Line, in its intimate connection with its users and analyse how the post-March 11 th nuclear radiation fear transforms Tokyo into a precarious space where human relations are dismembered in opposition to the community-making processes enabled by public transportation. Ultimately, this paper broadens the literary depiction of Tokyo as a space endangered by external threats and further discusses mechanisms of stability and precarity in Japanese communities.





# Federica Cavazzuti

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Federica Cavazzuti is a PhD student in Archaeological, Historical and Historical-Artistic Sciences at the University of Turin, Italy. Her main areas of research are contemporary visual art, women's art, and the developments of photography in Japan and East Asia. She received her BA in Foreign Languages and Literature at the University of Bologna, Italy, and her Postgraduate degree in Language and Culture of Eastern Asia at Ca' Foscari University, Venice, Italy. She subsequently obtained an MA in Contemporary Art and Art Theory of Asia and Africa at SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies) in London, UK.

**Panel: 2**

**Time:** Wednesday, 29th March 2023, 12.00 - 12.20 h

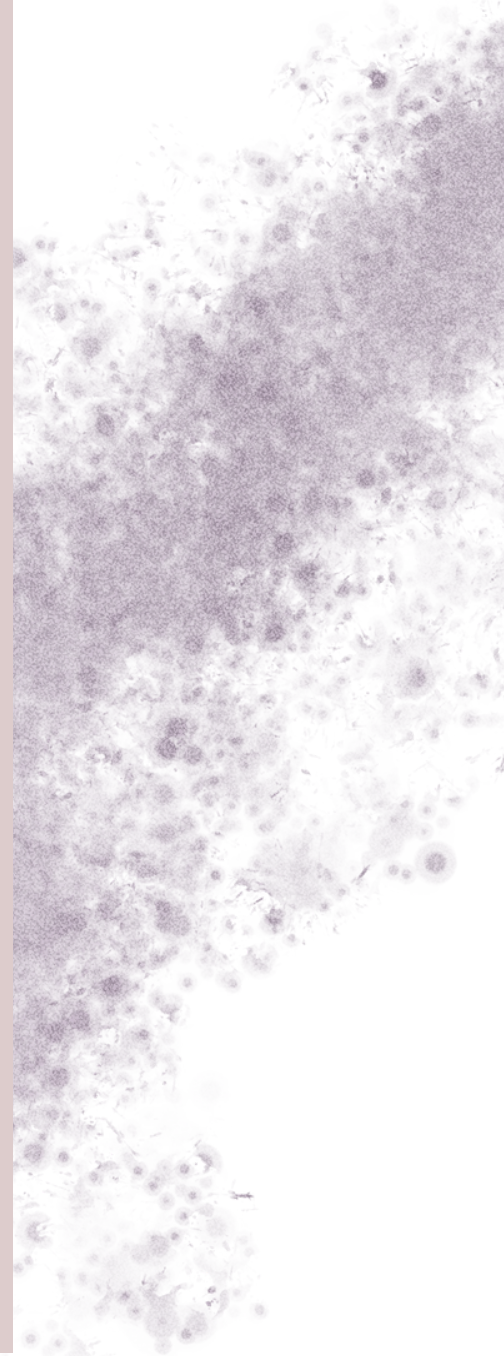
**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro

# The precarity of non-conforming bodies through Japanese female photography



The Japanese beauty industry has been a major business for the past decades and is one of the largest on a global scale. The ideals the industry conveys, particularly focused on flawless images of women, show influences of globalization and intersections with gender-related issues, as, '[...] many beauty concerns are no different from the defects women all over the world are taught through global advertising and imagery to hide or correct.'<sup>[1]</sup> These issues have generated a series of images of counter-reaction, realized by female photographers who started emerging on the Japanese scene since the Nineties – the moment when a proper female authorship, something unprecedented in Japan, became a mediatic and widespread phenomenon in the country. From this starting point, the paper proposed for the 'Precarity: Possibilities for Humans and Things' conference explores how Japanese female photographers Miyako Ishiuchi, Miyashita Maki, Nagashima Yurie, and Katayama Mari address the concepts of non-conforming bodies and beauty. Their different approaches provide eye-opening examples of renewed and challenging views of the female body, as ways to defy gender roles as well as to highlight the painful experiences endured by most women, with a variety of different outcomes. Crucial elements for these artists are the taboos surrounding images of female aging, ill bodies, and disability, as well as reflections on life and death, concepts that the media usually keep hidden.

<sup>[1]</sup> Laura Miller, *Beauty Up: Exploring Contemporary Japanese Body Aesthetics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 5.



# Eunice Chiu

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Ms. Eunice Chiu is currently a Ph.D. student of Education Science at the Faculty of Cultural and Behavioural Studies in Heidelberg University, Germany.


She holds a B.A. in Anthropology and a Msc. in Public Policy. Her research interests include education policy, teachers' emotions, migration studies and cultural heritage.

**Panel: 4**

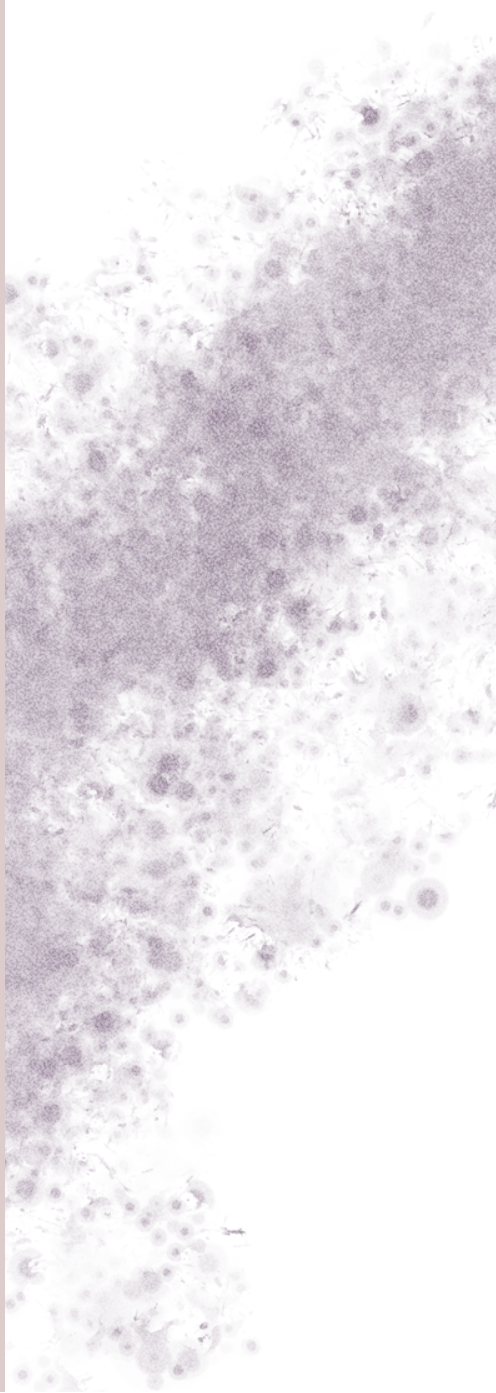
**Time:** Wednesday, 29th March 2023, 16-10 - 16.30 h

