

Camps, Belonging, and Abolition Democracy

The 3rd **Graz/Puerto Rico** International
Conference on Human Rights
from an Inter-American Perspective

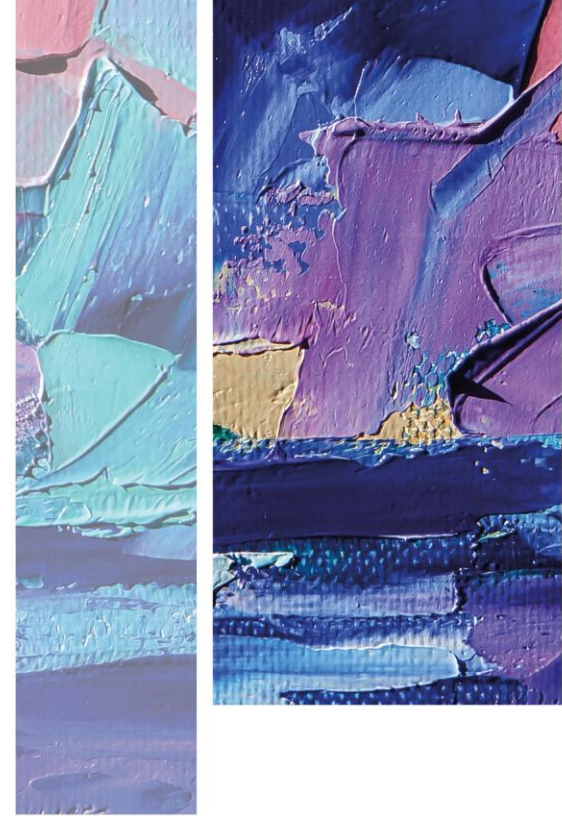
June 4–7, 2026

University of Graz, Austria

Organized by the Center for Inter-American Studies (C.IAS) at the University of Graz and the Institute of Caribbean Studies and the Department of English at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus



We work for
tomorrow



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GREETINGS FROM THE CONFERENCE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Dear Conference Participants, Colleagues, and Friends,

We are thrilled that you have joined us at this year's conference and extend you a very warm welcome. This international event has been organized because across the world, unprecedented numbers of people are held in camps and camp-like spaces—refugee camps, detention centers, prisons, jails, military confines, and wide variety of other commonplace structures—such as parks, hotels, schools, and boats—that have been transformed into carceral sites. When we developed the idea for this 3rd conference on Human Rights from an Inter-American Perspective, we had little idea that camps would soon come to take on even more telling roles globally, not only as sites of detention, violation, confinement, and refoulement, but also as a topic that is the subject of contentious debate about migration, belonging, due process, deportations, and basic human rights.

Our first conference, which took place in 2022, marked 20 years of detention at the U.S. military prison at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. Many of the discussions there concerned the abuses that made Guantánamo a global symbol of torture, violence, and U.S. imperial power. Others focused on dynamics that link the space to colonial policies and practices of the past that have impacted contemporary understandings of crime, migration, and war. Some unfolded hope against hope, but the participation of academics, writers, lawyers, poets, and artists assisted in putting the past and present in meaningful dialogue.

Especially significant was the participation of five former Guantánamo prisoners who are the authors of powerful memoirs—Mansoor Adayfi, Moazzam Begg, Lakhdar Boumedienne, Ahmed Errachidi, and Mohamedou Ould Slahi Houbeini. Their testimonies are, we suggest, still an essential anchor that assists in both understanding what they endured and envisioning the future anew, as they transformed their stories into sites of reflection, learning, and transnational solidarity.

We suggest that Guantánamo Bay continues to function a key node that is important for fostering international solidarity and for unpacking the logic of camps, one that should be carefully considered in formulating the grammar for radical change that thinkers such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Angela Y. Davis, and Ruth Wilson Gilmore have endorsed in their descriptions of abolition democracy. Graz, we suggest, is an opportune setting for this type of exchange given its status as the first Human Rights City in Europe and consistent support for initiatives that pursue social justice.

This conference underscores creativity and formulating connections as essential tools for dialogue, reflection, and learning. Please join us in enriching this dialogue during our time together and in nurturing it once we return to our respective homes. We're looking forward to an insightful conference!

The Academic Board and Organizational Committee

CONFERENCE PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

	Thursday, June 04	Friday, June 05	Saturday, June 06	Sunday, June 07
9:00 AM		Archives for the Future	Parallel Panels	Abolition Democracy and Freedom
9:30 AM				
10:00 AM				
10:30 AM			Coffee Break	Coffee Break
11:00 AM		Coffee Break/ Poster Presentation		
11:30 AM		Parallel Panels	Parallel Panels	Parallel Panels
12:00 PM				
12:30 PM				
1:00 PM		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:30 PM				
2:00 PM	Pre-Conference Panel: Prison, Detention & Abolition in Austria (Graz Museum)	Rooting [out] Our Entangled Present Diana Coleman Northern Arizona University	Mujeres migrantes y destierro Elithet Silva-Martinez University of Puerto Rico	Parallel Panels
2:30 PM				
3:00 PM				
3:30 PM		Coffee Break/ Poster Presentation	Coffee Break	Coffee Break
4:00 PM	REGISTRATION	Parallel Panels	Creative Writing Workshop (optional)	Parallel Panels
4:30 PM				
5:00 PM				
5:30 PM	Opening and Reception Freedom's Crisis Rinaldo Walcott University at Buffalo			Break
6:00 PM			Guantánamo Extended: Art, Scholarship, and Memory	Conference Closing Ceremony
6:30 PM				
7:00 PM				
7:30 PM		Conference Dinner (included with registration)		
8:00 PM				

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

THURSDAY, JUNE 4

<i>Pre-conference</i>		
2:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Location: Graz Museum (Sackstraße 18)	<p><u>Local Panel: Detention, Prisons, and Abolition in Austria</u></p> <p>Chair: Monika Mokre (Austrian Academy of Science)</p> <p>Kludia Wieser (Push-Back Alarm Austria)</p> <p>There are no laws. They are the law: Migration Detention in Vordernberg Austria</p> <p>Union for the Rights of Prisoners, Austria: Elena Balthesen, Leah Doll, and Mimi Schmidl</p> <p>Support for Prisoners in Austria: Between Solidarity and Paternalism</p> <p>Martin Steinbach (Inmates shelter)</p> <p>Prisons in Austria</p>
4:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Location: AULA, University of Graz (Universitätsplatz 3, first floor)	Registration
5:00 pm – 7.00 pm		<p>CONFERENCE OPENING AND WELCOME RECEPTION</p> <p>Freedom’s Crisis</p> <p>Keynote Lecture: Rinaldo Walcott (University at Buffalo, SUNY, U.S.) <i>(in English with interpretation into Spanish)</i></p>

FRIDAY, JUNE 5

Location: University of Graz (Heinrichstraße 36)			
9:00 am – 11:00 am	<p>HS 11.01</p> <p><u>Special Panel: Archives for the Future</u></p> <p>Chair: Don E. Walicek (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)</p> <p>Mansoor Adayfi (Yemen, Serbia)</p> <p>Sami Al Haj (Sudan, Oman)</p> <p>Barhoumi Sufyian (Algeria)</p> <p>Moazzam Begg (United Kingdom)</p> <p>Lakhdar Boumediene (Bosnia and Herzegovina, France)</p> <p>Abdellatif Nasser (Morocco)</p> <p>Mohamedou Ould Salahi Houbeini (Mauritania, Netherlands)</p>		
11:00 am – 11:30 am	<p>Coffee Break & Poster Presentation & Art Exhibitions</p>		
11:30 am – 1:00 pm	<p><u>Panel #1: The Elastic Borders of the EU: Analyzing Contemporary Border Regimes in Europe and Beyond</u></p> <p>HS 11.01</p> <p>Chair: Bilgin Ayata (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>Discussant: Maribel Casas-Cortes (University of Zaragoza, Spain)</p> <p>Artemis Fyssa (University of Graz, Austria)</p>	<p><u>Panel #2: Learning and Emancipation as Spaces of Worldbuilding</u></p> <p>HS 11.03</p> <p>Chair: Artiola Kajtazi (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>Brian Cabral (University of Texas at Austin, U.S.)</p>	<p><u>Panel #3: Incarceration, Rehabilitation, and Decolonial Ethics in Puerto Rico</u></p> <p>SR 11.05</p> <p>Chair: Tania Garcia-Ramos (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)</p> <p>Sara Santiago-Estrada (University of Puerto Rico, U.S.)</p>

	<p>From One Camp to the Next: Border Elasticity and the Scaling Up of Confinement on a Greek Island</p> <p>Mirco Buoso (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>Elastic Bordering through Encampment and Transfer: Ethnographic Notes from Tenerife, Canary Islands</p> <p>Angelika Adensamer (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>Legal Techniques of Elasticity: The Erosion of Rights through the Fiction of Non-Entry</p> <p>Carolyn Defrin (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>By Sea and by Land: Mapping the Elasticity of European and North American Borderscapes through Artistic Intervention</p> <p>Charlie Yves Ngoudji Tameko (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>Surviving the Atlantic, Arriving Unwell: The European Union Border Regimes and Migrant Health in the Canary Islands</p>	<p>Reordered Abolitionist Worldbuilding within U.S.-based Youth Carceral States: Educational Guideposts from Formerly Incarcerated Youth</p> <p>Marcia Watson-Vandiver (Towson University, U.S.)</p> <p>Jessica Lee Stovall (University of Wisconsin-Madison, U.S.)</p> <p>Freedom Schools as Sustained Emancipatory Spaces: Black Student Reflections on Carceral Discipline, the School-to-prison Pipeline, and Renewed Possibilities for Racial Belonging</p> <p>Gabriela Azevedo de Aguiar (Fundação Oswaldo Cruz, Brazil)</p> <p>“I Am From Here and There”: Belonging, Reception, and School Inclusion of Latin American Migrant Children in Brazil</p>	<p>The Context of Incarceration in Puerto Rico: Colonialism and Coloniality</p> <p>Maribel Báez-Lebrón (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)</p> <p>Correctional Rehabilitation in Puerto Rico</p> <p>Tania Garcia-Ramos (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)</p> <p>Marcos Irizarry (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)</p> <p>Amaris Nieves López (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)</p> <p>An Ethical Reconfiguration of Incarceration in Puerto Rico</p>
<p>1:00 pm – 2:30 pm</p>	<p>Lunch</p>		
<p>2:30 pm – 4:00 pm</p>	<p><u>Keynote Lecture</u></p> <p>HS 11.01</p> <p><u>Chair:</u> Nicole Haring (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>Rooting [Out] Our Entangled Present</p> <p><u>Speaker:</u> Diana Coleman (Northern Arizona University, U.S.)</p>		

4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	Coffee Break: Student Poster Presentation & Art Exhibitions			
4:30 pm – 6:00 pm	<p>Panel #4: From Clear Voices to Ungrievable Lives HS 11.01</p> <p>Chair: Bilgin Ayata (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>Fiammetta Bonfigli (University of Vienna, Austria) From Gaza to Rio de Janeiro: Extermination Policies and “Ungrievable” Lives</p> <p>Abdrabou A. H. Alanzi (Al-Azhar University- Gaza, Palestine; online presented by Walaa Allouh) Gaza as the World’s Largest Camp: Settler Colonialism, Carcerality, and the Politics of Belonging</p> <p>Johanna Lutz (University of Applied Arts Vienna, Austria) Anything you say can be used against you - Terrorism policing, Biometrics and the Voice in Germany</p> <p>Mansoor Adayfi (School of Engineering Management, Serbia)</p>	<p>Panel #5: Circuits of Enclosure, Currents of Opposition: Abolitionism and Transnational Carcerality HS 11.03</p> <p>Chair: Michael Reyes Sala (Vassar College, U.S.)</p> <p>Jorge E. Cuéllar (Dartmouth College, U.S., online) Administrative Errors: Kilmar Ábrego and the U.S.-El Salvador Carceral Archipelago</p> <p>Michael Reyes Sala (Vassar College, U.S.) Transcolonial Ruination: Abolitionist Optics in Penal Photo-Textuality</p> <p>Jorge Pavez Ojeda (University College London, UK) The Prison Détour of National Culture. The Case of Puerto Rico</p> <p>Angelica Camacho (San Francisco State University, U.S.; online) Resisting Divide and Conquer Strategies and the Agreement to</p>	<p>Panel #6: Literary and Visual Representations of Militarization and Violence SR 11.05</p> <p>Chair: Maritza Stanchich (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)</p> <p>Katja Seidel (University of Innsbruck, Austria) <i>Say Nothing</i> to Speak out Loud. Institutional Violence and the Effective Visuality of Relational Resistance</p> <p>Yutaka Yoshida (Chou University, Japan) What is New About the Emperor’s Clothes?: Carcerality, Militarization, International Cold War Politics in Caribbean Literature</p> <p>Bruno Lopes de Almeida (University of Minho, Portugal) (Re)Claiming and (Re)Imagining Belonging through the Novel <i>Rainbow Milk</i> by Paul Mendez</p>	<p>SPECIAL ACTIVITY</p> <p>Guided Tour Art Exhibition and Creative Session: 11.06 and main foyer space</p> <p>Carolyn Defrin (University of Graz, Austria) Past Portals to Future Worlds</p>

	From the War on Terror to War on Muslims and Migrants: Securitization, Islamophobia, and Executive Power	End All Hostilities Amongst the California Prison Population		
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm	Conference Dinner <i>(included with registration; no sign-up necessary; departure after parallel panels; meeting point at registration; on-foot and public transportation options available)</i> Location: Burg Graz; Hofgasse 15, 8010 Graz			

SATURDAY, JUNE 6

Location: University of Graz (Heinrichstraße 36)				
9:00 am – 10:30 am	<u>Panel #7: Education & Abolitionist Praxis</u> HS 11.01 Chair: Artiola Kajtazi (University of Graz, Austria) Elizabeth Swanson (Babson College, U.S.) Dignity, Belonging, Transformation: Criminal Legal Reform, Abolition Democracy,	<u>Panel #8: Restorative Justice, Temporicide, and the Possibilities of Abolitionist Sanctuary</u> HS 11.02 Chair: Chair: Jonathan Cortez (University of Texas at Austin, U.S.) Gabreëlla Friday (St. John’s University, U.S.) Josh M. Price (Toronto Metropolitan University, Canada)	<u>Panel #9: Re-visiting Guantánamo Writing in the Second Term of Trump</u> HS 11.03 Chair: Alexandra S. Moore (Binghamton University, U.S.) Alexandra S. Moore (Binghamton University, U.S.) ‘Where is Guantánamo’ Today Terri Tomsy (University of Alberta, Canada)	<u>Panel #10: Erasure, Belonging, and Critical Interventions</u> SR 11.05 Chair: Nicole Haring (University of Graz, Austria) Mahshid Mayar (University of Innsbruck, Austria) I, Art – I, Empire: On Black Sites, “Exhibits,” and Erasures

	<p>and Higher Education Inside the Walls</p> <p>Leanne Trapedo Sims (Knox College, U.S., online)</p> <p>The Limits of Forgiveness: A Meditation on an Inside-Out Class in Illinois</p> <p>Jessica Lee Stovall (University of Wisconsin-Madison, U.S.)</p> <p>Marica Watson-Vandiver (Towson University, U.S.)</p> <p>Ethnic Studies as an Abolitionist Educational Practice in Youth Carceral Regimes</p>	<p>Temporicide and Unbelonging</p> <p>Leila Rodríguez (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)</p> <p>Doing the Dirty Work: Workers' Experiences with the Incarceration and Management of Asylum-Seekers in Costa Rica</p> <p>A. Naomi Paik (University of Illinois, U.S.)</p> <p>All We Have Is Each Other: Abolitionist Sanctuary Against All-American Fascism</p>	<p>"Send them to the World": Guantánamo Poems in the Age of Trump 2.0</p> <p>Esther Whitfield (Brown University, U.S.)</p> <p>Two Decades of Literature from Guantánamo</p>	<p>Lena Elisabeth Leßlhuber (University of Salzburg, Austria)</p> <p>From JoAnne to Assata: A Journey of Resistance, Naming and Belonging in Assata: An Auto-biography (1987)</p> <p>Sandra Tausel (University of Innsbruck, Austria)</p> <p>Scaling the Prison Wall Together: Collaborative Erasure Art in Erasing Frankenstein</p>
10:30 am – 11:00 am	Coffee Break: Art Exhibitions			
11:00 am – 12:30 pm	<p>Panel #11: Perspectivas interculturales desde los territorios: pertenecer no al estado</p> <p>HS 11.01</p> <p>Chair: Anita Krainer (FLASCO, Ecuador)</p> <p>Nina Kolowratnik (Ghent University, Belgium)</p> <p>Voluntary Isolation as a Legal Category: Protection, Non-Contact, and Confinement: The</p>	<p>Panel #12: Language, Discourse, and the Abolitionist Imagination</p> <p>HS 11.02</p> <p>Chair: Eva Bauer (University of Graz)</p> <p>Paula Martin Rivero and Dietmar Offenhuber (Northeastern University, U.S.)</p> <p>Language as Infrastructure: Fron-tex and the Bureaucratic Production of (Non)Belonging</p>	<p>Panel #13: Socio-Political Movements and Dynamics of Belonging</p> <p>HS 11.03</p> <p>Chair: Frithjof Nungesser (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>Mohammed Zarkan (Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Morocco)</p> <p>From Discord to the Streets: Digital Camps of Belonging and the Reimagining of</p>	<p>Panel #14: Local Struggles, Global Designs: US Militarization in Puerto Rico and the Greater Caribbean</p> <p>SR 11.05</p> <p>Chair: Maritza Stanchich (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)</p> <p>Maritza Stanchich (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)</p>

