

DIGGING INTO STEREOTYPES

Re-thinking mining representations and practices

19-20/09/2025

Sapienza University of Rome, Rome, Italy

This workshop aims to ethnographically explore the production and effects of mining and miners' representations in different geographical and historical contexts. It will focus on the ways in which stereotypes (and ideal types) contribute to create the conditions for economic and political exclusion in mining areas.

By exploring the overlaps and discrepancies between dominant representations of mining (in popular, political or media discourses, and scientific literature) and miners' actual practices and self-perceptions, contributions will examine the ways in which specific social images of mining are produced. These representations, in turn, produce social and material consequences, ranging from the marginalisation or stigmatisation of miners and mining communities to the legitimisation of new forms of global extraction as "local" or "traditional" practices.

This workshop will not only examine the discursive level of mining representations but will also consider their material effects on mining as a practice. The aim is to provide new insights into the anthropology of mining and foster a critical understanding to support transformative interventions benefiting local mining communities involved in or affected by mining activities. We invite ethnographically grounded papers and methodological reflection related but not limited to the following themes:

1. Ethnography of mine workers: practices, self-perceptions and social representations.
2. Cross-historical and geographical comparisons of mining imaginaries and practices.
3. Post-mining and labour as cultural heritage.
4. Narratives related to mining and miners in visual media and literature.
5. Artistic and art-activist creations and collaborations with mining communities.
6. Politics of institutional or hegemonic representations of mining.
7. New frontiers: representing space, arctic, deep-sea mining.

Workshop organisers and committee:

Lorenzo D'Angelo (Sapienza University of Rome), Kyra Grieco (Mondes Américains, EHESS),
Deana Jovanovic (Utrecht University).

Partners:

Sapienza University of Rome, Utrecht University, the ANR Interruptions - Mondes Américains and EHESS.

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in History Anthropology Religion of Sapienza University of Rome

PROGRAMME

19 SEPTEMBER

MORNING SESSION (h. 9.30 – 13.00)

moderator:

Lorenzo D'Angelo

Sapienza University of Rome
(Italy)

1. *"We are no longer the weak ones":
Galamsey activities and networked relations in
mining governance in Ghana*

Augustine Gyan,

Bayreuth International Graduate
School of African Studies (Germany)

2. *A vanishing heritage. The social memory
of gold in the Sankaran region (Mali)*

Cristiana Panella,

Royal Museum for Central Africa, Tervuren
(Belgium)

**Comments + Q&A
11h Coffee Break**

3. *Harvesting the frontier, sharing the Eldorado:
Deep Sea mining as a battlefield of metaphors*

Pierre-Yves Le Meur,

Anthropologist, IRD-SENS (France)

Julien Collot,

Geoscientist, University of West Brittany
Geo-Ocean (France)

Vincent Geronimi,

Economist, Paris-Saclay University (France)

Valelia Muni Toke,

Anthropologist, IRD, SeDyL (France)

4. *Mining Moves Offshore. Old and New
Stereotypes*

Marta Gentilucci,

University of Bergen (Norway)

**Comments + Q&A
LUNCH BREAK (h 13.00 – 14.30)**

AFTERNOON SESSION (h 14.30 – 19.00)

moderator:

Kyra Grieco

EHESS
(France)

5. *Female leadership in the extractive frontier:
an untold story of entrepreneurship, morality
and fortune*

Amy Penfield,

University of Bristol
(United Kingdom)

6. *Beyond pollution and resistance: Mining
representations and local realities in the
Ecuadorian Amazon*

Héloïse Mathieu,

Université de Montpellier
(France)

**Comments + Q&A
16h30 Coffee break**

7. *Conjuring Cultures and Enacting Sustainability:
mining for progress in the Peruvian Andes*

Kieran Gilfoy,

University of Cambridge
(United Kingdom)

8. *Digging Beyond 'Mining Communities':
Ethnographic Study of Iron Mining and Ho
Scheduled Tribe of Jharkhand, India*

Rajanikant Pandey,

Central University of Jharkhand (India)

**Comments + Q&A
DINNER (h. 20.00)**

PROGRAMME

20 SEPTEMBER

MORNING SESSION (h. 9.30 – 13.00)

moderator:

Deana Jovanovic
Utrecht University
(Netherlands)

9. *Superheroes of the Subsoil? Recycled
Narratives of Modernity in the Visual Promotion
of Underground Work in France*

Julianna Colonna
INRAE (France)

10. *From Gulag to Russian Klondike: Memory
and the Representational Politics of Gold Mining
in Kolyma*

Asya Karaseva,
Universities of Tartu (Estonia) / University of
Hamburg (Germany)

11. *Digging Shadows, or How to Represent the
Dark Side of Soviet Modernity*

Francisco Martínez,
University of Murcia (Spain)

Comments + Q&A
LUNCH BREAK (h 13.00 – 14.00)

CONCLUDING REMARKS (h 14.00 – 15.00)