**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro

# Revival Cantopop: The Power of Resistance Amidst Precarities



Cantonese popular music had been a huge success back in the 1970s, an era in which the local cultural industry had yielded profitable business. Since the city became cosmopolitan, popular culture in Hong Kong has been heavily influenced and even marginalised by popular culture from the west, as well as K-pop, J-pop, etc. Cantopop has even been perceived as a sunset industry, denoted by the popular slang ‘ngok8 taan4 ji5 seiz’ (樂壇已死), meaning ‘the local music is dead’. However, with the intense socio-political events since 2019, Cantopop has experienced revival, even symbolising a form of resistance as a means for Hongkongers to negotiate their cultural identities. A number of local bands have gained popularity and often are those who subtly or openly admit their political stance against the government, such as My Little Airport and more. Amongst them, the boy band- Mirror, has protruded and even gained international recognition. The Cantopop boy band emerged from ViuTV’s talent competition programme ‘Good Night Show-King Maker’, its members are elected by local netizens and even managed to bring hope and something to look forward to in times of precarity. Their fame is comparable to the city’s ‘Four Heavenly Kings’ in the 1990s; and even K-pop sensation BTS. Through contextual analysis of forums, portrayal of the media, and focused group interviews; this research discusses i. what the boy band signifies in Hong Kong; ii. Hongkongers’ negotiation of cultural identity and resistance against nationalism; and iii. the revival of Cantopop as a synergy effect.



# Luna Chung

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Luna Chung is a PhD Candidate in Gender and Women's Studies at the University of Arizona. She is a first-generation graduate born in a refugee camp. Currently, she is writing her dissertation, (Un)making Refugee: Beyond a Discourse of Humanity, that thinks through how the legal figure of the refugee is predicated on a negation of Blackness.

**Panel: 6**

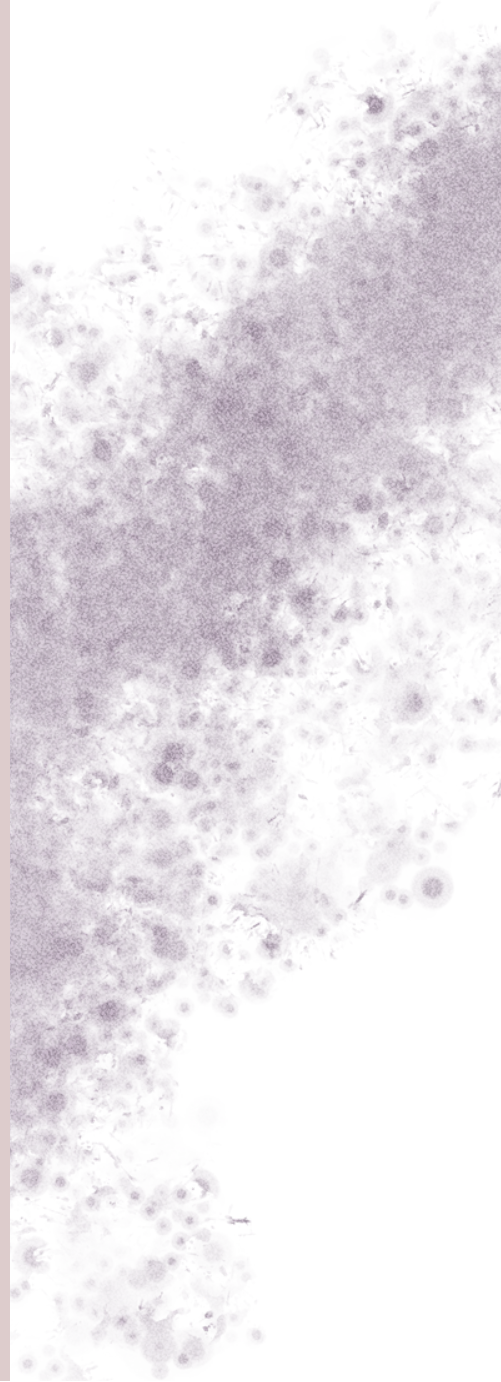
**Time:** Thursday, 30th March 2023, 12.00 - 12.20 h

**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro (ONLINE)

# Precarious Lives: Reading the “active refugee” in 20th Century Southeast Asian Refugee Camps



The refugee camp, a geopolitical site marked by precarity and liminality. The uncertain nature of refugee futures is exacerbated by daily violence: physical abuse by guards, rapes and sexual assaults against women, overcrowding and unsanitary conditions, diseases, and the psychological traumas of losing loved ones and a nation. Just as the guarantees of resettlement is unpredictable, so too is living. Thus, the refugee camp is life in the margins. Yet, living in the margins does not mean that living stops. In this presentation, I present a method of reading the active refugee, for how to look for lifestyles in precarity, of Vietnamese within Southeast Asian refugee camps. Active refugees is a term that I coined to connote the difference between how refugees are characterized as “passive” victims within refugee camps towards thinking of refugees as individuals “actively” working within camp life to survive, navigate bureaucratic systems, and improve their chances of a future elsewhere. While living within refugee camps and waiting for determinations of refugee status, what did Vietnamese refugees do to pass time? How were social relations formed in refugee camps? How did refugees resist political determinations characterizing them as economic refugees rather than political refugees? What was daily life like in a space that can only produce life in precarity? My presentation provides insight into the precarious lives of Vietnamese refugees in 20th century Southeast Asian refugee camps to illuminate the alternative modes of existing, to illustrate how life goes on even within the margins.



# Gustavo Elmer Gutiérrez Suárez

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Gustavo Elmer Gutiérrez Suárez is a PhD candidate in Social Anthropology at Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil). He holds a Master in Anthropology at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (Perú)

# Eleana Paola Catacora Salas

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Eleana Paola Catacora Salas is Professor at Universidad Nacional Intercultural de Quillabamba (Perú). She holds a PhD in Social Anthropology at Universidade Federal Fluminense (Brazil)