	<p>Tagaeri and Taromenane Case before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights</p> <p>Christina Korak (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>Adriana Rodriguez (University Andina Simón Bolívar, Ecuador) Memoria de las mujeres amazónicas waorani y justicia intercultural: más allá de la reparación libera</p> <p>Anita Krainer (FLASCO, Ecuador)</p> <p>Desafíos para pertenecer al Estado: diversidades, interculturalidad y diálogo de saberes en América Latina</p>	<p>Stephanie Latty and Joshua Price (Toronto Metropolitan University, Canada)</p> <p>From Preventable to Inevitable: Discourses of Custodial Death in Official Reports</p> <p>Omar Granados (University of Wisconsin La Crosse, U.S.)</p> <p>Carceral Pedagogies: The After-lives of the Hombre Nuevo in <i>El Mercurio de McCoy</i></p>	<p>Democracy in Morocco's Gen Z 212 Movement</p> <p>Ahmed Maher (Independent Scholar)</p> <p>The Space between Bars: Narratives of Belonging in an Egyptian Activist's Memoir</p> <p>Todd Michael Rowan (Louisiana State University, U.S.) and Jenna Ann Altomonte (Mississippi State University, U.S.)</p> <p>(American) Southern Youth at the Global Crossroads</p>	<p>Domestic in a Foreign Sense: U.S. Militarization in the Caribbean Parallels its Own Authoritarianism</p> <p>Marie Cruz Soto (New York University, U.S., online)</p> <p>Vieques in the Interplay of Militarized and Settler Colonial Logics</p> <p>Zorimar Rivera Montes (Tulane University, U.S.)</p> <p>A Week in the Life: (Re)militarization in the Greater Caribbean</p> <p>Fabio Santos (University of Copenhagen, Denmark)</p> <p>The Limits of Abolition Democracy: Haitian Refugees at Fort Allen, Puerto Rico</p>
12:30 pm – 2:00 pm	Lunch			
2:00 pm – 3:30 pm	<p>Keynote Lecture</p> <p><i>(in Spanish with simultaneous interpretation into English)</i></p> <p>HS 11.01</p> <p>Chair: Don E. Walicek (University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus)</p> <p>Mujeres migrantes y destierro</p> <p>Speaker: Elithet Silva-Martínez (University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus)</p>			
3:30 pm – 4:00 pm	Coffee Break: Art Exhibitions			

<p>4:00 pm –5:30 pm</p>	<p><u>Creative Writing Workshop</u> (please sign-up beforehand)</p> <p>HS 11.01</p> <p><u>Workshop leaders:</u></p> <p>Don E. Walicek (University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus)</p> <p>Mohamedou Ould Salahi Houbeini (writer)</p>	<p><u>Book Presentation</u></p> <p>HS 11.03</p> <p><i>Alicia Kozameh: la obra y su multiplicidad (2026)</i> (Erna Pfeiffer y Norah Giraldi Dei Cas, eds.)</p> <p>Norah Giraldi Dei Cas (University of Lille, France)</p> <p>Alicia Kozameh (Chapman University, U.S.)</p> <p>Erna Pfeiffer (University of Graz, Austria)</p>
<p>6:00 pm – 7:30 pm</p> <p>Location: Meerscheinschlössl, Mozartgasse 3</p>	<p><u>Guantánamo Extended: Art, Scholarship, & Memory</u></p> <p>José Ramón Sánchez Leyva (Cuba) author of <i>Torres de Arena (Towers of Sand)</i> (forthcoming in 2026)</p> <p>Esther Whitfield, (Brown University, U.S.) author of <i>A New Non-Man’s Land: Writing and Art at Guantánamo, Cuba</i> (U of Pittsburgh Press, 2024)</p> <p>Alexandra S. Moore (Binghamton University, U.S.) and Elizabeth Swanson (Babson College, U.S.) Editors of <i>The Guantánamo Artwork and Testimony of Moath al-Alwi</i> (Palgrave Macmillan, 2024)</p> <p>Mansoor Adayfi (Yemen, Serbia) contributor to <i>The Guantánamo Artwork and Testimony of Moath al-Alwi</i>, chapter title: “My Brother, the Artist”</p> <p>Sami Al Haj (Sudan, Oman) journalist, director of Al Jazeera Center for Public Liberties and Human Rights</p>	

SUNDAY, JUNE 7

Location: University of Graz (Heinrichstraße 36)

<p>9:00 am – 10:30 am</p>	<p><u>Special Panel: Abolition Democracy and Freedom</u> HS 11.01 <u>Moderator:</u> Don E. Walicek (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus) Bilgin Ayata (University of Graz, Austria) A. Naomi Paik (University of Illinois, U.S.) Mohamedou Ould Salahi Houbeini (Mauritania, the Netherlands) Rinaldo Walcott (University at Buffalo, SUNY, U.S.) <i>Creating and Committing to the Future</i> Carolyn Defrin (University of Graz, Austria)</p>			
<p>10:30 am - 11:00 am</p>	<p>Coffee Break: Art Exhibitions</p>			
<p>11:00 am – 12:30 pm</p>	<p><u>Panel #15: Life Writing, Politics, and Memory</u> HS 11.01 <u>Chair:</u> Julia Harnoncourt (University of Graz) Steven Stieglmeier Jr. (University of Bielefeld, Germany) <i>Life Writing and Visibility: Enslaved People, Undocumented Migrants, and Legal Erasure</i> Alejandra Campos (University of Granada, Spain) <i>Creative Writing on Migrant Childhood and Adolescence in the</i></p>	<p><u>Panel #16: Literary Choices and Abolitionist Imaginaries</u> HS 11.02 <u>Chair:</u> Seyma Yonar (University of Graz) Nicolangelo Becce (Roma Tre University, Italy) <i>“As a result of the interview, my family name was reduced to No. 13660.” The Calvary of the Japanese American Incarceration in Miné Okubo’s Illustrated Memoir</i> Youssouf Diallo (Cheikh Anta Diop University, Senegal)</p>	<p><u>Panel #17: Public Memory and Narratives of Resistance</u> HS 11.03 <u>Chair:</u> Fatmir Ramadani (AAB College, Kosovo) Mónika Fodor (University of Pécs, Hungary) <i>Telling Stories for an Invisible Audience: Narrative Agency in the Guantánamo Public Memory Project</i></p>	<p><u>Panel #18: Martyrdom, Psycho-Carcerality, and the Abolitionist Imperative Against ICE and Elite Impunity</u> SR 11.05 <u>Chair:</u> Michael Reyes Salas (Vassar College, U.S.) Estella Pettus (Vassar College, U.S.) <i>The Clubhouse Model of Mental Health as Resistance to Psycho-Carceral Architecture</i> Demetri Sedita (Vassar College, U.S.)</p>

	<p>Face of Contemporary Policies of Capture and Confinement</p> <p>José Ramón Sánchez Leyva (independent scholar, Cuba)</p> <p>No es país para ingleses: fundaciones fallidas vuelven a suceder</p>	<p>From Colonial Compounds to Contemporary Camps: African Literary Interventions in (Be)longing and Abolition Democracy</p> <p>Lucio De Capitani (Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy)</p> <p>Colonialism, Carcerality and Abolition: Reimagining and Dismantling the Canadian Residential Schools in Cherie Dimaline's <i>The Marrow Thieves</i> (2017) and <i>Hunting by Stars</i> (2021)</p>	<p>Manjola Nasi (University of Tirana, Albania)</p> <p>The Evasive Other: Narrating Relational Surveillance and Re-Sentencing in Albanian Communist Political Prison Memoirs</p> <p>Rabija Osmanagić (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>Abolition, Care, and Decolonial Feminism: Nadja Dizdarević and the Gendered Politics of Resistance in Postwar Bosnia</p>	<p>ICE and the Battle Over the Digital Visibility of Its Actions</p> <p>Eva Martinez (Vassar College, U.S.)</p> <p>Witness as Humanity: Comparing the Passion of Perpetua and ICE Detainees' Stories</p> <p>Mariya Novosad (Vassar College, U.S.)</p> <p>"Free Jeffrey Epstein?" Abolition, Impunity, and Imaginings of Accountability</p>
12:30 pm – 2:00 pm	Lunch			
2:00 pm – 3:30 pm	<p>Panel #19: Memory, Unforgetting, and Carceral Imaginaries</p> <p>HS 11.01</p> <p>Chair: Carolyn Defrin (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>Rosie Elebyjian (Vassar College, U.S.)</p>	<p>Panel #20: Exhibition and Presentation: Support of Prisoners in Austria</p> <p>SR 11.05</p> <p>Chair: Monika Mokre (ÖAW, Austria)</p> <p>Elena Balthesen, Leah Doll and Mimi Schmidl (Union for the Rights of Prisoners, Austria)</p> <p>Between Solidarity and Paternalism</p>	<p>Panel #21: Belonging and Imagination as Abolitionist Tools</p> <p>HS 11.02</p> <p>Chair: Artiola Kajtazi (University of Graz)</p> <p>Stephanie Athey (SUNY-Binghamton, Human Rights Institute, U.S.)</p> <p>Dueling National Security Imaginations: El Salvador,</p>	<p>Panel #22: Counterspaces, Deportation, and Policy</p> <p>HS 11.03</p> <p>Chair: Artemis Fyssa (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>Raven Burns (Northern Arizona University, U.S.)</p>

	<p>Anti-Carceral Digital Resistance: Online Public Memory of Syria's Saydnaya Military Prison</p> <p>Sandrine Canac (École des hautes études en sciences sociales, France, online)</p> <p>Repackage to Reconcile? Colonial Carcerality, UNESCO Heritage, and the Politics of Memory</p> <p>Suma Cheru (University of Texas at Austin, U.S.)</p> <p>Educational Counterspaces, Acompañamiento, and Carceral Humanitarianism in U.S. Refugee Detention</p>	<p><i>Guided tour through Exhibition on Artworks and Texts from Prisons in Austria, followed by presentation</i></p>	<p>the US and Spaces of Negation</p> <p>Túlio Zille (Bowdoin College, U.S.)</p> <p>Belonging in Movement</p> <p>Shinichi Ishizuka and Mika Funakoshi (Ryukoku University, Japan)</p> <p>Capital Punishment and Discrimination in Japan: Explicit and Implicit Lurking in the Criminal Justice System</p>	<p>The Human Investment: Consequences of the AFT's Operation Fast & Furious</p> <p>Otto Herschmann (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>The Weaponization of ICE: Mass Deportation, the Suspension of Due Process, and the Logic of the 'Camp' in the Americas</p> <p>Kamal Tasiu Abdullahi (Istanbul University, Turkey)</p> <p>Borders of Belonging: Economic and Social Dimensions of Migrant Detention</p>
3:30 pm – 4:00 pm	Coffee Break: Art Exhibitions			
4:00 pm – 5:30 pm	<p>Panel #23: ICE, Solidaridad y Perspectivas Humanistas</p> <p>HS 11.01</p> <p>Chair: Julia Harnoncourt (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>José Sánchez Guerra (Casa de Historia, Ciudad de Guantánamo, Cuba)</p>	<p>Panel #24: Rewriting Restorative Justice, and Nonviolent Resistance</p> <p>HS 11.02</p> <p>Chair: Eva Bauer (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>Ahmed Maher (Independent Scholar)</p> <p>Bruce Pearson (Center for Nonviolent Conflict Research, U.S.)</p>	<p>Panel #25: Beyond Guantánamo: Empire, Camps, and Freedom</p> <p>HS 11.03</p> <p>Chair: Don E. Walicek (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)</p> <p>Matthew Masotto (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus, online)</p> <p>Political Discourse and the Illusion of Freedom</p>	

	<p>Guantánamo Bay: Violación de los derechos humanos. Colonización cultural.</p> <p>Melquisedec González Dávila (Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras)</p> <p>Identidad de la negritud, pertenencia y democracia abolicionista: genealogías del Encierro y horizontes de libertad decolonial</p> <p>Eliani A. Parrilla Rodríguez (Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras, online)</p> <p>La libertad del saber en prisión: humanidades en contextos carcelarios</p>	<p>Expressive Culture under Confinement: Nonviolent Resistance, Prison Life, and the Making of Political Meaning in Egypt</p> <p>Sreetapa Chakrabarty (Rabindra Bharati University, India)</p> <p>Identity, Belonging, and Childhood: Insights from Rohingya Refugee Camps in Bangladesh</p> <p>Gertrude Mensah (University of Ghana, Ghana)</p> <p>Beyond Encampment: How In-formal Settlements in the Global South Cultivate Belonging, Resistance, and Everyday Abolition Practices</p> <p>Leanne Trapedo Sims (Knox College, U.S., online)</p> <p>Reckoning with Restorative Justice: Hawai'i Women's Prison Writing</p>	<p>Alondra S. Acevedo Pérez (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)</p> <p>Resisting Erasure in Carceral Spaces: How Silenced Voices Speak</p> <p>Alicia Figueroa Carlo (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)</p> <p>Translation as Counter-Discourse: Against Empire, Toward Abolition Democracy</p> <p>Ángel R. Ocasio Gracia (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)</p> <p>Community Participation in Correctional Reform: A Public Health Approach from Puerto Rico</p>
<p>5.30-6.00 pm</p>	<p>Break</p>		
<p>6.00pm - 7.00 pm</p>	<p><u>Closing Ceremony: What's Next?</u> <u>Moderators:</u> Don E. Walicek (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus) and Nicole Haring (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>Poetry Reading</p> <p>Presentation of Art (Daniela Brasil)</p>		

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KEYNOTE & SPECIAL LECTURERS - ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

RINALDO WALCOTT

University at Buffalo, SUNY, U.S.

Freedom's Crisis

It is evidently clear that the liberal democratic discourse of freedom has found itself in a significant crisis of legitimacy. The previously articulated rules-based international order has been exposed as inconsistently enforced, premised on a flawed logic of history, and producing a rank ordering of which lives matter most globally. In this paper I track, explore, and analyze how liberal humanist ideas and discourses fail to meet the historical moment. Under new global conditions that continue to sort peoples, lands, deaths, and capital we are living a reordering of the globe. I argue that freedom's crisis is the acknowledgement that the Western consensus on what it has meant to be Human can no longer hold under these evolving brutal conditions of planetary life.

Rinaldo Walcott is Professor and Chair of Africana and American Studies at the University at Buffalo. He holds the Carl V. Granger Chair in Africana and American Studies. A writer and critic, his research is in the area of Black Diaspora Cultural Studies, as well as gender and sexuality with interests in nations, nationalisms, multiculturalism, as well as the histories of slavery, emancipation, incarceration and ongoing struggles for freedom. An interdisciplinary scholar, Walcott has edited or co-edited multiple works, and he is the author of *Black Like Who: Writing Black Canada* (Insomniac Press, 1997 with a second revised edition in 2003). He is also the author of *Queer Returns: Essays on Multiculturalism, Diaspora and Black Studies* (Insomniac Press, 2016) and co-author of *Black Life: Post-BLM and the Struggle for Freedom* (Arbeiter Ring, 2019). In 2021, Walcott published *The Long Emancipation: Moving Towards Freedom* (Duke University Press) and *On Property: Policing, Prisons, and the Call for Abolition* (Biblioasis), which was nominated for the Heritage Toronto Book Award, longlisted for the Toronto Book Awards, named a Globe and Mail Book of the Year, and listed in CBC Books Best Canadian Nonfiction of 2021.

ARCHIVES FOR THE FUTURE

The panel will begin with the presentation of testimonies by former Guantánamo Bay prisoners from a variety of backgrounds. Their memoirs and other creative projects will be approached both as records of what happened and as acts of memory that serve as a foundation for thinking together about what should happen in this conference as well as beyond. In addition, they will be asked to imagine a “Guantanamo Archive” for the future and asked to share ideas about what facts and stories still need to be collected or recorded so that they can be remembered in the future. The session will include time for questions and answers with the audience.

Mansoor Adayfi is a writer, advocate, and former Guantánamo Bay prisoner. He spent nearly fifteen years without charge in U.S. custody, including eight years in solitary confinement. Originally from Yemen, he was released to Serbia in 2016. Since then, he has focused on public speaking, continuing his education and writing about his experiences. Adayfi’s writings have been published in *The New York Times*. These include “In Our Prison on the Sea” and “Taking Marriage Class at Guantánamo Bay.” He is also the author of the essay “Did We Survive Torture?,” which is included in the edited volume *Witnessing Torture: Perspectives of Torture Survivors and Human Rights Workers* (2018). Hachette Books is the publisher of his 2021 memoir, *Don’t Forget Us Here*.

Sami Al-Haj holds a master’s degree in Business Administration and a Bachelor’s of Arts in Political Science from Poona University, India, where he studied from 1989 to 1992. He joined Al Jazeera Media Network in October 2000 as a journalist and is now the Director of its Center for Public Liberties and Human Rights. Under his stewardship, the Center has become a prominent advocate for press freedom, human rights monitoring, and the promotion of civil liberties worldwide. Al-Haj’s knowledge has been shaped by an ordeal that inflected debates about human rights and the rule of law at the global level—spending seven years detained without charge at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. He was finally released in 2008. That same year, he received a Special Award from the Association for International Broadcasting and International News Safety Institute, and in 2009, the Fondazione Festival Pucciniano named him International Reporter of the Year. His experience of incarceration and the events leading up to it have made him a compelling symbol of the perils facing journalists in the post 9/11 era.

Moazzam Begg, a British-born Muslim, is a former Guantánamo Bay detainee and Outreach Director for CAGE. After his release, he became one of the most prominent public-speakers and Muslim advocates for justice and dialogue. He is the author of the best-seller *Enemy Combatant*, a memoir in which he recounts his experience as an innocent man detained and tortured at Guantánamo, Bagram, and Kandahar. He has travelled extensively to investigate state abuses and western complicity in torture including to Tunisia, Libya, and Syria. The Muslim 500 listed him as one of the 500 “most influential Muslims” in the world, and *The New Statesman* listed him in the top 50 “Heroes of our time.” A direct eye-witness to the conflicts

in Bosnia, Afghanistan and Syria, his testimony has been recorded by the Columbia University Oral History Project, and the BBC Storyville documentary “The Confession.” In 2025, he was arrested for opposing genocide in London’s Parliament Square.

Lakhdar Boumediene was born and raised in Algeria, and as an adult he worked for various humanitarian causes. Boumediene was imprisoned at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay from January 2002 to May 15, 2009. Like others, he was detained and interrogated, but not charged. He was also the lead plaintiff in *Boumediene v. Bush* (2008), a U.S. Supreme Court case that he won. The court determined that Guantánamo detainees and other foreign nationals have the right to file writs of habeas corpus in U.S. federal courts. Boumediene and Mustafa Ait Idir are the authors of the memoir *Witnesses of the Unseen: Seven Years in Guantanamo* (2017).

Abdellatif Nasser was born and raised in Casablanca City, Morocco. After graduating from high school in mathematical science, he studied at the University of Science. For nearly twenty years, between 2002 and 2021, he was detained at the U.S. detention facilities at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. He was never charged with a crime or tried, but like many others, he was repeatedly interrogated, tortured, and force-fed. He turned to hunger strikes because they were the only means by which he could resist soldiers’ harassment and arbitrary detention. He emerged as a block leader and for years pushed for educational opportunities for his fellow detainees. This led to his nickname, “the Minister of Education.” His story was widely covered in the *New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and in the 6-part NPR series “The Other Latif.” As noted in some of these reports, during his incarceration he created a handwritten bilingual (Arabic-English) dictionary that consisted of about 2,000 entries. Since his release, he has studied independently and completed different online courses in a variety of subjects.

Mohamedou Ould Salahi Houbeini is a writer, advocate, and former prisoner from Mauritania. He was detained at the U.S. government’s Guantánamo Bay prison without charge for approximately fourteen years. Houbeini wrote a memoir during his incarceration, which the U.S. government declassified in 2012 with numerous redactions. An international bestseller and the first memoir to be published while the author was still detained in the naval base, it was released as *Guantánamo Diary* in January 2015. In 2017, a “restored edition” was published with thousands of redactions removed and new life added. The memoir was used as the basis for “The Mauritanian,” a 2021 film starring Tahar Rahim, Benedict Cumberbatch, and Jodie Foster. Slahi wrote four other books in detention, one of which he describes as being “about finding happiness in a hopeless place.” In 2021, his novel *The Actual True Story of Ahmed & Zarga* was published by Ohio University Press in its Modern African Writers series. At the time of this writing, he is Writer-in-Residence at Noord Nederlands Toneel, a Dutch theatre company.

Barhoumi Sufyian is from Algeria. He was held in extrajudicial detention at the US naval base in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba for almost twenty years. There he earned a reputation for his good humor, his empathy for those who suffered, and the strong command of English that he acquired during

his incarceration. His repatriation from Guantánamo Bay was arranged during the Obama administration but then delayed for about five years. He was reunited with his family in 2022 and is working hard to rebuild his life; he is committed to living a life based on honesty, kindness, and forgiveness. However, the stigma associated with his incarceration is difficult to overcome, and his subjection to various forms of suffering that were induced by his incarceration at Guantánamo is ongoing. His future plans include becoming a taxi driver through a still active GoFundMe initiative.

DIANA COLEMAN

Northern Arizona University, U.S.

Rooting [Out] our Entangled Present

The rapid emergence of authoritarianism, the dismantling of legal frameworks, the stifling of political speech, the explosive expansion of Department of Homeland Security scope, funding, and infrastructure, and the ramping up of overt interference throughout Latin America and beyond did not spring fully formed from the architects of Trump's second term. Rather, these developments must be traced from the deep taproots, from violent imperial beginnings through the U.S. Global War on Terror and ultimately mapped onto the fascism of end stage capitalism. The logic of camps relies on populist appeals rooted in racism, classism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, and other hatreds to control, order, and divide our humanity, but also demand impunity for perpetrators of human trafficking, carceral systems, forced labor, torture, and murder. How then to reckon with the past, confront our present, and to advocate for our collective future? A lineage of scholars from W.E.B. Du Bois to Angela Davis to Rinaldo Walcott offer visions that promote radical change to ground alternative futures. We must think with moral clarity, name truths with explicit language, and work shoulder to shoulder with the activist exemplars of our past and those in our midst today, to imagine, wrest, and create radically new futures for all.

Diana Murtaugh Coleman, a former Luce Fellow in Indonesia, is an Associate Teaching Professor in the Department of Comparative Cultural Studies at Northern Arizona University. Her research, focused on contemporary Islam, U.S. militarism, and carceral issues includes numerous talks, presentations, and publications. She is the author of a chapter in *Guantánamo: The Humanities Respond*; the article “El Sur También Existe: Imagining futures” in *Cultural Dynamics*, and articles in two special issues of *Sargasso: the 2017-18 Guantánamo: What's Next?* Issue and the 2020-21 *Camps, (In)Justice & Solidarity* issue. She has conducted research, presented and participated in dozens of conferences, led panels and workshops, and guest lectured nationally and internationally, in the U.S., France, Morocco, Germany, South Africa, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Cuba, Nicaragua,

Argentina, Uruguay, Bangladesh, Austria, India (virtually), and the UK. She was a Humanities Scholar and presenter for the 2023 TOM KIEFER: El Sueño Americano / The American Dream exhibit at the Coconino Center for the Arts and recently completed training with the Inside Out Prison Exchange Program at Temple University. As NAU's 2024/25 College of Arts and Letters Teacher of the Year and NAU's Interns to Scholars program 2024/25 Mentor of the Year, Dr. Coleman is deeply committed to empowering her students and to reaching broader publics beyond walls and borders.

ELITHET SILVA-MARTÍNEZ

University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus

Mujeres migrantes y destierro: pertenencia y resistencia en el Caribe

El análisis de las migraciones contemporáneas en el Caribe requiere de una mirada crítica a la luz de procesos históricos de colonialismo e inequidad global que continúan moldeando ideologías hegemónicas sobre quién tiene derecho a pertenecer. Estas dinámicas no solo delimitan fronteras territoriales, sino también las fronteras sociales y simbólicas de la pertenencia. Si bien la movilidad humana es natural, en muchas regiones la invasión de territorios, el saqueo de recursos y la explotación de poblaciones han provocado desplazamientos forzados a millones de personas. Este trabajo examina las experiencias de mujeres migrantes desde una perspectiva feminista decolonial que vincula la movilidad humana con tácticas de control, exclusión y confinamiento presentes en los regímenes migratorios contemporáneos. El análisis se centra en Puerto Rico y en las experiencias de mujeres migrantes en un trabajo de colaboración con organizaciones comunitarias, particularmente con el Centro de la Mujer Dominicana. En muchas instancias, la feminización de la migración se relaciona con procesos de racialización y xenofobia, donde mercados laborales neoliberales imponen condiciones de precarización que afectan a las mujeres y sus comunidades. Aunque estas narrativas evidencian múltiples formas de violencia estructural, también revelan resistencia, solidaridad y construcción de comunidad que desafían las fronteras de la pertenencia. Desde esta perspectiva, se propone repensar las políticas migratorias desde el derecho a pertenecer, la dignidad y los derechos humanos.

Elithet Silva-Martínez has been with the Beatriz Lassalle Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Puerto Rico since 2011 and currently serves as its Interim Director. The only Latina member of the National Institute of Justice's Research Consortium, she specializes in economic abuse and gender violence in universities, sharing her research in several countries including Ireland, Chile, and South Africa. Her collaborative work with the Center for Dominican Women led to participatory research initiatives, notably the book *Narrativas de Lucha: Immigrant*

Women and Gender Violence in Puerto Rico. She recently won an award for her children's story, "The Secret Dream of a Ballet Tutu," from the Popular Education Network for Women of Latin America and the Caribbean. Dr. Silva-Martínez also produced the award-winning short film "Desempacando: Gender, Migration and Violence," recognized as the best national documentary at the Enfoque International Film Festival. She has taught courses at the University of Iowa and conducted an ethnographic study with Mexican undocumented women, resulting in published work and a Feminist Manuscript Award. Additionally, she co-founded the SIEMPRE VIVAS Metro organization to support survivors of gender violence. Inspired by the stories of the women in her life—her grandmothers, mother, and daughters, Lina and Lara—Dr. Silva-Martínez continues to engage in impactful research and advocacy.

GUANTÁNAMO EXTENDED: ART, SCHOLARSHIP, AND MEMORY

Art and scholarship are elements circulating in the center of the conference's negotiation of carcerality and abolition democracy. Focusing on some of the creative projects linked to the detention camps at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, this special event invites us to contemplate towers of sand, plastic borders, and breathtakingly beautiful ships as responses to different experiences of confinement, within and across borders as well as mediums. It engages with poetry, translation, visual art, and recent academic scholarship on Guantánamo that considers art as a form of protest that is of broad, interdisciplinary relevance. Bringing together a medley of topics, this evening aims to nourish reflections and connections that will help us better articulate questions and answers that are important in the present and in an abolitionist future. The event includes a special musical performance by the feminist choir *Graz Girlzzz*.

José Ramón Sánchez Leyva is the author of the following books: *Aislada noche* (2005), *Marabú* (2012), *El derrumbe* (2012), *22* (2017), and *Talibán* (2018). He is editor of the journal *La Noria*. In 2017, he compiled the bilingual (Spanish-Portuguese) collection of contemporary Cuban poetry *Nocauté: 6 Poetas Cuba Hoje*. He is an instructor of literature at Casa de Cultura Municipal. He currently lives in the place of his birth, Guantánamo City.

Esther Whitfield is Carlos Manuel de Céspedes Professor of Comparative Literature and Professor of Hispanic Studies at Brown University. She is author of *A New No-Man's Land: Writing and Art at Guantánamo, Cuba* (2024) and *Cuban Currency: The Dollar and 'Special Period' Fiction* (2008); translator, with Katerina González Seligmann, of José Ramón Sánchez's poetry collection *The Black Arrow* (2023); and co-editor with Anke Birkenmaier, of *Havana Beyond the Ruins: Cultural Mapping of the City After 1989* and with Jacqueline Loss of *New Short Fiction from Cuba* (2007).

Alexandra S. Moore is Professor and Chair of English and Co-Director of the Human Rights Institute at Binghamton University. She is the author of two monographs and numerous essays and chapters and has co-edited nine volumes. Her most recent publication is *The Guantánamo Artwork and Testimony of Moath al-Alwi: Deaf Walls Speak* (2024), co-edited with Elizabeth Swanson, and *The Handbook on Structural Violence*, with Joshua M. Price, is forthcoming. Her current research focuses on the cultural afterlives of the War on Terror.

Elizabeth Swanson is the Joyce and Andy Mandell Endowed Professor of Human Rights at Babson College in Wellesley, MA, U.S. Author or editor of multiple volumes and articles on the subjects of literature and human rights, Dr. Swanson has worked extensively to center survivor voices in her work. Founder of Babson Venturing Out Prison Education Initiative, Dr. Swanson is committed to action and advocacy to ground her scholarly research and writing. She is currently at work on a memoir chronicling gender, migration, and trauma.

Mansoor Adayfi is a writer, advocate, and former Guantánamo Bay prisoner. He spent nearly fifteen years without charge in U.S. custody, including eight years in solitary confinement. Originally from Yemen, he was released to Serbia in 2016. Since then, he has focused on continuing his education and on writing about his experiences. Adayfi's writings have been published in numerous international newspapers, including *The New York Times*. Those in the latter include "In Our Prison on the Sea" and "Taking Marriage Class at Guantánamo Bay." He is the author of the essay "Did We Survive Torture?," which is included in the edited volume *Witnessing Torture: Perspectives of Torture Survivors and Human Rights Workers* (2018). Hachette Books is the publisher of his 2021 memoir, *Don't Forget Us Here*.

Sami Al-Haj holds a master's degree in Business Administration and a Bachelor's of Arts in Political Science from Poona University, India, where he studied from 1989 to 1992. He joined Al Jazeera Media Network in October 2000 as a journalist and is now the Director of its Center for Public Liberties and Human Rights. Under his stewardship, the Center has become a prominent advocate for press freedom, human rights monitoring, and the promotion of civil liberties worldwide. Al-Haj's knowledge has been shaped by an ordeal that inflected debates about human rights and the rule of law at the global level—spending seven years detained without charge at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. He was finally released in 2008. That same year, he received a Special Award from the Association for International Broadcasting and International News Safety Institute, and in 2009, the Fondazione Festival Pucciniano named him International Reporter of the Year. His experience of incarceration, the events leading up to it, and his vision of the future have made him a compelling symbol of the perils facing journalists in the post 9/11 era.

ABOLITION DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM

References to freedom abound and seem to be increasingly frequent in political debates and academic research as well as in popular culture. For this panel, participants will be asked to define freedom and to comment on how their understanding of this all-important concept has changed

through research, writing, and / or personal experience. They will also be asked to consider these questions: What forces, factors, and insights are responsible for those changes and how might they inform dynamics of our everyday lives as well as the radical imagination and “efforts to move closer to freedom”? How can past struggles for freedom such as those associated with the Atlantic slave trade and the colonization of the Americas assist us in better understanding borders, the importance of sanctuary, and critiques of contemporary human rights discourse?

Bilgin Ayata is a professor for Southeastern European Studies at the Center for Southeastern European Studies at the University of Graz. Her research centers on socio-political transformation processes with a focus on migration, borders, affect and emotions. She is project leader of the NOMIS Research project "Elastic Borders- Rethinking the borders of the 21st Century." She has published widely on affective politics, displacement, diasporas, citizenship, memory, and genocide denial and foreign policy. Her SNF Funded research project “Affective Citizenship: Religion, Migration and Belonging in Europe” examined the relationship between religious incorporation and belonging. Her SNIS funded project “Infrastructure Space and the Future of Migration Management” explored the infrastructure of migration control. Ayata is co-speaker of the Cluster "Migration, Borders and Mobility" at the Field of Excellence "Dimensions of Europe" at the University of Graz and has been DFG-Mercator Fellow of the SFB 1171 "Affective Societies" at the FU Berlin (2019-2023).

A. Naomi Paik is the author of *Bans, Walls, Raids, Sanctuary: Understanding U.S. Immigration for the 21st Century* (2020) and *Rightlessness: Testimony and Redress in U.S. Prison Camps since World War II* (2016; winner, Best Book in History, AAAS 2018; runnerup, John Hope Franklin prize for best book in American Studies, ASA, 2017). Her next project, "Sanctuary for All," calls for the most capacious conception of sanctuary that brings together migrant and environmental justice. She has co-edited four special issues of *Radical History Review*—“Militarism and Capitalism (Winter 2019), “Radical Histories of Sanctuary” (Fall 2019), “Policing, Justice, and the Radical Imagination” (Spring 2020), and “Alternatives to the Anthropocene” (Winter 2023). She co-edits the “Borderlands” section of Public Books and “The Politics of Sanctuary” blog sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution. She is an associate professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago, and a founding organizer of the Sanctuary Campus Network, Sanctuary for All UIC, and a member of the Migration Scholars Collaborative and Faculty and Staff for Justice in Palestine, UIC.

Mohamedou Ould Salahi Houbeni is a writer, advocate, and former prisoner from Mauritania. He was detained at the U.S. government’s Guantánamo Bay prison without charge for approximately fourteen years. Houbeni wrote a memoir during his incarceration, which the U.S. government declassified in 2012 with numerous redactions. An international bestseller and the first memoir to be published while the author was still detained in the naval base, it was released as *Guantánamo Diary* in January 2015. In 2017, a “restored edition” was published with thousands of redactions removed and new life added. The memoir was used as the basis for “The Mauritanian,” a 2021 film starring Tahar Rahim, Benedict Cumberbatch, and Jodie Foster. Slahi wrote four other books in detention, one of which he describes as being “about finding happiness in a hopeless

place.” In 2021, his novel *The Actual True Story of Ahmed & Zarga* was published by Ohio University Press in its Modern African Writers series. At the time of this writing, he is Writer-in-Residence at Noord Nederlands Toneel, a Dutch theatre company.