**Panel: 4**

**Time:** Wednesday, 29th March 2023, 16.30 - 16.50 h

**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro (ONLINE)

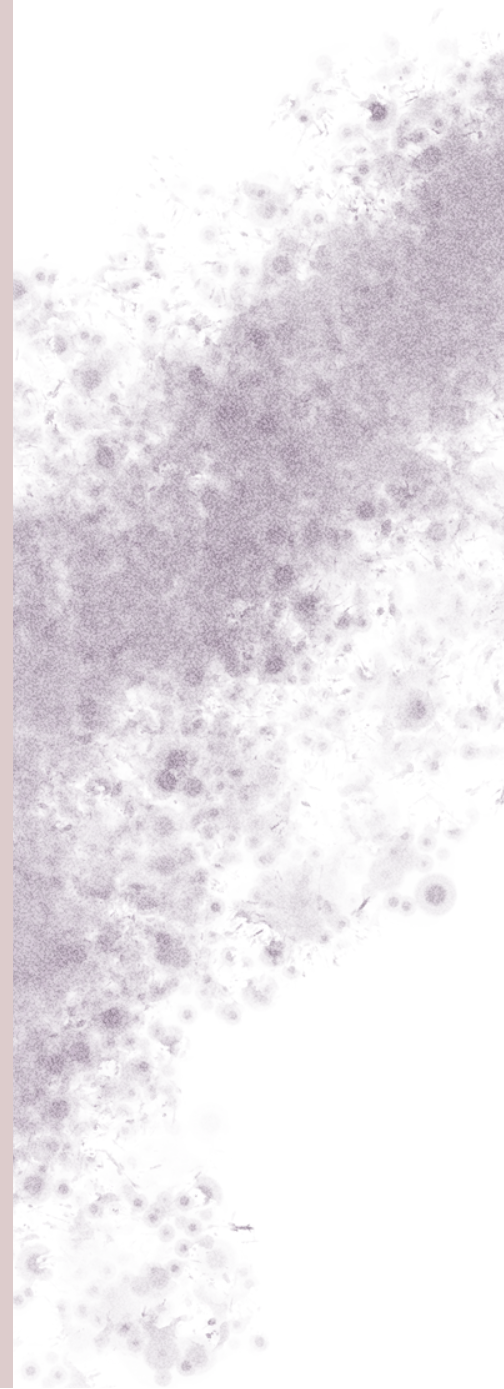
# Cartography of food inequality in Lima (Peru). Communitarian cooking pots, Feminine Agency and Neighbor Relations during Covid times



This cartography of food inequality experienced in slums from Lima (Peru) is depicted through the ethnographic study of the relations that families of La Nueva Rinconada establish around the practices and situated knowledges on cooking. We focus on the agency relationships established by the women, neighbors and mothers of La Nueva Rinconada, mostly migrants from various towns in the Peruvian Andes, in order to ensure the food of their neighborhood.

Sample of this agency is the organization of "communitarian cooking pots", which constitute autonomous feminine spaces of cooking and community food, but at the same time social spaces where situated knowledges converge, that is insights, experiences, affections, and care from women's perspective.

Considering the Andean origin of the migrant women in charge of the "communitarian cooking pots", it can be seen how their cooking actions are connected with Quechua cultural practices of collective work and mutual exchange, which are updated today in the city, in a context of precariousness and food inequality. Our fieldwork in La Nueva Rinconada, carried out between 2021 and 2022, allows us to emphasize the generation of common cooking pots in the pandemic context of covid-19, its associative features, as well as its critical link with the Peruvian State.





# Ammara Khalid

National College of Arts (Lahore), Pakistan  
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Ammara Khalid has done her M.Phil. in Communication Studies from the University of the Punjab. Trained as a documentary maker, her videos focus on the issues of identity, sexuality, nostalgia, and socio-cultural taboos. She was a RJ and was also part of Film Talents- Voices from Pakistan. Currently, she is serving as lecturer in the Department of Cultural Studies at NCA, Lahore. She is a member of the Awami Art Collective, a non-profit art and activist group.

**Panel: 2**

**Time:** Wednesday, 29th March 2023, 11.40 - 12.00 h

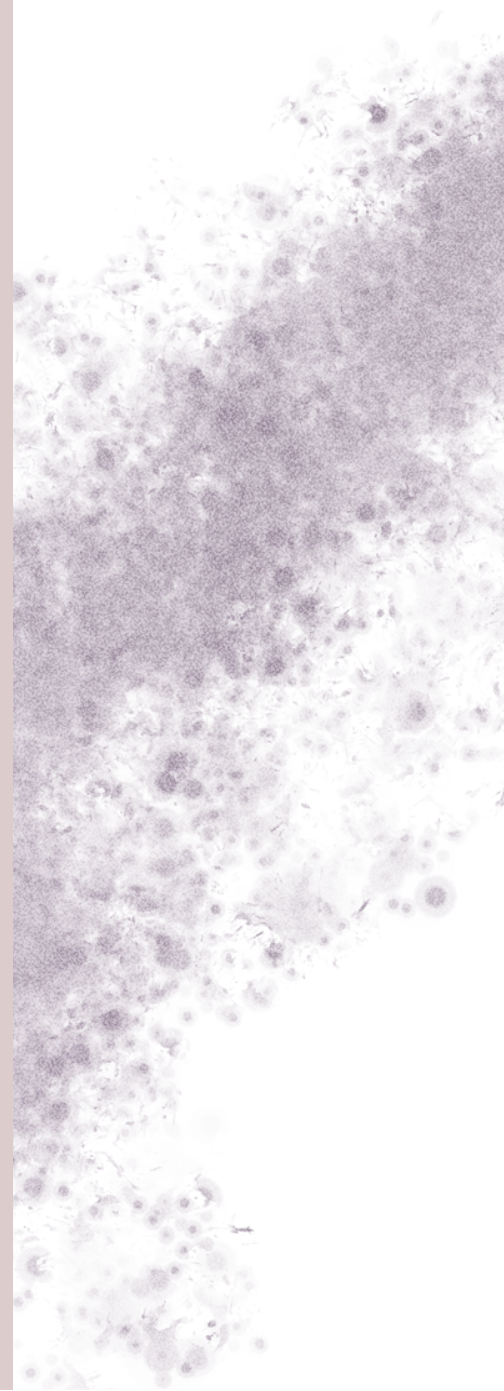
**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro (ONLINE)

# Toxic portrayal of single females in Pakistani dramas



Pakistani patriarchal society always questions the status of women. Social honour is always associated with women and society demands unrealistic obedience from women to perform this responsibility of keeping the honour without any complaint. They lend them into unwanted marriages, killing them for honour, thinking of them as burdens economically, socially, and culturally. The lived realities of Pakistani women are far more haunting than published facts. The number of unmarried females is increasing day by day for a number of reasons, and precarity of their situation imposed by cultural traditions lingers in their minds as to what will be their future. According to Judith Butler in performativity, precarity and sexual politics, "Precariousness implies living socially, that is, the fact that one's life is always in some sense in the hands of the other."

This study will focus on the media representation of single 30–40-year old women in Pakistani dramas and how this brings precarity to the struggles in their real lives. The purpose of this study is to analyse patriarchal oppression in media, which leads to depression, unjustified fear, and social aloofness in economically sound, educated, and cultured working single women in Pakistan. Content analysis of two popular Urdu dramas and in-depth interviews with working women in the given age bracket will be used as methodology. This study will help to create a discourse within society to accept single women equally constructive as any other member of the society. A documentary film can also be produced with this research.