Rinaldo Walcott is Professor and Chair of Africana and American Studies at the University at Buffalo. He holds the Carl V. Granger Chair in Africana and American Studies. A writer and critic, his research is in the area of Black Diaspora Cultural Studies, gender and sexuality with interests in nations, nationalisms, multiculturalism, as well as the histories of slavery, emancipation, incarceration and ongoing struggles for freedom. An interdisciplinary scholar, Walcott has edited or co-edited multiple works, and he is the author of *Black Like Who: Writing Black Canada* (Insomniac Press, 1997 with a second revised edition in 2003). He is also the author of *Queer Returns: Essays on Multiculturalism, Diaspora and Black Studies* (Insomniac Press, 2016) and co-author of *Black Life: Post-BLM and the Struggle for Freedom* (Arbeiter Ring, 2019). In 2021, Walcott published *The Long Emancipation: Moving Towards Freedom* (Duke University Press) and *On Property: Policing, Prisons, and the Call for Abolition* (Biblioasis), which was nominated for the Heritage Toronto Book Award, longlisted for the Toronto Book Awards, named a Globe and Mail Book of the Year, and listed in CBC Books Best Canadian Nonfiction of 2021.

Carolyn Defrin is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at the University of Graz, researching the role of art in border zones. A socially engaged artist, researcher, and facilitator, her practice centers less-heard voices; bringing disparate communities into dialogue through creative activity around urgent societal issues such as migration, housing, health, and social cohesion. Originally from the United States, with an early career in Chicago theatre, her work now spans installation, music, and poetry across the UK, Europe, and beyond. Recent artistic research projects include a series of films about migrant artists navigating the UK’s hostile environment policies (London Southbank University), an interactive digital mural for a London children’s health centre (Dulwich Picture Gallery), and an intergenerational housing exhibition with low-income elders (Levitt Bernstein Architects, Hammersmith United Charities). www.carolyndefrin.com.

LIST OF PANELS, ABSTRACTS, AND BIOGRAPHIES

LOCAL PANEL: PRISONS, DETENTION, AND ABOLITION IN AUSTRIA

This panel on detention, prison and abolition in Austria positions itself as a starting point for the 2026 Camps Conference with the aim of geographically and theoretically locating some of its main concerns in terms of Graz and Austria. A standard part of the Camps Conferences, this kick-off event has always problematized and helped to document how camps are historically negotiated given the National Socialist past. Atrocities and the omnipresence of camps and camp-like institution occurs in multiple periods and extends beyond the Shoah.

This year's local panel engages within the larger conceptual framework of abolition democracy by describing local detention centers, prison activism, and attempts to articulate abolitionism in Austria today. It will look at how migrant detention is situated in Austria, specifically, how the detention center of Vordernberg north of Graz is a case study that can point to extensive practices that are part of migrant detention in Austria and in other parts of Europe. Additionally, the panel will address how activist work and legal advocacy for imprisoned persons in Austria plays a significant role given the current national debate on prison reforms sparked by a recent death of an inmate. The panel consists of the following talks:

- **Support for Prisoners in Austria: Between Solidarity and Paternalism** (Union for the Rights of Prisoners, Austria: Elena Balthesen, Leah Doll, and Mimi Schmidl)
- **There are no laws. They are the law: Migration Detention in Vordernberg, Austria** (Klaudia Wieser, Push-Back Alarm Austria, and X. Counselor for Refugees and Inegration)
- **Prisons in Austria** (Martin Steinbach, Inmates Shelter)

Elena Balthesen has been a member of the “Solidarity Group for a Prisoners’ Union Austria” since 2024. She studies anthropology at the University of Vienna where she wrote her bachelor’s thesis about prisons, surveillance, and state violence.

Leah Doll is an activist and social worker. She holds a master's degree in Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Cádiz. Her activist works focus on issues of patriarchal violence, feminicides, prisons and abolitionism.

Monika Mokre is a political scientist and Senior Researcher at the Institute of Culture Studies of the Austrian Academy of Sciences as well as a member of the “Union for the Rights of Prisoners” and the “Solidarity Group for a Prisoners’ Union Austria.” She completed her doctorate at the University of Vienna and her habilitation at the University of Innsbruck. Her fields of interest as a researcher and a political activist are asylum, migration, prison, and abolitionism. She is currently doing research on the theory of democracy, gender studies, and cultural politics.

Mimi Schmidl is a cultural worker and filmmaker based in Vienna. They have been part of the "Solidarity Group for a Prisoners' Union Austria" since 2024. Within the solidarity group they are organizing various events like letter writing workshops, film screenings and reading circles regarding the topics of prison and abolition.

Martin Steinbach studied History and Archeology in Vienna. In 2009, he hacked the IT system of the Austrian police and judiciary to obtain information on the case of Natascha Kampusch and the 'Bawag Scandal' and tried to sell it, a set of acts for which he received the maximal prison sentence of 10 years + 5 'bonus' years. All of the 15 years, he spent at the prison Karlau in Graz. He was released in April 2024 and based on his experience founded the NGO "Inmates Shelter." Due to the lack of financial support, the association has been put on hold for now. What has remained is the project 'Prison Unite' and the band 'Knast Band,' in which he plays the drums. With this project he aims to show imprisoned people in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland how they can use their time in prison in meaningful ways.

Klaudia Wieser is a social science researcher, and co-founder of Push-Back Alarm Austria. Push-Back Alarm Austria supports people surviving state violence at Austrian border regions and beyond.

PARALLEL PANELS

PANEL #1: THE ELASTIC BORDERS OF THE EU: ANALYZING CONTEMPORARY BORDER REGIMES IN EUROPE AND BEYOND

From One Camp to the Next: Border Elasticity and the Scaling Up of Confinement on a Greek Island

Artemis Fyssa (University of Graz, Austria)

Taking 2015 as a point of departure, this paper moves beyond the notion of the so-called “refugee crisis” as a rupture and analyzes how crisis has been institutionalized and normalized through successive camp forms built and operationalized across the Greek–Turkish maritime borderscape. While the Hotspot Approach produced overcrowding, informal spillover camps, and everyday violence alongside practices of care and solidarity, the paper shows that the later establishment of a new “model” camp, in the form of a Closed Controlled Access Center (CCAC) from 2021 onwards, did not resolve these dynamics but instead reconfigured them. Relocation, isolation, enclosure, and securitization rendered the camp less visible while embedding it more deeply into the island’s socio-political fabric and political economy, including as one of its largest employers. Drawing on ethnographic research conducted in 2023 on the Eastern Aegean island of Samos, this paper explores how border elasticity, materialized through successive camps — meant to both deter and detain — reshapes local social relations, affects, and responsibilities. Silence, routinization, and pragmatic complicity coexist with moral unease, anger, and exhaustion across the borderzone community. At the same time, institutional actors involved in both border control and camp management operate through schemes of fragmented authority, often resolving to procedural improvisation while eluding accountability. By analyzing the Samian borderzone as a node within the elastic border regime, this paper shows how camps, as a key infrastructure space, become durable, normalized, and affectively charged sites of governance rather than temporary spaces of exception

Artemis Fyssa is a sociologist and postdoctoral researcher in the Elastic Borders project (funded by NOMIS) at the University of Graz. She received her PhD in Sociology (cum laude) from the University of Basel in 2025. Her research examines contemporary border and migration regimes through ethnographic work, with a focus on island borderzones in Greece and the Greek–Turkish maritime borderscape. She focuses on border governance as enacted through infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, and everyday practices, and on how these processes contribute to the normalization of crisis and confinement, producing broader sociopolitical reverberations that shape political subjectivities and moral registers.

Elastic Bordering through Encampment and Transfer: Ethnographic Notes from Tenerife, Canary Islands

Mirco Buoso (University of Graz, Austria)

This paper offers an ethnographic account of Tenerife (Canary Islands) as a key site within the western Euro-African borderscape where border elasticity becomes particularly legible through shifting arrangements of encampment, reception, and onward mobility management. Based on fieldwork conducted between 2023 and 2025, it maps how migration governance has been enacted since the renewed Atlantic crossings to the archipelago from 2020, with particular attention to the infrastructures and institutional ecologies through which people on the move are received, processed, and moved on. After outlining early emergency responses, the paper focuses on the shift away from prolonged on-island confinement and retention toward a transfer-oriented approach that accelerates onward movement to mainland Spain. It argues that this reconfiguration became possible only through the establishment and differentiation of multiple typologies of camps and reception sites—hybrid, carceral-humanitarian spaces in which people are rendered administratively “transferable” through categorisation, scheduling, and logistical coordination. The paper then shows how these arrangements have reworked both the public presence of migration and the island’s perceptions of crisis and emergency: largely muted at the scale of everyday public space, intensified in proximity to specific infrastructures and for on-the-ground institutional and civil-society actors, and nonetheless politically reactivated through governmental crisis narratives and policy measures. The paper concludes by situating these dynamics within broader island debates in which, for many members of the local communities, the most consequential “mobility pressure” is not perceived coming from migration.

Mirco Buoso is Principal Researcher in the NOMIS Foundation–funded project Elastic Borders: Rethinking the Borders of the 21st Century, conducting ethnographic research on the socio-political ramifications of the EU border regime in the Canary Islands (Spain). He is a doctoral candidate in Law and Politics at the University of Graz (CSEES) and a member of the doctoral programme “Migration – Diversität – Globale Gesellschaften.” His work moves across Political Science, Sociology of Law and critical criminology, and International Relations. He holds an MA (cum laude) in International Relations (curriculum focus: International Criminology) and a BA in International Development and Cooperation from the University of Bologna.

Legal Techniques of Elasticity: The Erosion of Rights through the Fiction of Non-Entry

Angelika Adensamer (University of Graz, Austria)

The EU Migration Pact has greatly expanded the use of detention and de facto detention. One of the measures contained in the Pact is the “fiction of non-entry,” a legal construct under which individuals who have physically entered EU territory are nevertheless deemed, in law, not to have entered. In practice, individuals subject to the fiction of non-entry are held in detention or de facto detention while being denied the legal status that would trigger full procedural safeguards. These provisions have attracted significant criticism because they deprive People on the Move of rights that originate from territorial presence, most notably the Right to Asylum and to have an asylum request examined through an orderly administrative procedure. This fiction thus exemplifies a broader decoupling of law from factual reality, specifically from the EU’s territorial borders. This decoupling enables the Elasticity of Borders through the separation of territorial presence from legal rights, and legal definitions from facts. This contribution asks, first, how the fiction of non-entry operates as a matter of law, through a doctrinal analysis of its legal structure, effects, and relationship to territoriality, procedural safeguards, human rights and international law. Second, it examines on a conceptual level how this fiction can be understood as a legal technique enabling Elasticity of Borders, and how the meaning and operation of borders is reshaped by it.

Angelika Adensamer holds a law degree from the University of Vienna and a Master’s in Criminology and Criminal Justice from the University of Oxford. She is a researcher in the Elastic Borders Project at the University of Graz, where her work focuses on the European Union’s evolving border policies. Her doctoral dissertation examined legal remedies against algorithmic evidence in administrative procedures. In 2024, she was awarded the Austrian Academy of Sciences Dissertation Prize for Migration Research. Her previous research has focused on state surveillance, algorithmic regulation, and administrative law.

By sea and by land: mapping the elasticity of European and North American borderscapes through artistic intervention

Carolyn Defrin (University of Graz, Austria)

This presentation shares early research findings from a recent field trip along the U.S./Mexico border, engaging with museums and community-based arts initiatives at a moment of intensified securitization, detention, and border violence. It places these encounters in dialogue with an ongoing artistic research project in Samos, Greece and Tenerife, Spain—two island contexts shaped by Europe’s camp-based migration regime. Across these sites, the presentation explores how artworks and artistic practices tell stories that diverge from dominant border narratives of crisis, threat, and

control. Rather than reproducing linear accounts of emergency or enforcement, the works examined enact what I describe as a form of narrative and temporal elasticity: they speak simultaneously to past histories, present conditions, and future possibilities, opening imaginative space beyond carceral logics of separation and containment. Focusing on specific artworks and participatory projects from the U.S./Mexico border, the presentation highlights how artistic interventions have facilitated relationships among border actors—migrants, local residents, artists, activists, and cultural workers—that differ markedly from those structured by detention, surveillance, and exclusion. These findings are then placed in comparative conversation with artistic practices in Tenerife and Samos, including my own installation- and workshop-based research, which brings diverse actors together to collectively imagine more humane migration futures.

Carolyn Defrin is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at the University of Graz, researching the role of art in border zones. A socially engaged artist, researcher, and facilitator, her practice centers less-heard voices; bringing disparate communities into dialogue through creative activity around urgent societal issues such as migration, housing, health, and social cohesion. Originally from the United States, with an early career in Chicago theatre, her work now spans installation, music, and poetry across the UK, Europe, and beyond. Recent artistic research projects include a series of films about migrant artists navigating the UK's hostile environment policies (London Southbank University), an interactive digital mural for a London children's health centre (Dulwich Picture Gallery), and an intergenerational housing exhibition with low-income elders (Levitt Bernstein Architects, Hammersmith United Charities).

Surviving the Atlantic, Arriving Unwell: The European Union Border Regimes and Migrant Health in the Canary Islands

Charlie Yves Ngoudji Tameko (University of Graz, Austria)

In response to calls made at the Second Global Consultation on Migration and Health, recent literature highlights the impact of migration on health outcomes and the urgent need for inclusive health policies for migrants. The new European Union Pact on Migration and Asylum adopted in 2024 recognises migrant health as a relevant concern at the border by introducing health checks that will enable the rapid identification of migrants' potential needs. The pact therefore remains largely focused on diagnostic and procedural issues, addressing health after arrival rather than examining how border arrangements themselves contribute to health deterioration during transit. Furthermore, debates on migration and health have largely focused on selection mechanisms such as the “healthy migrant effect,” which suggests that migration is mainly undertaken by individuals in good physical condition. While this framework may apply at the point of departure, it fails to take into account the transformative and harmful effects of contemporary border regimes on migrants' bodies during the journey itself. Restrictive migration policies, the tightening of legal channels, and the externalisation of border control on the Atlantic route oblige migrants to undertake increasingly long and dangerous sea crossings, resulting in

disappearances and deaths, as well as a deterioration in their health upon arrival. This study draws on the case of undocumented migrants who successfully reached Tenerife after crossing the Atlantic to examine how the European border, which expands and contracts through deterrence measures, remote surveillance, delays in providing assistance, and the externalisation of migration control, generates health problems. It shows that arrival does not mark the end of violence at the border, but rather its inscription on bodies, with deteriorating health becoming a direct consequence of border governance, rather than individual vulnerability or a pre-existing condition. The findings challenge dominant discourses that present poor health among migrants primarily as a problem of integration after arrival or as a consequence of precariousness in their country of origin, shifting attention to considering health as the result of a migration journey shaped by border governance.

Charlie Yves Ngoudji Tameko, research affiliate at the Centre for Social Inequality and Governance Studies (CEDESOG) at the University of La Laguna is a Visiting Fellow in the Fields of Excellence ‘Dimensions of Europe’ at the University of Graz. He completed his PhD in Economics (Cum Laude) in March 2024 at the University of La Laguna. His research focused on the interrelationship between health and well-being through assessing the effectiveness of antimalarial policies’ implementation on its prevalence and mortality in Sub-Sahara African countries using the Malaria Policy Index (MaPI) he constructed. His current research lines include health and migration.

PANEL #2: LEARNING AND EMANCIPATION AS SPACES OF WORLDBUILDING

Reordered Abolitionist Worldbuilding within U.S.-based Youth Carceral States: Educational Guideposts from Formerly Incarcerated Youth

Brian Cabral (University of Texas at Austin, U.S.)

This presentation showcases a paper that is structured in two parts. The first demonstrates how purported ‘crises’ of post-war (neo)liberal world orders is continually an elusive exceptionalist project central to U.S. empire that contradicts its deeply entrenched deployment of punishment via its attendant technologies of exclusion, repression, management, and captivity, often via physical confinement (Go, 2009; Peoples, 2024; Thompson, 2010; Wacquant, 2009). Specifically, I argue that this crisis extends to youth-based contexts, where youth continually bear the brunt of failed/failing (neo)liberal economic/political infrastructures and of captivity within the youth carceral state (Cabral, 2025; Jacobs, 2014; Muncie, 2005), including the co-production of instability, vulnerability, and precarity that they experience (Millar, 2017). This section attends to the deceptive promises heralded by past and current orchestrations of (neo)liberal worlds and the shortcomings and implications of this inheritance for youth now and in their precariously captured futures. The second part shows how colonially carceral state-sanctioned education projects through normative public

schooling are conscripted to the contradictions I laid out above (Rudolph & Thomas, 2023). Consequently, I argue that mass public schooling, once co-opted as a globalization project for advancement and the democratization of knowledge and polity, cyclically reproduces existing (neo)liberal world orders premised on population management strategies through control and captivity, in turn salvaging and re-stabilizing contemporary articulations of empire (Quisumbing King, 2019). Anchored in individual reflections from a community-based project in the San Francisco Bay Area, USA focused on youth reentry and school reintegration post-custody, I demonstrate a collection of stories indicating how formerly incarcerated youth, for example, engage in alternative educational and pedagogical practices that re-order the trickling down of the manufactured vulnerabilities they experience. Focusing on their embodied and articulated praxes here provides educational guideposts on abolitionist worldbuilding and refusals to accept U.S. carceral empire's insistence on the permanence of youth's inherited (neo)liberal world-orders. This paper is in conversation with the conference's theme that positions formerly incarcerated youth as legitimate knowledge producers and whose ways of living and being provide us with necessary lessons for thinking about the potential for an unfinished restructuring of an abolitionist democratic society.