# Chiara Rita Napolitano

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Chiara Rita Napolitano is a PhD candidate at University “L’Orientale” and is currently affiliated with the Italian School of East Asian Studies (Kyōto). In 2020 she graduated summa cum laude in Comparative Literature at University of Naples “L’Orientale” and her dissertation investigated the development of the landscape of Kyōto, having traditional urban dwellings as case-study. She spent six months at University of Cologne (Germany 2014-2015); later, she was granted a scholarship to spend one year as an exchange student at Kyōto University of Foreign Language (2018-2019).

**Panel: 1**

**Time:** Wednesday, 29th March 2023, 10.20 - 10.40 h

**Place:** Ca’ Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro (ONLINE)

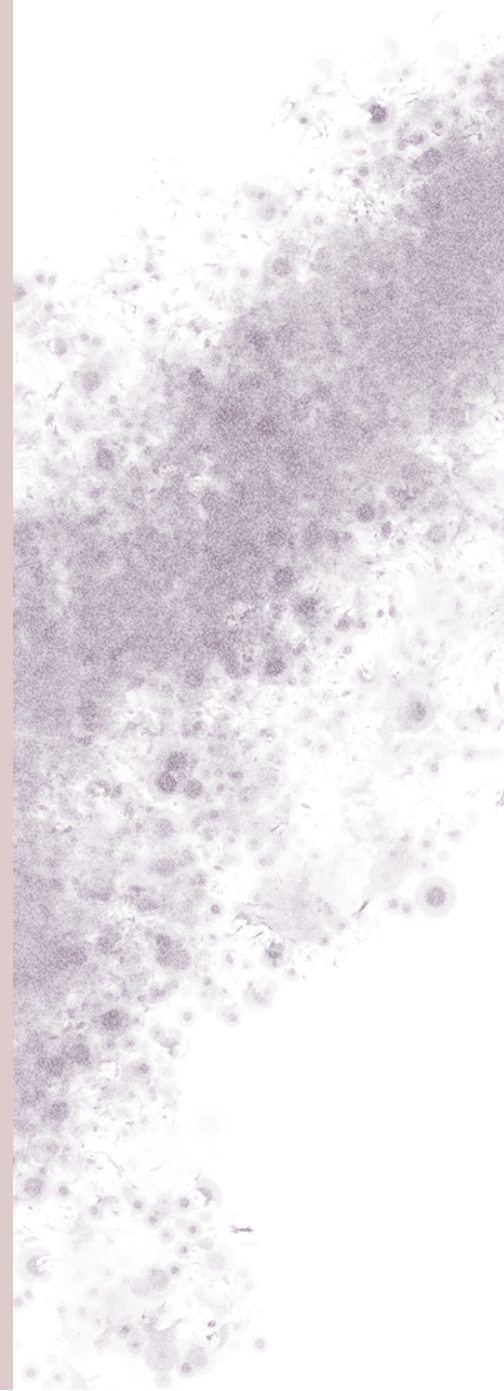
# Kyōmachiya: a precarious balance between renovation and destruction of traditional urban landscape



*Machiya* are traditional wooden dwellings found in urban areas, especially in Kyōto. Notwithstanding their recognition as “important cultural properties”, their number has been steadily decreasing, a phenomenon related to the disappearance of habits and practices from former traditional neighbourhoods. Often regarded as uncomfortable to inhabit, particularly in comparison to modern *manshon*, *machiya* are vulnerable to the changes of the housing market.

Their survival depends on the needs of the tourism industry, which seeks to convert them into affordable *ryokan* (traditional lodgings), and on the efforts undertaken by organisations of citizens, a combination which creates a precarious balance between modernisation and protection of landscape.

In the present talk, I will first consider the legal aspect, discussing how the vulnerability of *machiya* as cultural heritage was partially caused by post-war legislation dealing with wooden architecture. Subsequently, I shall describe the actual situation in Kyōto, where local no-profit organizations are trying to keep these buildings from becoming *akiya* (empty houses) or from being demolished.



However, as I will argue in the second part, while the urban processes challenge the preservation of *machiya*, they also give space to experimentalism both in shape and usage. To demonstrate that precarity does not imply fragility as only consequence, but it also generates possibilities of renewal, I shall present some chosen case-studies of renovated *machiya*. In conclusion, the talk will argue that while *machiya* are constantly facing the risk of disappearing, the precarity of their situation allows for renovated expressions of the concept of “tradition” in urban terms.



# Briar Pelletier

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Briar Pelletier is a PhD candidate in the Department of Humanities at Nagoya University. Her research focuses on US-Japan sister cities' employment of visual art exchange programming during the Covid-19 pandemic. She serves as the program coordinator for the Maine-Aomori Printmaking art exchange and exhibition program alongside the Munakata Shiko Museum of Art in Aomori, Japan. Briar has presented her work and research internationally, most recently as a Visual Culture Diplomacy panelist at the Global Humanities Symposium in Washington D.C.

**Panel:** 1

**Time:** Wednesday, 29th March 2023, 10.00 - 10.20 h

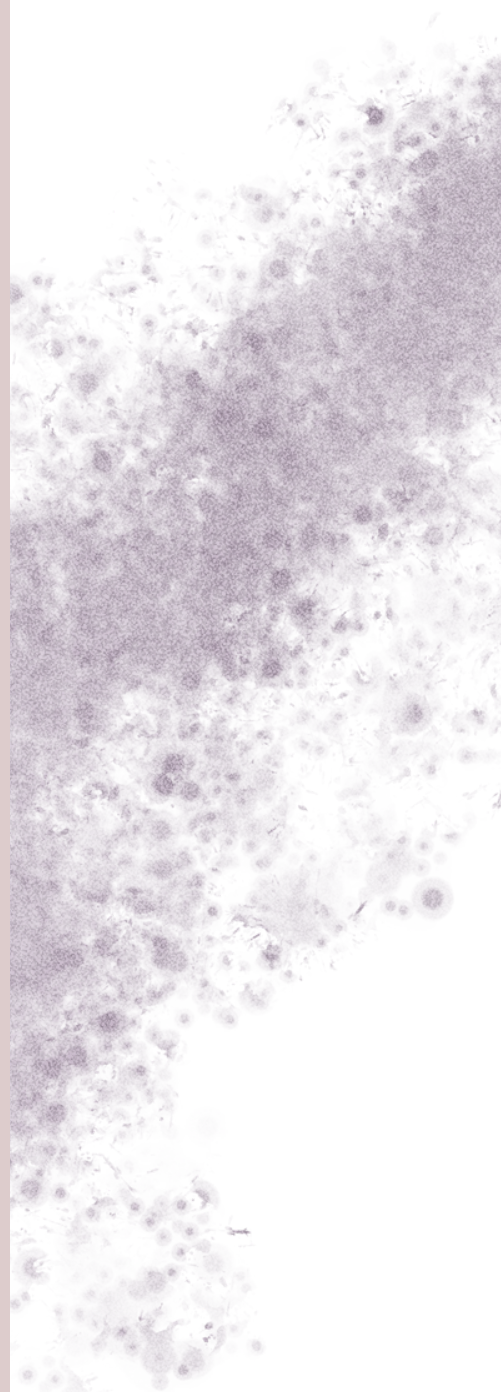
**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro (ONLINE)

# Night is My Sister: The Return to Precarity as Catalyst for 21st Century Sister Diplomacy



The modern concept of sister cities - or town twinning - stems directly from global disaster. The Second World War prompted the first formal town pairing in 1944 to establish solidarity between allied cities which endured “similar devastating events” (Griffin, 2018). A post-war wave of town twinning followed suit throughout Europe, the United States, Asia and beyond. The latter half of the 20th century saw a boom in sister city pairings formed for the purpose of trade and tourism, resulting in a wider network spanning beyond the Global North. The turn of the 21st century saw a shift towards international business development. However, the last decade has experienced a return to disaster-driven city diplomacy.

Precarity brought on by disaster has resulted in the development of new grassroots strategies, program revitalization and infrastructure support efforts that could change how sister cities operate for the near future. In today’s globalized world, when global precarity such as pandemics or natural disasters occur, collaboration is the only way forward (Allison and Li, 2020). Sister cities tap into international networks through informal methods of communication in situations of emergency, such as Covid-19 (Rudakowska and Simon, 2020). This paper explores and analyzes a range of various sister city diplomacy activities in response to global disasters during the 21st century. These activities are arranged into three groups: disaster response, disaster memory, and pandemic-related program recalibration and response. Case studies include the Haiti earthquake (2010), the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami (2011), Super Typhoon Haiyan (2014) and the Covid-19 pandemic (2020-present).



# Marilou Sarrut

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Marilou Sarrut is a second year PhD Candidate in Social Geography at the Université de Paris, France, with an ethnographic approach to the field. She has been interested for more than 6 years in the migration issue and in particular in approaches on agentivity, adaptation capacities of people in transit, construction of trajectories and tension between mobility and immobility with an interdisciplinary approach. She is currently working on a PhD thesis entitled: *Between constraints and autonomy: projects, trajectories and adaptation capacities of so-called "extra-continental" migrants in transit in Central America* under the supervision of Laurent Faret.

**Panel: 6**

**Time:** Thursday, 30th March 2023, 12.20 - 12.40 h

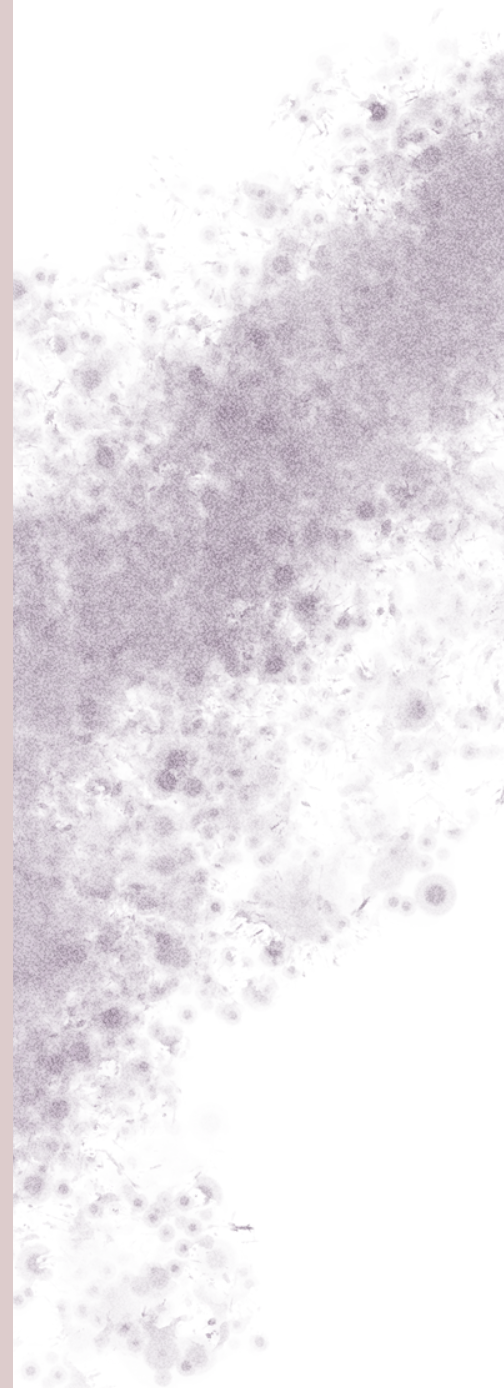
**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro (ONLINE)



# When Precarity Create possibilities: African & Asian Migrants Experiences of Transit in the Darien Jungle (Panama and Colombia border)



The border between Colombia and Panama, a jungle of 6,000 km<sup>2</sup>, has become in a few years the "road of death" for thousands of migrants who are crossing it. To go through it, it is necessary to count at least from three to fifteen days of walking, wandering and crossing deep rivers often without food or water in total vulnerability: "where survival wins over everything else" as some migrants stay at the reception camp in Panama. By conducting an ethnography and doing interviews at the exit of the jungle, in a migratory reception camp, I was able to observe how survival and precariousness was ultimately a catalyst for sociability, and can create ways of coexisting. We are particularly interested in the encounter between so-called "extra-continental" migrants from Asia and Africa, and regional migrants who meet within the Central American Corridor. It would seem, in fact, that the traumatic common experience of this crossing creates a unique bond, where there is nothing left but the unspeakable. It's a question of "you have to live it to understand it". Thus, the barriers of language and/or community are being let down and renegotiated in the specific time and space that is the Darien. Using ethnographic material - written, photographic and video – and with an interdisciplinary approach, I would like to illustrate this moment of sociability in precariousness by showing in particular how the migrants rebalance their various resources to help each other.



Which will allow us to observe and analyze precariousness across the specific time and space that represent the transit in the jungle, and within a range of various dimensions for the migrant: experiences, lived and represented/imagined. Of course, it will not be a question of hiding the violence, but precisely of showing how the constraints and the limits to which the migrants are confronted can be vector of possibilities, sociabilities and could possibly be a creator of bonding where the destitution is the most total.



# Zeynep Nur Simsek

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Zeynep Nur Şimşek is currently a PhD student in the Department of Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures at the University of Bologna and a researcher in the ERC-funded project NONWESTLIT. She received her MA in Turkish Literature from Bilkent University in 2021 and her BA from Istanbul Şehir University in 2018 with a dual major in History and Turkish Language and Literature. She taught Turkish courses at Bilkent University during her master's education and published articles in literary journals. She is particularly interested in Late Ottoman literature, animal studies, and minority literatures.