Brian Cabral (he/él), Ph.D., is a Chicagoan, sociologist, and community-based educational ethnographer currently laboring as an Assistant Professor of Youth & Community Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. His broader research is attentive to questions related to race, place, language ideology, and carcerality. Brian's current writing focus is on rearticulating school prison relations as intimately interconnected, reproducing state-sanctioned forms of educational confinement central to U.S. governance premised on punishment and marginalization. Simultaneously, his work is anchored in recasting abolitionism as a pedagogical project, lending us insight on varied ways to co-construct life-affirming worlds, structures, and communities.

Freedom Schools as Sustained Emancipatory Spaces: Black Student Reflections on Carceral Discipline, the School-to-prison Pipeline, and Renewed Possibilities for Racial Belonging

Marcia Watson-Vandiver (Towson University, U.S.) & **Jessica Lee Stovall** (University of Wisconsin-Madison, U.S.)

This presentation examines a virtual Ethnic Studies course where a Black teacher facilitated curricula centered on ethnic social solidarity movements, colonial legacies, and antiblackness inside four youth carceral facilities in the United States. Drawing on classroom observation, teacher interviews, and student focus groups, this work explores how teaching abolition-oriented Ethnic Studies within sites of confinement can foster a shared commitment to social justice by reshaping young people's understandings of political agency. We position Ethnic Studies as a counter-carceral practice that interrupts the logics of punishment and disposability. Students engaged critically with national and local histories of resistance, and, through dialogue, storytelling, and presentations by nonprofit organizers, articulated new ways of to engage in a world that framed them as

disposable. Even within the limitations of a Zoom screen, the pedagogy of direct teaching and collaborative discussion enabled youth to connect their personal experiences of confinement to broader structures of racial capitalism and colonial governance. The findings suggest that Ethnic Studies, in conjunction with an educator who teaches for liberatory aims, can operate as abolitionist praxis. This pairing has the potential to cultivate critical consciousness and relational belonging under conditions designed to suppress both. We build on the notion that abolition democracy must include educational practices that affirm the humanity and political imagination of young people living within carceral regimes.

Dr. Jessica Lee Stovall is an Assistant Professor of African American Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison with affiliations with the Curriculum and Instruction and Education Policy Studies departments in the School of Education. Her research sits at the intersection of Black Studies and education, and her work is in loving partnership with Black community organizations. Her most recent research was in collaboration with the Black Teacher Project out of Oakland, CA, to explore how Black teachers create fugitive spaces to navigate and combat antiblackness at their respective school sites. She holds a B.S. in Secondary Education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a M.S. in Literature from Northwestern University, and a Ph.D. in Race, Inequality, and Language in Education (RILE) at Stanford University. Before beginning her doctoral studies, Jessica taught high school English for 11 years in the Chicagoland area.

Dr. Marcia (Marcia) Watson-Vandiver is an Associate Professor of Education at Towson University in Baltimore County, Maryland. She received her B.S. in Middle Grades Education from Mercer University. After her undergraduate studies, she worked for Atlanta Public Schools as an alternative middle school teacher and received her M.Ed. in Educational Policy and Leadership from Georgia State University. She later received her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction (Urban Education) from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Marcia's research interests focus on various intersections of Black education, including: resistance pedagogy, decolonial studies, and emancipatory learning.

“I Am From Here and There”: Belonging, Reception, and School Inclusion of Latin American Migrant Children in Brazil

Gabriela Azevedo de Aguiar (Fundação Oswaldo Cruz, Brazil)

This presentation discusses key findings from doctoral research that examines how Latin American migrant children and adolescents construct meanings around their migratory trajectories and their insertion into Brazilian public schools. Grounded in a psychosociological and critical intercultural perspective, the study places children and adolescents at the center of analysis, challenging adult-centric approaches that often render accompanied migrant minors invisible within migration and education policies (Moscoso, 2008; Assumpção & Aguiar, 2019). The research was carried out in public schools in Rio de Janeiro and employed qualitative methodologies, including semi-structured interviews and psychosocial support

workshops. Through attentive listening and intercultural analysis, the study sought to apprehend not only what participants explicitly express, but also the symbolic frameworks, silences, and interpretative schemes through which experiences of migration, school reception, and belonging are negotiated (Schütz, 2010; Aguiar & Ozella, 2013). The findings reveal persistent gaps in schools' preparedness to receive migrant students, particularly regarding language practices, institutional expectations, and unequal power relations that shape children's everyday experiences. These dynamics affect how migrant children and adolescents navigate feelings of belonging, exclusion, and recognition within educational spaces. The analysis draws on the understanding of culture as a reciprocal and socially constructed process rooted in concrete contexts (Berger & Luckmann, 1967), and on intercultural approaches that emphasize how meaning is produced and translated through unequal cultural codes (Hall, 2016; ElHajji, 2019). In addition to analytical contributions, the research generated two practice-oriented outputs co-constructed from the voices of the participants. The Atlas of Activities for the Promotion of Intercultural and Welcoming Environments compiles pedagogical activities proposed by migrant children and adolescents to support inclusive school practices. The illustrated book "I Am From Here and There" was developed from the participants' narratives as a tool to foster dialogue with Brazilian classmates and educators in receiving classrooms. By presenting empirical findings alongside these research-based materials, this presentation contributes to discussions on childhood, migration, and belonging in transnational contexts, highlighting the importance of listening to children's perspectives in the development of intercultural and inclusive educational environments.

Gabriela Azevedo de Aguiar is Social and Clinical Psychologist with over 25 years of professional experience, she holds a PhD and master's degree in Psychosociology of Communities and Social Ecology from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Brazil, and is the coordinator of the Territorial Development Project at the President's Office of Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (FIOCRUZ), working at the intersection of public health, social inequalities, and community-based policies in contexts involving populations in situations of vulnerability. She is member of the research group *Diaspotics – Transnational Migrations and Intercultural Communication* (UFRJ), and member of the Latino-European Social Psychological Research Network on Migration, Displacement and Inclusion (La-EU-MiDI). Her academic work focuses on migration, childhood and youth, belonging, and intercultural relations.

PANEL #3: INCARCERATION, REHABILITATION, AND DECOLONIAL ETHICS IN PUERTO RICO

The Context of Incarceration in Puerto Rico: Colonialism and Coloniality

Sara Santiago-Estrada (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)

This presentation critically addresses the historical and social context of carcerality in Puerto Rico. It highlights the implications of the United States' structural colonialism in shaping policies and practices. Also, describes coloniality as a significant force to perpetuate mental models of inferiority, stereotypes of the poor and Black people, and the sense of powerlessness to enforce a dignified approach to rehabilitation. It describes two historical moments that illustrate key elements for understanding and analyzing policies on incarceration and rehabilitation in Puerto Rico. First, through the analysis of the correctional rehabilitation provision in the 1952 Puerto Rican Constitution; second, through the analysis of the punitive state policy “Strong fits against crime” (Mano Dura contra el Crimen, in Spanish) implemented by the government in 1993. As a central result, this presentation states the porosity between social and economic conditions and criminality. This porosity has been and continues to be ignored by policymakers and practitioners in the incarceration context. It concludes that recognizing this porosity is a challenge for the state and society to adopt and support a decolonial and dignified prison policy for the country.

Sara Santiago-Estrada is a professor in the Graduate Psychology Program at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. She holds a master's degree in counseling psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a PhD in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. She has extensive experience in the design, development, and evaluation of educational and community projects in Puerto Rico and the United States. Her research interests include alliances between nonprofit organizations, dialogic consulting, subjectivities in precarious labor, governmental learning, and psychology training programs. She is a member of the International Diplomat in Dialogic Practices of the Taos Institute.

Correctional Rehabilitation in Puerto Rico

Maribel Báez-Lebrón (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)

In this presentation, I critically analyze correctional rehabilitation in Puerto Rico. Rehabilitation is defined as any discourse or practice that aims to transform or normalize the offender into a citizen who is socially defined as non-deviant. Rehabilitation is also the aspiration to provide a person with the opportunity to change their thinking, feelings, and behavior, thereby taking responsibility for their actions and transforming themselves. It

is presented as an alternative to inflicting pain on convicted offenders. Its goal is to reduce the likelihood that offenders will reoffend. However, this utilitarian claim places most of the responsibility for rehabilitation on the offender. The discourse of rehabilitation implies that crime is an exercise of free will. Criminality is influenced, if not largely determined, by social factors, which are now often referred to as risk factors. These factors should not be reduced to the individual but considered in the context of the social inequalities and lack of opportunities that a person faces. Our prison system and our rehabilitation and reintegration programs have not been successful, despite our wishes. Picó (1994) and Olmo (2024) agree that Puerto Rico's prisons do not fulfill their function, are not deterrents, and do not rehabilitate. When analyzing crime and incarceration as a complex phenomenon, a multidimensional paradigm must be adopted. I propose a decolonial model of reintegration. This model would integrate restorative justice and therapeutic jurisprudence from the outset of incarceration. By transcending a focus on pathology and considering social determinants, it aims for a true transformation of the individual, helping them redefine their past and find their place in society.

Dr. Maribel Báez has 30 years of experience in rehabilitation counseling and 23 years as a professor and researcher, she is an outstanding professional and a full Professor at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. She holds a PhD in Psychology (Industrial/Organizational), a master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, and is certified as a Vocational Evaluation Specialist (CVE) and a Vocational Evaluation Expert (IPEC). Her work focuses on Rehabilitation Counseling and Work and Organizational Psychology (WOP) from a critical perspective. She has published around 20 articles and chapters, supervised numerous theses, and presented her work in several professional and legislative forums.

An Ethical Reconfiguration of Incarceration in Puerto Rico

Tania Garcia-Ramos, Marcos Irizarry, Amaris Nieves López (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)

In this presentation, we discuss alternatives for an ethical reconfiguration of imprisonment from diverse perspectives, including education and community work that focus on values and capacities (Nieves López et al., 2025). Also, the abolitionist proposal is considered a radical, transdisciplinary approach to question the prison as a means of addressing crime in society. There is an urgent need to demand alternatives to prison sentences for all, while also developing more humane structures that allow those deprived of their freedom to have contact with nature as well as their families and loved ones. Although many questions remain, education must be at the heart of the restorative system we are creating (Olmo Agrait, 2024). The educational proposals put forward by Picó (1999), as well as the importance of community integration in Román's (1993) equation at the end of the 20th century, are taken into consideration. We present research by Ward & Heffernan (2017) that proposes a more conceptual and philosophical alternative: abandoning the view of rehabilitation as mere risk reduction and adopting it as the fostering of values and human flourishing. Also, Shoham & Timor (2006) analyze the integration of ex-offenders into Israeli kibbutzim —communities organized around

collective work and social cooperation. Finally, we discuss that abolitionism has questioned the existence of imprisonment and the penal system. In addition, the system's failure to prevent and assess conflicts, as well as the resulting dissatisfaction among people who lose cases conducted by the state, led to harm to others. Abolitionist feminism is a collaboration between two approaches: Abolitionism and Feminism. This approach proposes an anti-racist and anti-capitalist approach to abandon the dominant correctional system that includes the prison as punishment and correctional rehabilitation, at the same time.

Dr. Tania Garcia-Ramos holds a PhD in Social Psychology from Complutense University of Madrid, Spain—full professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. For 27 years, she has been teaching, conducting research, and publishing mainly in Work and Organizational Psychology (WOP), from a historical, psychosocial, and critical perspective. She has co-edited four books and published more than 70 articles in academic journals, peer-reviewed books, professional bulletins, and others. She has presented more than 90 papers at international, local, and professional conferences and forums, and has supervised over 60 doctoral and master's theses.

Marcos Irizarry completed a bachelor's degree in social sciences with a concentration in Forensic Psychology, an emphasis in Rehabilitation Counseling, and a minor in Business Development at the University of Puerto Rico, Ponce Campus. Currently, he is pursuing a master's degree in work and organizational psychology at the Río Piedras Campus. Throughout his academic journey, he has combined research, leadership, and community engagement. Additionally, he has experience in educational counseling programs and environmental initiatives integrating psychology, education, and social engagement. In 2025, he presented a research paper at the III Franco-Latin American Colloquium on Critical Work Psychology held in Santiago, Chile.

Amaris Nieves López is completing her final year of a bachelor's degree in psychology at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. She has participated in the research program, Development of a Psychosocial Intervention for Parents Learning about Interpersonal Relationships, Depression, and Anxiety when Facing Diabetes in Adolescents. She has also researched university students' perceptions of the rehabilitation of formerly incarcerated individuals. Additionally, she completed an internship at the Law Studies Program at the Inter American University of Puerto Rico. She aspires to integrate her interests in psychology and law in her future academic and professional endeavors.

From Gaza to Rio de Janeiro: Extermination Policies and “Ungrievable” Lives

Fiammetta Bonfigli (University of Vienna, Austria)

In *Deadly Symbiosis: Where Prisons and Ghetto Meet and Mesh* (2001), Loïc Wacquant argues that the increasing mass incarceration of Black populations in the United States emerged from the crisis of the ghetto as a mechanism of caste control, and that the logics, rationalities, and practices of the prison expanded to reshape the ghetto itself. In *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (2004), Judith Butler argues that the ability to mourn and the public recognition of a life are not private but political acts, shaped by power structures that determine whose lives are considered “grievable” or worthy of grief. She contends that the denial of grief to certain groups constitutes a form of political violence, and conversely, that public mourning can be manipulated by the state to justify ongoing violence against others. Drawing on these frameworks, this paper examines the Brazilian context—particularly the recent massacre of October 28, 2025, in Rio de Janeiro’s favelas of Complexo do Alemão and Penha, where more than 100 people were killed by police forces during a so-called mass operation “against narcos.” I argue that these police practices of extermination (chacinas) reveal a continuum between carceral spaces and favelas, exposing extermination as a state policy rather than an exceptional occurrence. A parallel can be drawn with Gaza, where thousands of Palestinians are confined, abused, and tortured in Israeli prisons that resemble concentration camps (e.g., Sdei Teman). Simultaneously, the mass killings at aid sites operated by the GHF, alongside the systematic starvation and bombardment of what has been termed the world’s largest open-air prison, expose the persistent links among confinement, concentration, and extermination. Discourses of disposability and “ungrievable” lives are mobilized to justify violence: in Rio, over 100 people killed by military police in the Complexo do Alemão favela are labeled “suspects” or “criminals,” while in Gaza, the terms “terrorists,” “ Hamas supporters,” and “human animals” underpin processes of dehumanization, extermination, and genocide. By juxtaposing the cases of Gaza and Rio de Janeiro, this study shows how distinct contexts converge in deploying extermination as a state technology of control, redefining the carceral space and the “zone of exception,” and enacting what Mbembe (2003) calls necropolitics—a politics of death that renders some lives unworthy of life or grief.

Fiammetta Bonfigli is a post-doc researcher at the Legal and Constitutional History of the University of Vienna, where she teaches Transitional Justice and Legal Sociology, and a Collaborating Professor at the Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul (Porto Alegre, Brazil). She holds a Ph.D. in Legal Studies and Sociology of Law from the University of Milan, and defended her thesis on “Immigration, Security, Neighbourhood. A Study between Milan and Madrid” in 2014. From 2014 to 2023 she lived and worked in Brazil, researching Police Violence, State Crime, Transitional Justice mechanisms and Social Movements, first at La Salle University (Canoas, RS) and then at the Federal University of Espírito Santo (Vitória).

Gaza as the World's Largest Camp: Settler Colonialism, Carcerality, and the Politics of Belonging

Abdrabou A. H. Alanzi (Al-Azhar University- Gaza, Palestine)

This paper aims to explore Gaza as a unique and paradigmatic site of settler colonialism and open-air carceral governance, where geography itself becomes a continuous space of isolation, restricted movement, and constrained political belonging. The title underscores that, due to years of blockade, structural violence, and systemic destruction, Gaza functions as the world's largest open-air detention space, where residents experience a quasi-permanent condition of geographical and political incarceration. The study focuses on the core research problem: the intersection of colonialist policies, social exclusion, and systematic human rights restrictions, seeking to understand how these policies produce a reality characterized by advanced forms of institutionalized violence and the systematic curtailment of freedom. Furthermore, it examines the connections between physical camps, social and political belonging, and modern carceral technologies, within the broader scholarly debates on necropolitics, settler colonialism, and Abolition Democracy. The research draws on a multidisciplinary theoretical framework, engaging the works of Achille Mbembe (Necropolitics), Patrick Wolfe (Settler Colonial Studies), Angela Davis (Abolition Democracy), and Noura Erakat (Palestinian Rights and International Law), to offer a critical analysis of Gaza as a space of ongoing collective detention and deprivation of fundamental rights. Additionally, the paper explores the potential of abolitionist frameworks to reimagine justice, liberation, and political belonging, positioning Palestinian resistance as part of a broader global struggle against systems of oppression and settler colonial governance. This study contributes to interdisciplinary conversations on camps and carcerality, highlighting how legal, social, and ethical perspectives can inform frameworks for human rights protection and the dismantling of institutionalized enclosures, while providing insights into strategies that challenge prolonged systems of confinement and structural violence.

Dr. Abdrabou A. H. Alanzi is Chairperson of the Department of Political Science at Al-Azhar University – Gaza and an Assistant Professor of International Relations with over 20 years of teaching experience. His research focuses on conflict studies, democracy, reconciliation, and genocide studies. He has developed Master's and Ph.D. programs in Political Science, founded the International Relations Lab for Documenting Genocide Crimes in Gaza, and directed the Reconciliation and Peacebuilding Center. Dr. Alanzi has contributed extensively to academic publications, projects on peacebuilding, and civic education, while actively engaging in public service and local and international scholarly initiatives.

Hearing Voices - On the Entanglements of Sonic Warfare and Biometric (Voice) Recognition

Johanna Lutz (University of Applied Arts Vienna, Austria)

From Indian welfare systems to the borders of fortress Europe, and from German “anti-terrorism” policing to aid distribution in Gaza, biometrics are presented discursively and used politically as a central and infallible technology for secure and easy access as well as objective and straightforward identification. For the 2026 Graz/Puerto Rico conference, I want to broaden and specify my current work for an MA thesis on voice biometrics in German so-called anti-terror policing and possibilities of activist resistance against it by focusing on the entanglements of (US-American) sonic warfare and (voice) biometrics-based policing. The history of US interest in sounding into the body as a means of forcing subjugation and sounding out the body as a practice of identification finds its roots in settler colonial slave marking and reaches beyond CIA-instrumentalized research in the 1950s to sonic torture in Guantanamo Bay and joined projects with the EU and Israel on biometric voice identification in INTERPOL policing “crime and terrorism.” I argue that accessing this history through sound offers a productive perspective of thinking sonic torture and sonic surveillance as two dimensions of the same phenomenon, thus helping to connect externalized warfare and internal policing through their sonic manifestations. Understanding these entanglements is crucial in the fight for abolition and social justice, as it allows for a more detailed analysis of carceral systems on the one hand, and more targeted strategies of struggle and resistance on the other. To make this argument I will draw on sound studies scholarship around the voice as identifier and metaphor, surveillance studies research concerning the genealogy of (voice) biometrics, and the use of (voice) biometrics in policing, as well as analyses of sonic warfare. As conclusion and outlook I plan to present some of the practical individualized resistance tactics against biometric voice identification that are the research product of my MA thesis and a short overview of collective strategies in the struggle against the sonic warfare-voice biometrics-complex.

Johanna Lutz is an antifascist and abolitionist activist based between Berlin and Vienna, as well as an almost-finished master’s student in the MA Arts and Culture Studies at University of Applied Arts, Vienna. Johanna strives to make academic work productive for activist contexts by drawing on anti-colonial, marxist, queerfeminist, and radical liberationist theories to understand and analyse technologies of surveillance, politics of sound in a variety of contexts (mostly colonial archives and state-subject-encounters) and mechanisms of knowledge production.

From the War on Terror to War on Muslims and Migrants: Securitization, Islamophobia, and Executive Power

Mansoor Adayfi (School of Engineering Management, Serbia)

More than two decades after 9/11, the “war on terror” persists not as a discrete military campaign but as an enduring mode of governance. This presentation interrogates how counterterrorism has reconfigured legal, political, and social orders in ways that normalize exceptional powers, expand executive authority, and embed racialized hierarchies into everyday practices of security. It revisits foundational measures such as the Authorization for Use of Military Force and the USA PATRIOT Act not simply as emergency responses, but as constitutive moments in the consolidation of a preemptive security state. Practices once framed as temporary—indefinite detention, extrajudicial violence, mass surveillance—have become institutionalized, raising questions about the erosion of legal constraints and the redefinition of accountability. At the same time, this work foregrounds the racialized and civilizational logics underpinning these developments, asking how Islamophobia has operated not only as prejudice but as a structuring principle of security policy, one shaping who is rendered suspect, governable, and expendable. It further examines how these logics have expanded beyond their initial targets, informing the policing of migration, the management of borders, and the surveillance of dissent. Attention is also given to the role of political language and media in legitimizing these transformations. Terms such as “enhanced interrogation,” “black sites,” and “extreme vetting” function not merely as euphemisms, but as discursive tools that enable the normalization of coercion and the depoliticization of violence. Rather than treating the “War on Terror” as an episode that can end, here it is approached as an evolving assemblage of legal authorities, security practices, and ideological frames that continues to expand across domains—from counterterrorism to migration control and foreign policy. In doing so, this presentation asks: what does it mean to live under a permanent state of exception, and how might its logics be contested?

Mansoor Adayfi is a writer, advocate, and former Guantánamo Bay prisoner. He spent nearly fifteen years without charge in U.S. custody, including eight years in solitary confinement. Originally from Yemen, he was released to Serbia in 2016. Since then, he has focused on continuing his education and on writing about his experiences. Adayfi’s writings have been published in numerous forums and newspapers, including *The New York Times*. These include “In Our Prison on the Sea” and “Taking Marriage Class at Guantánamo Bay.” He is the author of the essay “Did We Survive Torture?,” which is included in the edited volume *Witnessing Torture: Perspectives of Torture Survivors and Human Rights Workers* (2018). Hachette Books is the publisher of his 2021 memoir, *Don’t Forget Us Here*.

PANEL #5: CIRCUITS OF ENCLOSURE, CURRENTS OF OPPOSITION: ABOLITION-ISM AND TRANSNATIONAL CARCERALITY

Administrative Errors: Kilmar Ábrego and the U.S.-El Salvador Carceral Archipelago

Jorge E. Cuéllar (Dartmouth College, U.S.)

This paper situates the experience of Kilmar Ábrego García, the Maryland man recently deported to El Salvador's notorious CECOT maximum security prison alongside hundreds of other non-criminal Salvadorans and Venezuelans disappeared in Nayib Bukele's gulags. Examining this phenomenon transnationally, I discuss the place of CECOT in Bukele's economic plans, and how his servitude to the U.S. deportation machine marks a new turn in U.S.-Salvadoran relations. Engaging in close readings and discourse analysis of Salvadoran, U.S., and international reporting, as well as the official messaging of the governments of the U.S. and El Salvador, I offer an analysis of the transnational connections between the U.S. deportation system and El Salvador's expanding carceral state. Here, I examine the "cash-for-prisoner" deal as part economic strategy, ideological partnership, and a temporary fix for the exhaustion of neoliberalism in El Salvador. As democratic erosion marches on and imperils us all, Salvadorans in the U.S. and in El Salvador are articulating ways to resist Bukele's punitive enclosures and challenge the legitimacy of this draconian, dehumanizing pact that has emerged between Trumpism and Bukelismo.

Jorge E. Cuéllar is an interdisciplinary scholar who focuses on the histories, politics, and daily life of modern Central America. At present, he is finishing his first book titled, *Everyday Life and Everyday Death in El Salvador* (Duke), a grounded study of the Central American nation's postwar to "post-postwar" transition. Cuéllar is appointed Assistant Professor of Central American Studies in the Department of Latin American, Latino & Caribbean Studies at Dartmouth College and is a member of the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) Editorial Committee.

Transcolonial Ruination: Abolitionist Optics in Penal Photo-Textuality

Michael Reyes Salas (Vassar College, U.S.)

This paper encourages readers and viewers to appreciate the role of hybrid literary and artistic works in re-imagining commemorative practices surrounding carceral histories. I begin by asking: Why do some former prisons become cultural heritage sites while others are razed to oblivion? By investigating how the transformation of carceral sites into sensational, spectacle-driven excursion destinations commodifies violence for mass cultural consumption, I then move to the question: How can countervisuality play a role in changing how we (un)see prisons? Using a transcolonial approach,

I focus on case studies across Guyane, Río Piedras, and Belfast, to demonstrate how collectives of visual artists and writers use photo-textuality—which combines serialized photographic plasticity and meditative, critical essay writing—to re-envision penal infrastructure in a state of ruin. I make the case that looking at defunct prison buildings is an important step towards fathoming the obsolescence of the prison. The hybridized genre of the photo-text, I argue, allows us to reckon with penal heritage otherwise by prompting spectators to activate radical modes of witnessing that denaturalize carcerality and facilitate the ability to visualize prison abolition.

Michael Reyes Salas is a comparatist scholar who studies the question of carceral heritage from a transcolonial perspective. He has taught in prisons across Texas and New York. He researches the work of Caribbean writers, African diasporic artists, penal spectatorship, and visual culture. He has published in the *CENTRO Journal of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies*, *Dalhousie French Studies*, and *Asymptote*. He studied Comparative Literature at the University of Texas at Austin and was a Chester Dale Fellow in the Department of Photography at the Met Museum. He is Assistant Professor of Africana Studies at Vassar College, where he co-advises the Prison Studies Correlate.

The Prison Détour of National Culture. The Case of Puerto Rico

Jorge Pavez Ojeda (University College London, UK)

Considered as indexes and icons of the cultural archive of the nation, the prison poetics and aesthetics produced by Puerto Rican writers, musicians, and painters allow us to approach what I call the prison *détour* of national culture, which I explain based on two determining conditions of Puerto Rican history: the colonial condition and the archipelagic condition. A review of the works and carceral biographies of three prominent Puerto Rican creators—the poet Francisco Matos Paoli (1915–2000), the popular singer Ismael Rivera (1931–1987), and the painter Elizam Escobar (1948–2021)—will allow me to characterise the place occupied by the carceral cultural production as 1) the projection of community as a desire fuelled by forced uprooting, 2) the effect of visions and auditions that cross and elude the architecture of confinement and punishment devices, and 3) the allegory of community as a counterpoint that interrupts the linear temporality, binary hierarchy, and isolate spatiality of prison confinement. Thus, we will see the unique process of cultural elaboration through which prison becomes a place of creation and enunciation where the meaning of the national is elaborated as redemption and cultural authority is reinforced.

Jorge Pavez Ojeda is currently a Research Fellow in the Department of Anthropology at University College London, working on the project ‘Hidden in Plain Sight: Incarceration’s racialised health impacts in Latin America,’ led by Caroline Parker. His research covers historical anthropology,

visual studies and the history of race relations in Latin America and the Caribbean. He has recently published the books *Imbunches de la dictadura. El fundamento sádico de la dominación neoliberal* (Metales Pesados, 2023) and *Sonidos de la revuelta* (Macul ediciones, 2025).

Resisting Divide and Conquer Strategies and the Agreement to End All Hostilities Amongst the California Prison Population

Angelica Camacho (San Francisco State University, U.S.)

This paper explores the groundbreaking mobilization of prisoners via the End All Hostilities Agreement (EAHA) that emerged out of the 2011 and 2013 Pelican Bay-California, prisoner hunger strikes. The End All Hostilities Agreement called on the prisoner population to end all hostilities amongst racial groups in prison and come together to combat the corruption and abuse within the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). While sensationalized media often portrays prisoners as violent predators who are the “worst of the worst,” it often ignores how the CDCR mobilizes prison violence to prevent rehabilitative reforms, stop in-prison programming, and advance tough-on-crime punishment. A close examination of the End All Hostilities Agreement reveals how CDCR orchestrates prison violence, relies on confidential informants to create conflict, and benefits from racial divisions amongst prisoners. Importantly, the EAHA is a monumental theoretical analysis of the prison industrial complex, where incarcerated people recognize their power as a united force that could transform a corrupt prison system for the benefit of both prisoners and the public.

Angelica Camacho is an Associate Professor in the Department of Criminal Justice Studies at San Francisco State University. Her current research documents the 2011 and 2013 Pelican Bay California Prisoner Hunger Strikes and the subsequent uprising of their families. She engages and forefronts SHU prisoners and their families’ theorization about social transformation and the carceral state. Camacho is active with the Mandela Campaign and California Families to Abolish/Against Solitary Confinement (CFASC) in the struggle to end long-term solitary confinement. She is also a previous Career Enhancement Mellon and Ford Foundation fellow. Her work has been published in journals such as *Kalfou*, *Social Justice*, and *Latino Studies*, and is currently working on a book titled *Unbroken Spirit: The Rise of the California SHU Prison Hunger Strikes*.

Say Nothing to Speak out Loud. Institutional Violence and the Effective Visuality of Relational Resistance

Katja Seidel (University of Innsbruck, Austria)

Forced institutionalisation and/or incarceration of unruly subjects seeks to produce docile inmates compliant with social normativity, the rules of institutional actors and the structures imposed by the system. To resist the subjugation into seemingly all-powerful institutions, inmates use their bodies as the last resorts of resistance. Rejecting food is one way to escape the punishment of the system and to challenge the disciplinary power of institutions. Institutions that fight back in using any means at their disposal – including force feeding ‘to prevent self-harm’ – to maintain control, established (gendered) hierarchies and submission of the subjects at their disposal. In this paper, I engage with the body of the prisoner as a weapon of resistance and empowerment, self-determination, and psychosocial escape from incarceration and institutionalisation. I do so via analysis of two very different filmic engagements: The historical drama mini-series “Say Nothing” (Joshua Zetumer, 2024) which, based on interviews from the Belfast Project, depicts the life of IRA members Dolours and Marion Price. Second is the documentary film “Titicut Follies” (Frederick Wiseman 1962), which presents daily life’s notorious mistreatments at Bridgewater State Hospital for the Criminally Insane through the lens of direct cinema. Using these visual representations as an entrance into a multimodal and multisensory understanding of silent embodied protests and resistance, I engage with hunger strikes and force feeding as contested practice and human rights violation and think through the ways in which filmic representations enable affective engagement with otherwise often obscured practices. I then suggest that film can become a tool of a new humanism as it impacts our sensations and emotions into a different sense of justice that demands change in the face of affective relationality. In conclusion, I thus argue that filmic engagements and the visuality of injustice create affective openings that allow for the public to relate emotionally not only with inmates but with societal norms, historical injustices and the often invisibilised brutality of camps.

Katja Seidel is a Senior Lecturer at the Unit for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Innsbruck and former co-Director of the ‘ethnocineca – International Documentary Film Festival’ in Vienna (2014-23). She is a social anthropologist with expertise in legal anthropology, violence and conflict studies, HR and visual arts. Katja has completed her PhD at Maynooth University where she worked for 10 years. She conducted fieldwork in Argentina, Nicaragua, Ethiopia, Spain and Germany, and co-directed the Holocaust education and research project ‘A Letter to the Stars’ in Vienna. Among her publications are “*Coming full Circle? Broken Pasts and Contested Expectations about the Future*’ Berghahn (2019), ‘History on Trial. H.I.J.O.S., Memory and Reparation in the Court of Tucumán/Argentina,’ Ashgate/Routledge (2018) and most recently the book “*From Legacies to Futures. The Lifeworlds of Older Adults in Europe.*” Berghahn (2025).

What is New About the Emperor's Clothes? Carcerality, Militarization, and International Cold War Politics in Caribbean Literature

Yutaka Yoshida (Chou University, Japan)

This paper will delve into how military culture normalizes incarcerations in the Pacific and Atlantic regions by reading selected works of Caribbean literature written in the 1950s and 1960s. Scholars have indicated that the US military interventions in the Caribbean islands have stimulated the anti-colonial sentiment in the region since the US Navy's occupation of Haiti that began in 1915. This trend culminated in the construction of the U.S. military bases in Trinidad around early 1940 and in the joint intervention of US and Britain against the socialist government of British Guyana in the 1950s and 1960s. Understandably, a number of Trinidadian writers, including Samuel Selvon and V. S. Naipaul, have written about how the inferior statuses they were enforced to experience were strengthened by the powerful presence of the US army. I propose here that some of the writers, such as C.L.R. James and Martin Carter, wrote about the war on the Korean peninsula as it demonstrated to them that the ideological division and military violence of the Cold War era were encroaching on the Caribbean region as well. On the other hand, we can see in Selvon's works that the US occupation could be part of a global phenomenon that might catalyse a spatial and historical difference between East Asia and the Caribbean. In doing so, I would like to reveal how the Cold War intervention in the Caribbean is interrelated with the militarization of the region and the divisive incarceration of the people in East Asia.

Yutaka Yoshida is Associate Professor of Chuo University. His recent interests are Caribbean Literature and Comparative Literature in the Cold War Era. He translated into Japanese Caribbean literature such as George Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin* (Getsuyo-sha, 2019), Stuart Hall's *Familiar Stranger* (Jimbun-shoin, 2021), and C.L.R. James's *Mariners Renegades, and Castaways* (Getsuyo-sha, 2025). His articles on Caribbean literature have been published in *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, *Cultural Studies*, and *Journal of West Indian Literature*.