**Panel: 3**

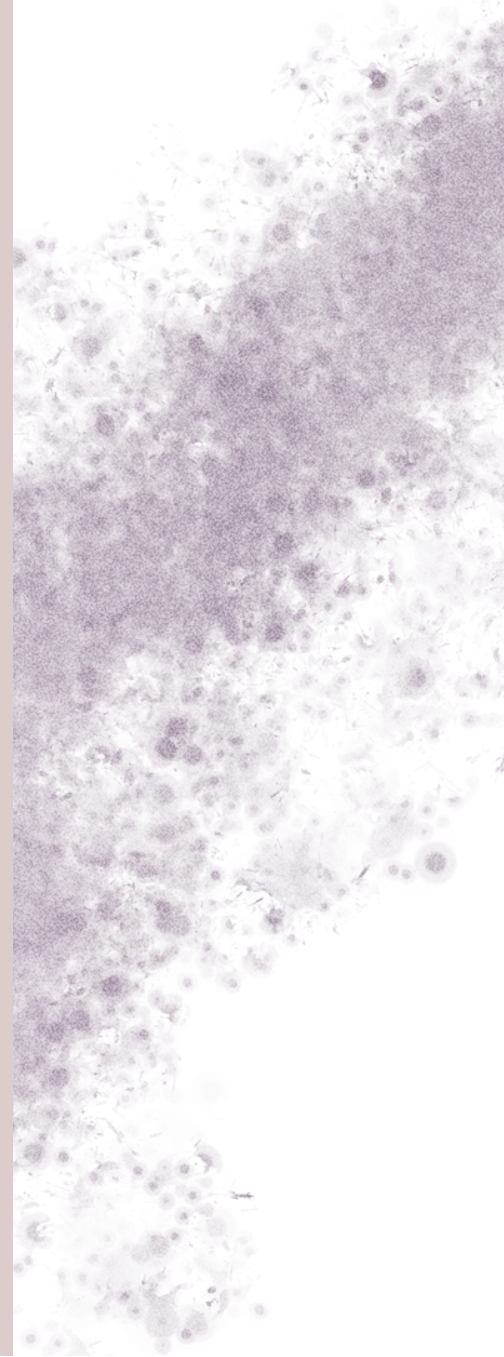
**Time:** Wednesday, 29th March 2023, 14.50 - 15.10 h

**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro (ONLINE)

# A Voice from the Wall: Precarity of Being in the Existential Narratives of Ahmet Mithat



The most prolific late Ottoman author, Ahmet Mithat, composes a series of materialist articles in the *Dagarcik Journal* in 1871. In these semi-fictional articles named “The Voice from the Wall”, “Motherhood”, and “Human” he questions human existence with materialist codes. The articles concern the existential crisis of Ahmet Mithat who endeavors to find an answer to the question of “What am I?”. When the answer to this ontological question is given by a formerly human brick standing in the wall next to him, Ahmet Mithat falls into deep precariousness regarding his own being. In this imaginary dialogue, the brick narrates its transformation from a human to a flower, a raindrop to a stone, and explains all existence within a non-anthropocentric cycle of life. According to this idea, human and non-human entities are comprised of a variety of common elements i.e., oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, etc. and therefore they basically share the same essence in terms of elemental composition they have. Since the different numbers of elements generate different forms like humans, animals, and things, the uncertainty of being existent feels precarious to Ahmet Mithat. By taking its cue from such materialist texts, this paper traces the non-anthropocentric narratives composed during nineteenth-century Ottoman literature. Since Ahmet Mithat was exiled after the publication of the aforementioned articles, this study examines the notion of “precarity” that manifested itself under state authority in the late Ottoman period.



# Elena Stecca

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Elena Stecca is a PhD candidate in Anthropology at the University of Padua and at Ca' Foscari University of Venice. She is interested in the intersections of ecology, agriculture, neoliberal reforms and extractivism in the MENA region, with a specific focus on Morocco.

**Panel:** 5

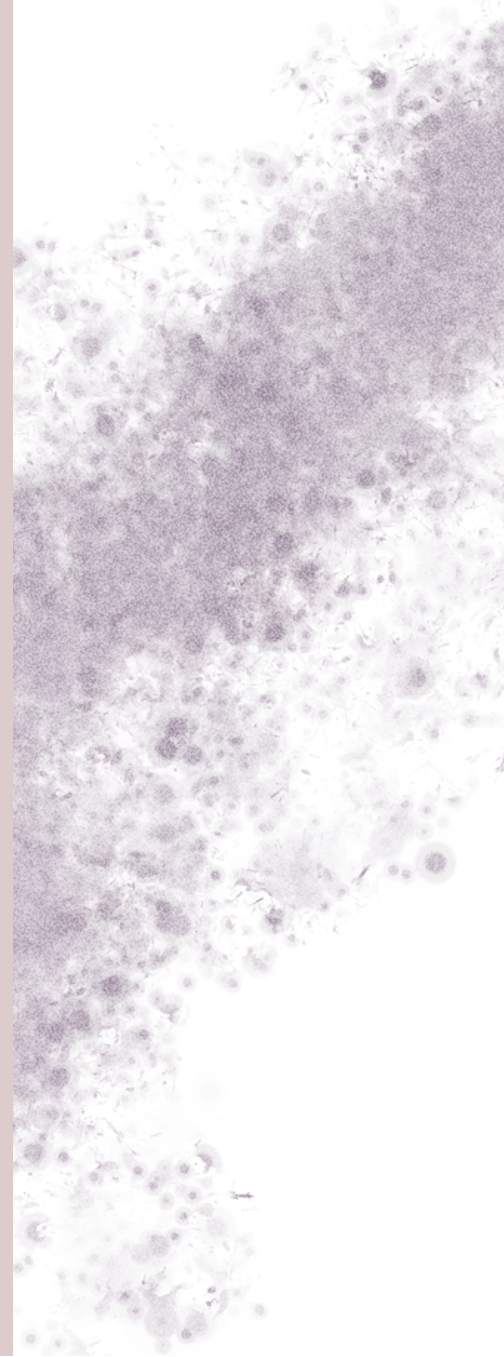
**Time:** Thursday, 30th March 2023, 9.50 - 10.10 h

**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro

# Desert Rising: Notes on Precarious Interdependencies in the Ouarzazate Province of Southeastern Morocco



Dwellers of the south-eastern Moroccan deserts are highly skilled at living with uncertainty: they grow and sustain life in harsh conditions while facing long standing climatic unpredictability and emergent socio-ecological pressures. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in the Ouarzazate province, this paper focuses on how, in these times of accelerated change, they participate in the making – or reckon with the unmaking - of precarious multispecies living spaces. First, this contribution explores the impacts of the construction of “Noor” - the world largest Concentrated Solar Power plant - on the neighbouring rural commune of Ghassate. The aim is to show how the material embodiments of a socio-technical imaginary – one aimed at propelling Morocco into a greener, more sustainable future – fostered the further marginalization of precarious livelihoods and environments, albeit not without encountering resistance. Then, the paper focuses on Skoura, an oasis severely impacted both by recurring droughts and by the Bayoud, a disease caused by a soil-borne fungus that depleted North African palm groves. Through a focus on care as an ambivalent notion, this paper will analyze the precarious relationships between people, olive trees and Saharan bees as together they carry on living in a ruined environment. These emergent forms of caring are fraught with tensions: imbricated as they are with situated material conditions, some end up perpetuating dominant values and creating new forms of inequalities. Others function as repairing practices, which focus on the making of precarious interdependencies as a potentially transformative process.