(Re)Claiming and (Re)Imagining Belonging through the Novel *Rainbow Milk* by Paul Mendez

Bruno Lopes de Almeida (University of Minho, Portugal)

Unquestionably, language and literature, as communicative and sociocultural phenomena (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 1984; Kanavillil Rajagopalan, 2003), hold a crucial role across the numerous domains of the Colonial Matrix of Power (Quijano, 2000). Consequently, it is accurate to state that, in order to pursue more justice-oriented, sustainable, and solidarity-based present(s) and future(s) — questioning, fighting, and moving beyond

coloniality (Quijano, 2000; Lugones, 2007; Mignolo, 2011; Curiel, 2013) — the interconnectedness between language, literature, and power must be thoroughly and critically examined. In this sense, this paper, rooted in the decolonial thought, explores how *Belonging* (bell hooks, 2009; Moreton-Robinson, 2015) is (re)claimed and (re)imagined in the novel *Rainbow Milk* (2020), written by the Jamaican-British author Mendez (they/them). Through the interrelated life narratives of Jesse McCarthy, a queer Jamaican-British man in 21st century London, and Norman Alonso, a Jamaican immigrant in 1950s Britain, the novel interrogates, from an intersectional perspective (Crenshaw, 1991; Akotirene, 2019) the intergenerational impact of coloniality on the notion of belonging among colonized peoples. Ultimately, this paper positions *Rainbow Milk* (2020) as a significant work in contemporary World Literatures in English that collapse social hierarchies and oppressions, demanding narrative authority about Jamaican histories and identities while also redefining the imaginary of contemporary literary storytelling. Through this lens, the novel emerges as a linguistic, literary, and political intervention, fighting the epistemicide (Carneiro, 2005) promoted by Hegemonic English Literature and the compulsory celebration of Standard British English, and offering a transformative approach to representation, (re)existence, and resistance.

Bruno Lopes de Almeida is a young Brazilian professor-researcher with nine years of experience in the fields of English and Portuguese languages. He is pursuing a master's degree in English Language, Literature, and Culture (University of Minho and Uni Graz). He is a full scholarship recipient from the Arqus European University Alliance and is interested in the following areas of knowledge: Applied Linguistics, Critical Languages Pedagogies, English Language Teaching and Learning, Multilingualism and Language Policies, Contemporary World Literatures in English, Decolonial Studies, and Intersectionality.

PANEL #7: EDUCATION & ABOLITIONIST PRAXIS

Dignity, Belonging, Transformation: Criminal Legal Reform, Abolition Democracy, and Higher Education Inside the Walls

Elizabeth Swanson (Babson College, U.S.)

In 2018, the Massachusetts Legislature approved a sweeping criminal legal reform bill meant to address a stark data point: that prior offenders comprised approximately 75% of new convictions. Reform measures were designed to incentivize good behavior and reduce recidivism, allowing inmates to earn up to 15 days “good time,” or sentence-reduction credit, per month by enrolling in “recidivism reducing programs.” Prime among these are the many academic degree programs offered by Boston area schools as part of the Massachusetts Prison Education Consortium. Emboldened by the reform bill and resulting expansion of higher education programs inside the walls, our team was able to convert an existing volunteer partnership with the Department of Correction, whereby advanced students in human rights courses at Babson College mentored and

supported students in pre-release entrepreneurship programs behind the walls, into a fully-accredited certificate program, “Transformation Through Entrepreneurial Leadership,” comprised of two trauma-informed humanities and two entrepreneurial leadership courses designed to help incarcerated students transform themselves and their lives from within. This paper situates Babson College’s Venturing Out Prison Education Program in its local, regional, and national historical contexts, exploring strategy and logistics of program creation within the university context (in this case, Babson College, #1 in Entrepreneurship according to US News and World Report for the past 30 years) alongside pedagogies of belonging, identity, and self-formation rooted in the broader context of abolition democracy. In our preliminary research, we have identified gains in emotional regulation, resiliency, and self-efficacy among students that we correlate with a curriculum that acknowledges trauma as a fundamental variable in self-making and re-making; provides opportunity for students to construct a “Story of Self” over the course of the semester that moves from origins and contexts through transformations and futures; and invites students on a journey of entrepreneurial thinking and acting that does not depend on opening a venture, nor even on departing the camp. Research suggests (Evans et al., 2018; McWilliams et al., 2021; Moore et al., 2016) that incarceration can have a negative impact on self-identity, leading to reduced self-worth, stigma, and internalized guilt. Data from our students (surveys and coursework) supports these findings, and also, crucially, shows how course content, work, and methods help students to shift, revise, and rebuild their core identities in the contexts of fundamental dignity and belonging.

Elizabeth Swanson is the Joyce and Andy Mandell Endowed Professor of Human Rights at Babson College in Wellesley, MA, USA. Author or editor of multiple volumes and articles on the subjects of literature and human rights, Dr. Swanson has worked extensively to center survivor voices in her work. Founder of Babson Venturing Out Prison Education Initiative, Dr. Swanson is committed to action and advocacy to ground her scholarly research and writing. She is currently at work on a memoir chronicling gender, migration, and trauma.

The Limits of Forgiveness: A Meditation on an Inside-Out Class in Illinois & Hawai’i Women’s Prison Writing

Leanne Trapedo Sims (Knox College, U.S.)

Since 2021, I have been taking undergraduate students from Knox College in Illinois to study alongside students who are incarcerated at the proximate Henry Hill Correctional facility. Many of the men are deported from Chicago and are facing death by incarceration. This presentation/paper is a compilation of recorded poetry, spoken word, and art by the inside students, as well as my own reflections and meditations that explore the transformative potential and limitations of forgiveness. Some of the questions I proffer circle around radical acts of forgiveness; poetics as embrace; transformative justice; and simultaneous sites of pain, desire and joy. The Inside-Out Prison Exchange program—now transnational— is the brainchild of Lori Pompa, Criminology professor at Temple University, and her student Paul Perry who was incarcerated at

Graterford prison in Pennsylvania. The philosophy behind Inside-Out is *transformative* pedagogy—inside students (students who are incarcerated) and outside students (students in the “free world”) study as peers behind the concertina wire. Pompa is clear about what Inside-Out is not: the outside students do not study the inside students; they do not research the inside students; they do not save anyone. I have been teaching in prisons since 2012—from Hawai‘i to Illinois. As the Chair of Peace and Justice Studies and Director of the Knox College Inside-Out program, I have facilitated a variety of Inside-Out classes in rural Illinois: Literature, Restorative Justice, Peace and Justice, and Creative Writing. Henry Hill Correctional Center warehouses 1,189 men. Despite being classified as a medium security prison, it has the feel of a maximum-security prison. Students in my classes have done time in maximum security prisons across the state. At times the men have described their “lives” inside—*herded* from one confinement to the next—as death by incarceration. They tell me their biggest fear is dying inside. Illinois doesn’t endorse capital punishment, but this is another type of death penalty. This meditation on forgiveness centers the Inside-Out course on Restorative Justice in which we read Palestinian/American author—Susan Abulhawa’s novel *Against the Loveless World*. The course was a meditation on forgiveness via poetics.

Leanne Trapedo Sims was born in South Africa: Apartheid was the early ferment for her political and social commitments. She is the Daniel J. Logan Associate Professor of Peace and Justice and Chair at Knox College and Director of the Knox-Henry Hill Prison Education program. Her book—*Reckoning with Restorative Justice: Hawai‘i Women’s Prison Writing* (Duke University Press, 23) interrogates the intersections of gender, Indigeneity, violence and state power in colonized Hawai‘i. At Knox College, she heads an interdisciplinary program in Peace and Justice with a focus on critical carceral studies and abolition. Her work has appeared in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* and *Frontiers: A Journal of Women’s Studies*.

Ethnic Studies as an Abolitionist Educational Practice in Youth Carceral Regimes

Jessica Lee Stovall (University of Wisconsin-Madison, U.S.) & **Marica Watson-Vandiver** (Towson University, U.S.)

This presentation examines a virtual Ethnic Studies course where a Black teacher facilitated curricula centered on ethnic social solidarity movements, colonial legacies, and antiblackness inside four youth carceral facilities in the United States. Drawing on classroom observation, teacher interviews, and student focus groups, this work explores how teaching abolition-oriented Ethnic Studies within sites of confinement can foster a shared commitment to social justice by reshaping young people’s understandings of political agency. We position Ethnic Studies as a counter-carceral practice that interrupts the logics of punishment and disposability. Students engaged critically with national and local histories of resistance, and, through dialogue, storytelling, and presentations by nonprofit organizers, articulated new ways of to engage in a world that framed them as disposable. Even within the limitations of a Zoom screen, the pedagogy of direct teaching and collaborative discussion enabled youth to connect

their personal experiences of confinement to broader structures of racial capitalism and colonial governance. The findings suggest that Ethnic Studies, in conjunction with an educator who teaches for liberatory aims, can operate as abolitionist praxis. This pairing has the potential to cultivate critical consciousness and relational belonging under conditions designed to suppress both. We build on the notion that abolition democracy must include educational practices that affirm the humanity and political imagination of young people living within carceral regimes.

Dr. Jessica Lee Stovall is Assistant Professor of African American Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison with affiliations with the Curriculum and Instruction and Education Policy Studies departments in the School of Education. Her research sits at the intersection of Black Studies and education, and her work is in loving partnership with Black community organizations. Her most recent research was in collaboration with the Black Teacher Project out of Oakland, CA, to explore how Black teachers create fugitive spaces to navigate and combat antiblackness at their respective school sites. She holds a B.S. in Secondary Education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a M.S. in Literature from Northwestern University, and a Ph.D. in Race, Inequality, and Language in Education (RILE) at Stanford University. Before beginning her doctoral studies, Jessica taught high school English for 11 years in the Chicagoland area.

Dr. Marcia (Marci) Watson-Vandiver is Associate Professor of Education at Towson University in Baltimore County, Maryland. She received her B.S. in Middle Grades Education from Mercer University. After her undergraduate studies, she worked for Atlanta Public Schools as an alternative middle school teacher and received her M.Ed. in Educational Policy and Leadership from Georgia State University. She later received her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction (Urban Education) from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Marcia's research interests explore various intersections of Black education, including: resistance pedagogy, decolonial studies, and emancipatory learning.

PANEL #8: TEMPORICIDE, RESTORATIVE JUSTICE, AND THE POSSIBILITIES OF ABOLITIONIST SANCTUARY

Temporicide and Unbelonging & From Preventable to Inevitable

Gabreélla Friday (St. John's University, U.S.) & **Josh M. Price** (Toronto Metropolitan University, Canada)

Camps, jails, and detention centres are often framed in terms of space – as places of confinement. In this essay, we consider carceral enclosures along the axis of time. In particular, we link unbelonging to a certain logic of structural domination that results in temporicide—temporal indeterminacy, a condition in which the future is circumscribed by a present condition that will continue for an unspecified length of time. In a previous work, we analyzed temporicide in jails, prisons and migrant detention centres in the US, Canada and Jamaica (Friday, Price, Satchell 2025). We showed how temporicide is a contemporary manifestation of the coloniality of time—the persistence of colonial forms of power long past the period in which formal colonialism has ended. The colonial legacy is in the practice and temporicide reframes the practice of freedom implicit within abolition democracy. Temporicide counters conventional linear understandings of time, dominant under racialized capitalism. Ultimately, temporicide is where living social death and necropolitics meet. With that, we expand our parameters of confinement to look at internment on Manus Island, the conditions at Guantánamo Bay, ICE detention centers in the US, human-induced famine in South Sudanese refugee camps, and the internal displacement, starvation, and genocide of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. In these global contexts, temporicide relegates generations of racialized, gendered, and othered persons to conditions of a prolonged death.

Joshua Price writes on structural and institutional violence, race and gender violence, incarceration and life after incarceration. Josh also writes on the role of language in the colonization of the Americas. He is the author of *Prison and Social Death* and several other books. He is Professor of Criminology at Toronto Metropolitan University.

Gabreélla (Ella) Friday is an Assistant Professor of Criminology in the Sociology and Anthropology Department at St. John's University. Her research centers on how time is used and manipulated by institutional and political actors to create and reproduce social inequalities along racialized, gendered, and heteronormative lines, particularly in carceral spaces. Moreover, she uses engaged and activist methods to address and alleviate issues faced by those impacted by imprisonment and their communities.

Doing the Dirty Work: Workers' Experiences with the Incarceration and Management of Asylum-Seekers in Costa Rica

Leila Rodríguez (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)

Costa Rica's longstanding reputation as a pillar of democracy and human rights was shaken when in February 2025, President Rodrigo Chaves announced an agreement to "collaborate with the United States in the repatriation of migrants". Soon after, 200 migrants from varied countries including Afghanistan, China, Ghana, India and Vietnam arrived and were taken to recently-established Center for Temporary Migrant Care (CATEM), situated near the Panamanian border. Almost half of them are children. Rights organizations denounced that they were being held arbitrarily and illegally, without access to legal counsel or information in their respective languages. Many of the detained were repatriated to their home countries, but others refused. By June, the Constitutional Court ruled that immigration officials had to release them. This paper addresses the impact that the policy and practice of deporting migrants and asylum-seekers from the United States to third countries has on the government officials and human rights workers charged with processing and incarcerating them. To situate the problem, I first contextualize Costa Rica's cooperation with the current U.S. administration in a weakening of democratic institutions and proliferation of populist forms of governing. I then describe the discourses around this cooperation, and strategies of acquiescence, resistance, solidarity, and advocacy that have emerged from this unprecedented event. Through the reactions of human rights activists, government employees and humanitarian workers who received, processed, and policed these migrants, I examine the lived consequences of locals impacted by the government's incarceration of these migrants, and how this shapes their future labor and citizenship practices.

Leila Rodríguez is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. She researches the use of cultural expert testimony as a tool for improving access to justice, and international migration in Central America and the Caribbean. She holds a PhD and MA in Anthropology and Demography from the Pennsylvania State University and a BA in Anthropology from the University of Costa Rica. In addition, she is the Academic Director of the peer-reviewed journal *Caribbean Studies*, which is based at the Institute of Caribbean Studies.

All We Have Is Each Other: Abolitionist Sanctuary Against All-American Fascism

A. Naomi Paik (University of Illinois, U.S.)

This presentation focuses on the social justice and solidarity organizing rippling across US cities in opposition to a federal government deploying anti-migrant policing agencies to consolidate its increasingly fascist power and authority. It will contextualize the federal occupations of cities like

Chicago, IL and Minneapolis, MN in their broader contexts of the long-building infrastructures of authoritarian governance in immigration law, policy, and enforcement mechanisms and in endless, imperial warfare, as seen in sites from Palestine to Guantánamo. I will also discuss on-the-ground organizing in both local/hyperlocal contexts and through national networks. In places like Chicago (where I live/work), organizing networks built from years of abolitionist work against racist policing have activated to defend targeted communities through mutual aid, rapid response, migra/cop watching, school patrols, and more. As institutions of wealth and power—from Congress to law firms to universities—obey in advance, the main bulwark against the consolidation of authoritarianism must be, and is, driven by ordinary people defending each other.

A. Naomi Paik is the author of *Bans, Walls, Raids, Sanctuary: Understanding U.S. Immigration for the 21st Century* (2020) and *Rightlessness: Testimony and Redress in U.S. Prison Camps since World War II* (2016; winner, Best Book in History, AAAS 2018; runner-up, John Hope Franklin prize for best book in American Studies, ASA, 2017). Her next project, "Sanctuary for All," calls for the most capacious conception of sanctuary that brings together migrant and environmental justice. She has co-edited four special issues of *Radical History Review*—"Militarism and Capitalism" (Winter 2019), "Radical Histories of Sanctuary" (Fall 2019), "Policing, Justice, and the Radical Imagination" (Spring 2020), and "Alternatives to the Anthropocene" (Winter 2023). She co-edits the "Borderlands" section of *Public Books* and "The Politics of Sanctuary" blog sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution. She is an associate professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago, and a founding organizer of the Sanctuary Campus Network, Sanctuary for All UIC, and a member of the Migration Scholars Collaborative and Faculty and Staff for Justice in Palestine, UIC.

PANEL #9: RE-VISITING GUANTÁNAMO WRITING IN THE SECOND TERM OF TRUMP

'Where is Guantánamo' Today

Alexandra S. Moore (Binghamton University, U.S.)

This paper revisits Amy Kaplan's 2005 question, "Where is Guantánamo," by examining how its juridico-political landscape has morphed over the past two decades and its function as what Kaplan calls a legal "black hole" has swallowed other spaces. Beginning with the conversation at the 2024 Camps Conference on echoes and analogies between detention centers in Guantánamo Bay and on Manus Island, a conversation that seems prescient in hindsight, I take former detainees' writing, public discourse, and artwork, in conversation with other journalistic and academic writing, as a guide through this new terrain.

Alexandra S. Moore is Professor and Chair of English and Co-Director of the Human Rights Institute at Binghamton University. She is the author of two monographs and numerous essays and chapters and has co-edited nine volumes. Her most recent publication is *The Guantánamo Artwork and Testimony of Moath al-Alwi: Deaf Walls Speak*, co-edited with Elizabeth Swanson, and *The Handbook on Structural Violence*, with Joshua M. Price, is forthcoming. Her current research focuses on the cultural afterlives of the war on terror.