# Francesco Tommasi

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Francesco Tommasi is a postdoctoral researcher in work and organizational psychology. His research interests can be divided into two broad areas: work and organizational psychology, and educational science. In the respect to the first, themes are meaningful work and sources of meaning in work; individualization of work; critical perspectives in work and organizational psychology. In the respect to the area of educational science, broad themes of interest are vocational education and training (VET); initial VET, soft skills; industry 4.0, and VET.

# Michela Santangelo

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Michela Santangelo is a clinical psychologist and a PhD student in Psychology at the University of Verona. Her PhD project focuses on the reciprocal associations between music and language and communication in children with cochlear implants. She is also interested in mental health outcomes in the context of academia. She has a master's degree in philosophy and a working experience as an educator for children with intellectual disabilities and autism.

# Mahshid Esmaeili- kolahdooz

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Mahshid Esmaeili-kolahdooz is a PhD student in Psychology at the University of Verona. Her PhD project focuses on the psychological and social determinants of the academic disadvantage of non-Italian students in the educational contexts. She has long worked as a teacher in an international school in Tehran. Her research interests concern multicultural and multilingual contexts and their impact on children.

# Luca Laezza

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Luca Laezza is a PhD student in Human Sciences at University of Verona. His research project concerns the role of natural, urban and virtual environments in well-being promotion, and more specifically to advance the understanding of how different environments are related to physical activity, as it is a key factor in mental and body health. In addition, he's investigating the effects of the natural environment exposure based on the restoration theories. He is also interested in the ecological dynamics perspective to better understand the mechanism of green physical activity.

**Panel: 8**

**Time:** Thursday, 30th March 2023, 16.40 - 17.00 h

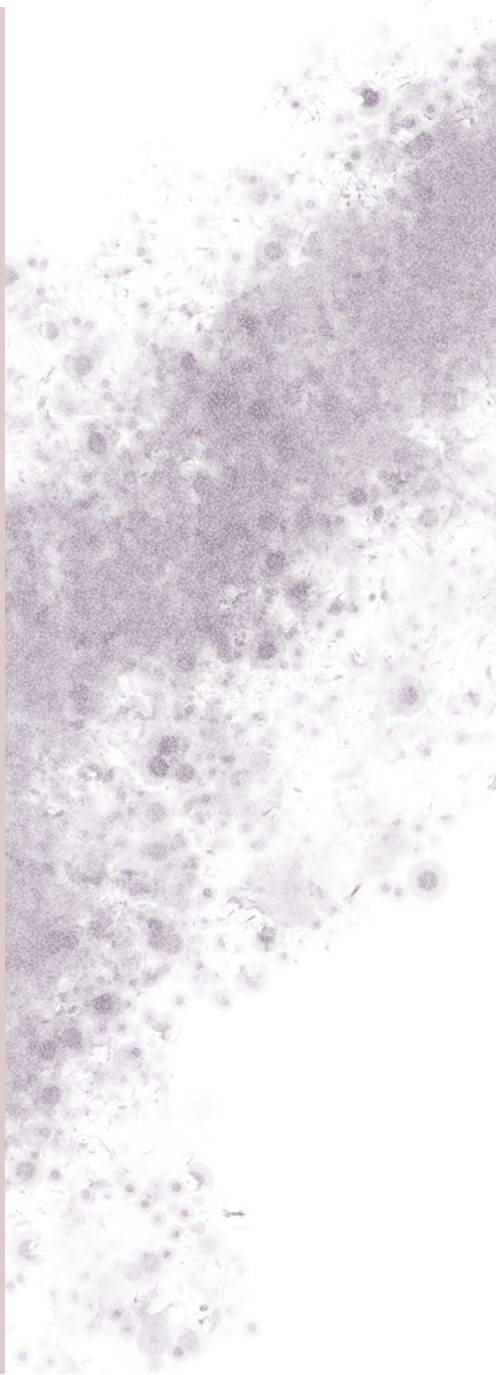
**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro (ONLINE)



# Precarious subjectivities in Academia: The Experience of the HumanS@Meetings Project



This paper situates the interest in precarity among doctoral students and early career researchers as vulnerable subjects. Using a critical psychological interpretation of the notion of precarity, we argue that doctoral students are vulnerable subjects at the personal, organizational, and societal levels. On the one hand, vulnerability appears in the quest for meaning, identity, and self-actualization. On the other hand, it appears objectively with organizational and societal constraints. Situating in the debate on precarity via this lens, we will introduce an alternative possibility for coexistence based on peer-/mutual- support among precarious and vulnerable doctoral students and early career researchers. Notably, we will present the HumanS@Meetings project, a self-organized community of doctoral students and early career researchers for mutual-support and peer-learning of the Department of Human Sciences at the University of Verona. Informal meetings of peer-learning and mutual-support represent a constant, but marginal and fragmented aspect in the experience of such subjects. Considering the potential benefitting characteristics of peer learning, there are reasons to support its realization in a more formal and institutionalized way.



It can be a relevant way to deal with precarity at the subjective, organizational and societal levels. Ultimately, the article introduces the HumanS@Meetings, its structure, and the experience of the authors as both organizers and participants. Furthermore, the paper will advance possibilities for the future of precarious and vulnerable subjectivities, e.g., doctoral students and early career researchers. Lastly, the paper will speculate on its possibility against organizational and societal barriers.



# Julia van Duijvenvoorde

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Julia van Duijvenvoorde is a PhD student within a larger project about devastation, dislocation and (re-)settlement involving Heidelberg University and Newcastle University. With the 1709-1710 migration waves to Ireland and North America as her starting point, she studies how pre- and post-migration landscapes intervened in the reconstruction of 'home' by Palatine communities. After a BA in International Relations & German and an MA in Heritage & Memory Studies, a passion for the complexity and beauty of human-nature relationships was ignited – a boundless topic that has occupied many a mind and now occupies hers.

**Panel:** 7

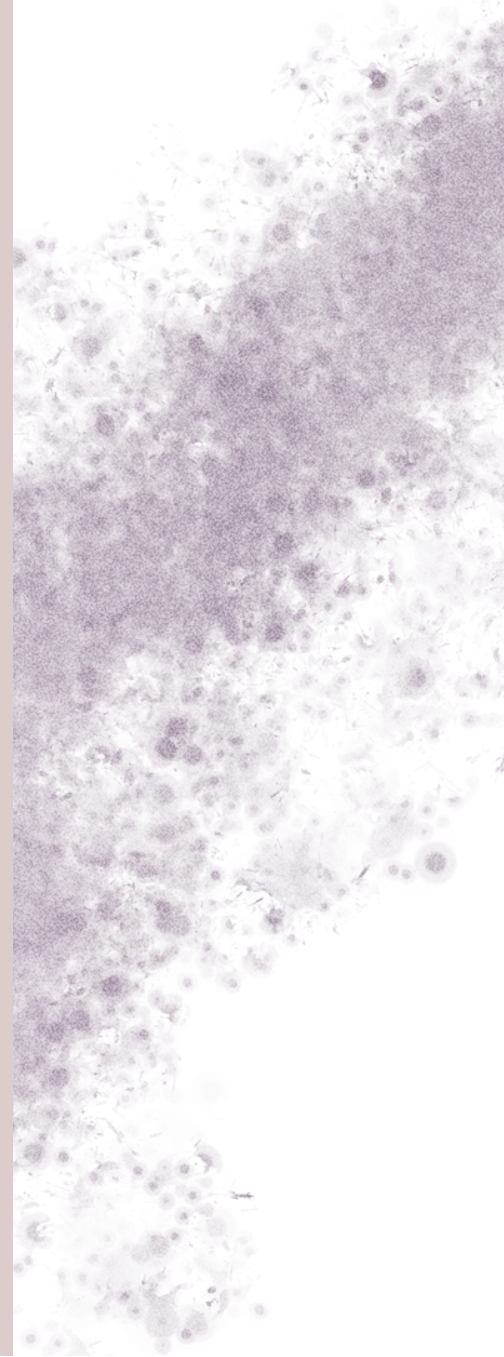
**Time:** Thursday, 30th March 2023, 14.40 - 15.00 h

**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro

# Resilience or glorified precarity? A comparative analysis of past and present narratives of early 18th century Palatine emigrants



After a long journey down the Rhine and across the English Channel, thousands of ‘Poor Palatine Refugees’ arrived in London in 1709 in the hopes of ultimately reaching the New World. Though firmly established in the dominant contemporary discourse about the effects of Louis XIV’s devastation of the Palatinate (historical region in Germany), this narrative of Palatine destitution stands in sharp contrast with the narrative of resilience that is put forward by Palatine heritage sites and associations today in the United States. While the latter narrative was originally endorsed by the migrant communities themselves, the way it is presented today points to a culture of forgetting: the inevitable precarity, uprootedness and vulnerability that comes with being a refugee finds itself overshadowed by the glorification of resilience. Interestingly, a similar pattern is found in the historiographic treatment of Palatine communities, as causes for their emigration are almost always treated as a separate subject of enquiry from the aftermath of immigration. To further highlight the narrational discrepancy, it is through the lens of landscape that I compare written accounts of contemporary British eyewitnesses with present-day American heritage narratives. The shift from a narrative of precarity to one of resilience not only meant a change in the portrayal of Palatines from victims to heroes but also of landscapes from a protective to productive presence – impacting how both people and nature are conceptualized in times of uncertainty.



# Wenja Zhou

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Wenja Zhou, doctoral researcher at the Department of Sociology, University of Turku, Finland. She completed her Master's Degree in Gender Studies at the University of Oslo, Norway. Located at the intersection of feminist technoscience studies and Chinese studies, her research interests concern gender, body, knowledge production, and medical technology.

**Panel:** 2

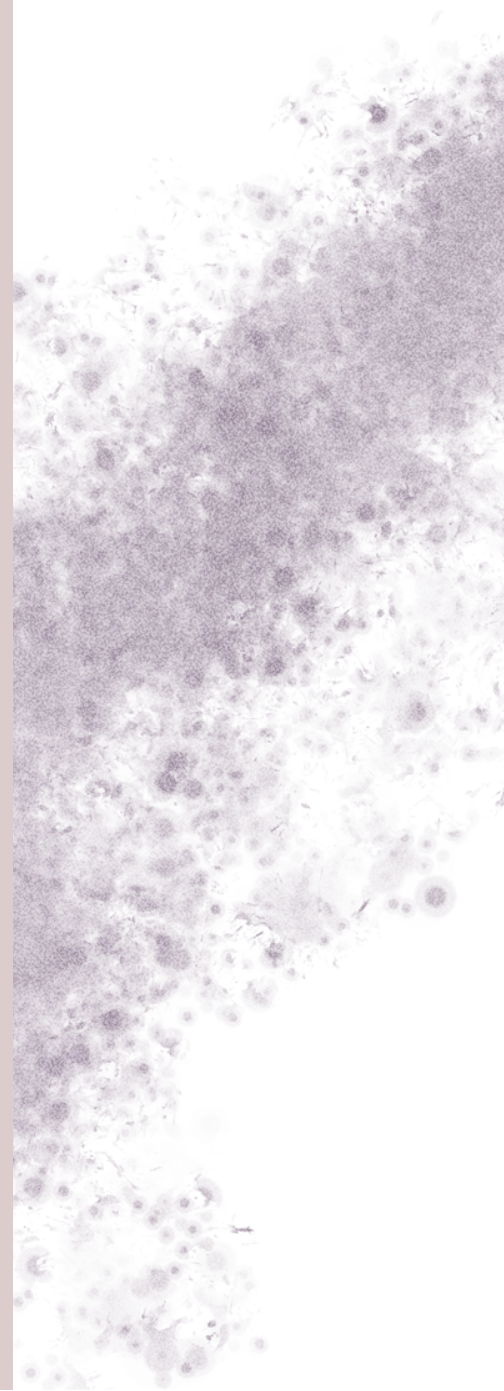
**Time:** Wednesday, 29th March 2023, 12.20 - 12.40 h

**Place:** Ca' Dolfin - Saoneria, Dorsoduro (ONLINE)

# Three Shots for Preventing Cancer? HPV Vaccination for Chinese Young Women in the Age of Precariousness



Often given as a three-dose series, the HPV(human papillomavirus) vaccine has been widely used as an effective way of preventing cervical cancer since 2006. More than one hundred countries have included the vaccine in their national vaccination program. Different from most countries, in China, vaccination is highly commercialized without a government subsidy. Partly due to its high price, its target customers are mainly young adult women. The vaccination is very popular among young women, and one often needs to wait for more than one year to get the vaccination due to its scarcity. Why do Chinese young women want the vaccination so much? I examine Chinese young women's pursuit of HPV vaccination in the context of precariousness in contemporary China. According to Judith Butler (2004, 2016), precariousness is the common human vulnerability of embodied existence, and it is entangled with precarity, which is the social and political configurations that distribute precariousness discriminatively. In post-socialist China, faced with market-oriented reforms, hybrid adaptive bureaucracy, and persisting gender norms, how do Chinese young women navigate and gain access to medical resources for their sexual health? By demonstrating Chinese young women's knowledges and practices of HPV vaccination, I investigate how these knowledges and practices shape their way of making sense of themselves and the social world.



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# THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE SYMPOSIUM.

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