“Send them to the World”: Guantánamo Poems in the Age of Trump 2.0

Terri Tomsy (University of Alberta, Canada)

The second Trump administration has renewed its pledge to “load up Guantánamo” with a promise to deport 30,000 migrants to the island prison. In this second age of Trump, carceral policies have expanded in scope and scale. Migrants have been snatched by the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) with no due process, abducted to detention centers across state lines, shipped to Guantánamo’s naval base, or disappeared, deported further afield to Sudan, Eswatini, or to CECOT, the mega prison in El Salvador. Those lawless abductions have been celebrated by the administration with visual narratives, a number of them enhanced by AI to showcase a xenophobic age of spectacle. What does this mean for scholars engaged with the testimonies of Guantánamo’s prisoners, themselves incarcerated under exceptional sovereignty? How do they speak to us today? This paper studies some of the earliest Guantánamo testimonies: the poems, some of which were etched on Styrofoam cups, written by captives facing indefinite detention with seemingly no legal recourse. The efforts to publish these poems culminated in *Poems from Guantánamo: The Detainees Speak* (2007), which sought to make the experience of Guantánamo legible to a distant audience. This paper examines the way such poems provide insight into the processes of dehumanization as well as memory-making in relation to unlawful incarceration. Following the work of literary scholars (Carr Vellino; Trapp; Weber; Whitfield), I see the poems representing a form of resistance literature but, I also argue that several poems anticipate what Daniel Levy and Natan Sznajder (2006) call a “cosmopolitan memory,” the catalyzing of an international, human rights consciousness. This offers a point of optimism within the carceral policies of the second Trump regime, when the law seems to offer little protection. My claim is that these poems speak in what Carolyn Forché calls the “evidentiary” mode, marked by “an explicit will to bear witness” to political violence (2011, 164). In this, the poems manifest the generative capacities of literature to build a collective memory of injustice, and so generate what Levy and Sznajder call a “moral consensus about human rights” (20).

Terri Tomsy is an Associate Professor of postcolonial literature in the Department of English and Film Studies at the University of Alberta in Canada. She has published in the areas of human rights literary studies, life writing, cultural memory and trauma, cosmopolitanism, as well as the Global War on Terror.

Two Decades of Literature from Guantánamo

Esther Whitfield (Brown University, U.S.)

This paper traces the evolution of literary writing at Guantánamo. Looking first at conceptualizations of the literary in the well-known and heavily-censored *Poems for Guantánamo*, I address scenes of reading, interpretation and beauty in a corpus of detainee memoirs that begins with Moazzam Begg's *Enemy Combatant: My Imprisonment at Guantánamo, Bagram and Kandahar* (2006). I propose that, over the course of time, memoirs attend differently to questions of the literary, with Mansoor Adayfi's *Don't Forget Us Here: Lost and Found at Guantánamo* (2021) privileging writing as a creative act.

Esther Whitfield is Carlos Manuel de Céspedes Professor of Comparative Literature and Professor of Hispanic Studies at Brown University. She is author of *A New No-Man's Land: Writing and Art at Guantánamo, Cuba* (2024) and *Cuban Currency: The Dollar and 'Special Period' Fiction* (2008); translator, with Katerina González Seligmann, of José Ramón Sánchez's poetry collection *The Black Arrow* (2023); and co-editor with Anke Birkenmaier of *Havana Beyond the Ruins: Cultural Mapping of the City After 1989* and with Jacqueline Loss of *New Short Fiction from Cuba* (2007).

PANEL #10: LIFE WRITING, POLITICS, AND MEMORY

Life Writing and Visibility: Enslaved People, Undocumented Migrants, and Legal Erasure

Steven Stieglmeyer Jr. (University of Bielefeld, Germany)

Slave narratives and contemporary undocumented life writing have emerged through racialized legality regimes that structure belonging, visibility, and personhood in the United States. This presentation places these literary strategies in comparative dialogue without ignoring their distinct historical contexts. Instead, it argues that they respond to patterned conditions of legal exclusion, public framing, and enforcement mechanisms. Rather than proposing equivalence, the analysis foregrounds counter-narrative as a practice that emerges in response to hegemonic systems that deny recognition and produce fear as a governing condition of everyday life. The presentation examines how law operates as a hegemonic narrative structure that shapes the conditions under which life writing becomes possible. Under slavery, legal non-personhood and the criminalization of literacy constrained narrative voice and self-determination; under contemporary regimes of undocumentedness, illegality and deportability similarly regulate mobility, speech, and credibility. Across both contexts, hegemonic mechanisms such as abstraction, dehumanization, and criminalization

restrict who may speak and how narratives are authorized as “truthful” or “legitimate.” Life writing responds to these constraints through counter-narrative strategies that negotiate audience, credibility, and moral address, intervening in dominant narratives rather than operating outside them. Approaching slavery and undocumented status through first-person accounts, the presentation conceptualizes plantations, borders, detention, and enforcement regimes as interconnected structures through which non-belonging and fear are produced and sustained. Fear does not only register as an internal or psycho-emotional response. It also circulates as a regulatory condition that structures movement, speech, and self-representation well beyond moments of direct coercion. Under these conditions, life-writing functions as a constrained practice through which survival and resistance are articulated, positioning self-authorship against legal erasure while being shaped by the structures it confronts. This comparative framework demonstrates how literary narratives operate as counter-legibility practice within evolving systems of racialized governance.

Steven Stieglmeyer Jr. is a master’s candidate in InterAmerican Studies at Universität Bielefeld in Germany. His research focuses include border studies, migration, racialized legality, and counter-narratives as representation and resistance. His current MA thesis centers on depictions of migrants and the U.S.-Mexico border as counter-narratives in contemporary music videos. He has a longstanding engagement with migrant communities in the U.S. and Mexico, including as a speaker at the 2013 Día Internacional del Migrante forum in San Luis Potosí, MX addressing DREAMer activism in the U.S.

Creative Writing on Migrant Child-hood and Adolescence in the Face of Contemporary Policies of Capture and Confinement

Alejandra Campos (University of Granada, Spain)

“Don’t Cry, Mija” is a creative writing and staged reading project that offers a critical and sensitive reflection on contemporary migration policies in the United States, placing at the center those who occupy an antagonistic position on these narratives: the sons and daughters of men and women detained and deported by the immigration enforcement system (ICE). The project is situated at the intersection of fictional writing, anticolonial feminist studies, and performance practices, seeking to explore the potential of theatricality to generate affect and new forms of political listening among its readers/audiences. “Don’t Cry, Mija” functions as a direct proclamation against the new forms of oppression that traverse racialized populations in territories where free movement is prohibited, persecution and fear are part of everyday life, and the new prisons are not only detention centers and camps, but also homes, schools, and bodies themselves. The same capitalist system that forces thousands of Latin American migrants to leave their territories of origin, only to later criminalize their bodies and turn them into “illegal aliens”. This fiction project aims to create a narrative that portrays what adolescents and children go through during and after these arbitrary and cruel detentions. Through this narrative style, we seek to promote a kinder, more accessible academia that is closer to people from all backgrounds.

Alejandra Campos Morales is a Peruvian actress, performer maker, and educator. She holds a bachelor's degree in Performing Arts from the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru. Her practice operates at the intersection of theatre, pedagogy, and community-based work, engaging body, territory, and memory. She holds a diploma in Studies of Women and Girls from Abya Yala and is currently pursuing the GEMMA master's in Women's and Gender Studies. Her work explores performance and embodied language as sites of critical inquiry, care, and social transformation.

No es País Para Ingleses: Fundaciones Fallidas Vuelven a Suceder

José Ramón Sánchez Leyva (independent scholar, poet, Cuba)

“Descubrir antigüedades” es un método fecundo para escribir poesía. Los poetas suelen actuar con eficacia en el presente caliente de sus emociones, en la recreación de sus experiencias; o, cuando más, en el ambiente social de su propia época. Pero hay autores que quieren ir más allá de esos ámbitos más o menos privados, que como líquido amniótico los rodea. Eso quise después de haber agotado mis propias reservas de emociones y experiencias directas. La primera “prospección” histórica que alcancé fue de alrededor de 130 años atrás, cuando fui hasta la guerra hispano-cubano-americana de 1898, tratando de alcanzar los orígenes de Gitmo. Más allá de esa fecha, es decir más atrás, estaba el mundo cerrado de una historia para mí sin apelación, una historia vivida de manera vicaria; una historia, que, no obstante, yo quería también modelar. Dos eventos emergieron poderosos en mi ensayo de pertenecer a otras épocas: la invasión inglesa de 1741, con la intención de conquistar el Oriente de la isla y de fundar una villa que llamarían Cumberland; y la expedición del conde de Mopox de 1796, ordenada por la corona española, para poblar y fortificar la bahía. En torno a esas fundaciones fallidas, decidí montar una nueva experiencia poética. El resultado: un cuaderno donde juego con la idea de qué hubiera sido Cuba y los cubanos si de veras pasábamos a ser súbditos británicos; qué hubiera sido de Guantánamo (y la futura base) si el conde de Mopox hubiera levantado ciudades importantes tan cercanas a la bahía. Imaginar el pasado permite hacer predicciones productivas.

José Ramón Sánchez Leyva is the author of the following books: *Aislada noche* (2005), *Marabú* (2012), *El derrumbe* (2012), *22* (2017), and *Talibán* (2018). He is editor of the journal *La Noria*. In 2017, he compiled the bilingual (Spanish-Portuguese) of contemporary Cuban poetry *Nocaut: 6 Poetas Cuba Hoje*. He is an instructor of literature at Casa de Cultura Municipal. He currently lives in the place of his birth, Guantánamo City.

PANEL #11: PERSPECTIVAS INTERCULTURALES DESDE LOS TERRITORIOS: PERTENECER NO AL ESTADO

Voluntary Isolation as a Legal Category: Protection, Non-Contact, and Confinement: The Tagaeri and Taromenane Case before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights

Nina Kolowratnik (Ghent University, Belgium)

The Tagaeri Taromenane are among the last Indigenous peoples living in isolation in the Ecuadorian Amazon. The expansion of oil extraction and logging drastically reduced their territory and led to a series of massacres. These events, and the Ecuadorian state's failure to protect them, became the subject of *Pueblos Indígenas Tagaeri y Taromenane v. Ecuador* (2024), the first case on Peoples in Isolation before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. This paper argues that Indigenous isolation is often not simply a voluntary withdrawal but a historically produced and ongoing response to state violence, extractivism, and frontier expansion. Read in this light, isolation appears less as absence than as a strategic and relational practice of refusal. At the same time, the emerging legal category of “peoples in voluntary isolation,” which links non-contact to the language of self-determination, raises important conceptual and practical questions. While this framing has enabled crucial protective mechanisms, it also risks stabilizing isolation as a fixed juridical condition, potentially limiting how Indigenous agency and political claims can appear in law. Drawing on legal ethnography and doctoral fieldwork in Ecuador, the paper shows that the Tagaeri Taromenane do, in fact, communicate indirectly through recently contacted kin groups, and that such mediated exchanges often convey demands to halt territorial encroachment. The paper argues that while framing isolation through the right to self-determination and non-contact has enabled crucial protective mechanisms, it also introduces conceptual and procedural limitations—particularly when moments of communication or indirect contact occur. Such encounters complicate the binary between isolation and contact and raise important questions about how the voices and agency of peoples in isolation can be acknowledged within Western legal forums. Finally, the paper suggests that this configuration tends toward a form of juridical enclosure that resonates with broader debates on camps and carcerality, in which protection is tied to spatial, political, and communicative containment. Without equating regimes of protection with carceral systems, the paper nonetheless calls for a more relational and non-carceral jurisprudence of protection—one that does not equate security with silence, nor self-determination with the foreclosure of mediated forms of presence and communication.

Nina Kolowratnik is an architect and PhD candidate in Law at the Human Rights Centre of Ghent University and a member of the ERC Advanced Grant project *DISSECT: Evidence in International Human Rights Adjudication*. Her doctoral research examines Indigenous agency and evidentiary practices in *Sarayaku v. Ecuador* and *Tagaeri y Taromenane v. Ecuador* before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Working across law, legal anthropology, and architecture, she studies how Indigenous engagements with Western legal institutions reshape evidentiary and epistemic frameworks. She is the author of *The Language of Secret Proof* (2019) and co-author of *Significant Impact: Contesting Surveillance Infrastructure on Tohono O'odham Je'ved* (2026). She conducted fieldwork in Ecuador and has taught at Columbia GSAPP and TU Vienna.

Memoria de las mujeres amazónicas waorani y justicia intercultural: más allá de la reparación libera

Christina Korak (University of Graz, Austria) & **Adriana Rodriguez** (University Andina Simón Bolívar, Ecuador)

A partir de las memorias de las mujeres waorani, el contacto forzado impulsado por el Instituto Lingüístico de Verano puede comprenderse no solo como un episodio histórico de intervención externa, sino como un dispositivo de reordenamiento ontológico, territorial y epistémico que fracturó las bases relacionales que sostenían la vida wao. Desde una perspectiva intercultural, estas memorias revelan que lengua, territorio y cuerpo constituyen una unidad político-cosmológica, por lo que su fragmentación produjo no solo despojo material, sino una ruptura en los marcos de sentido que organizan la existencia colectiva. En este contexto, la evangelización y la apertura extractiva operaron como tecnologías de poder que tradujeron la diferencia cultural en subordinación, instalando una colonialidad jurídica que desplazó formas propias de justicia, cuidado y transmisión intergeneracional. Sin embargo, demostramos que, lejos de situar a las mujeres como víctimas pasivas, sus relatos muestran prácticas de reexistencia donde el tejido, la oralidad y la defensa lingüística se constituyen en formas de resistencia epistémica y territorial. Estas memorias adquieren hoy una dimensión jurídica central a la luz de la sentencia de la Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos en el caso Tagaeri-Taromenane vs. Ecuador, que reconoce la obligación estatal de adoptar medidas de reparación con enfoque intercultural frente a los efectos históricos y estructurales del contacto forzado. Desde esta perspectiva, la examinamos cómo la memoria femenina waorani no solo interpela los marcos convencionales de justicia, sino que amplía el sentido mismo de la reparación intercultural.

Adriana Rodríguez Caguana: Magíster en Derechos Humanos por la Universidad Nacional de La Plata y doctora en Derecho Internacional por la Universidad de Buenos Aires. Actualmente coordina el Programa Andino de Derechos Humanos de la Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar. Su producción académica abarca derechos de la naturaleza, justicia intercultural, género, derechos lingüísticos y jurisprudencia comparada.

Christina Korak: Investigadora posdoctoral de la Universidad de Graz, intérprete y vicepresidenta de la Asociación de Investigadoras Austriacas sobre Temas Relacionados con Latinoamérica. En el proyecto “Towards a Cosmopolitan Turn: Challenging Basis Translation Theory”, Rafael Schögler y ella examinan el rol de la cosmovisión indígena en traducciones misioneras y programas de estudios para la traducción e interpretación en lenguas indígenas.

Desafíos para pertenecer al Estado: diversidades, interculturalidad y diálogo de saberes en América Latina

Anita Krainer (FLASCO, Ecuador)

Las sociedades latinoamericanas están marcadas por la herencia histórica del colonialismo y continúan padeciendo sus consecuencias en forma de desigualdad política, económica y social, así como de discriminación y racismo. Enfrentan grandes desafíos en la valoración de culturas, lenguas y

saberes ancestrales, elementos esenciales para el fortalecimiento de la identidad y la construcción de sociedades más equitativas y menos discriminatorias. La construcción de sociedades interculturales requiere la definición e implementación de políticas públicas interculturales para lograr una verdadera transformación. Desde la academia estamos convocados a apoyar este proceso de cambio, aportando con investigaciones cuyas resultados arrojen insumos para los tomadores de decisiones y para el ajuste de políticas públicas. En este sentido, en 2008 se ha creado el Laboratorio de Interculturalidad de FLACSO Sede Ecuador, un espacio de encuentro para el debate académico y el acercamiento de saberes y conocimientos en torno a la interculturalidad en América Latina. Nuestras metodologías de investigación decoloniales, enmarcadas en la inter- y transdisciplinariedad, basadas en relaciones de colaboración, respeto e intercambio, logran aportar a procesos de cambios y transformaciones desde adentro. La promoción del diálogo de saberes, la participación comunitaria intergeneracional, el rescate, la valoración y transmisión de los saberes ancestrales, contribuyen al empoderamiento de las comunidades y los actores locales, indispensable para enfrentar los desafíos sociales, económicos y políticos. En la ponencia se presentan – partiendo de la definición conceptual de interculturalidad y diálogo de saberes – los principales resultados de diferentes investigaciones realizadas en el campo educativo, especialmente de la investigación más reciente sobre los avances y desafíos para la educación superior en América Latina.

Anita Krainer es doctora en sociolingüística y magíster en pedagogía por la Universidad de Viena, Austria. Cuenta con una amplia trayectoria en proyectos de cooperación internacional en América Latina, especialmente en el ámbito de la educación intercultural bilingüe. Desde 2008 se desempeña como profesora investigadora en la Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) Ecuador, donde coordina el Laboratorio de Interculturalidad, un espacio dedicado al análisis y la reflexión sobre la interculturalidad en la región. Además, ha sido profesora visitante en diversas universidades de América Latina y Europa durante los últimos 15 años. Sus intereses académicos se centran en la educación, la interculturalidad, la diversidad natural y cultural, el diálogo de saberes, los pueblos indígenas, el desarrollo sostenible y la cooperación en América Latina. Es autora de alrededor de 40 publicaciones académicas en estos campos.

PANEL #12: LANGUAGE, DISCOURSE, AND THE ABOLITIONIST IMAGINATION

Language as Infrastructure: Fron-tex and the Bureaucratic Production of (Non)Belonging

Paula Martín Rivero and Dietmar Offenhuber (Northeastern University, U.S.)

This presentation examines how language operates as a form of infrastructure within systems of governance. Using the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, Frontex, as a case study, we analyze how administrative and technological language shapes the material and perceptual realities of borders. Frontex’s operations depend not only on physical systems of control but also on a linguistic architecture that defines what is visible, measurable, and actionable within the European border regime. Through the specific example of the *List of fundamental rights violations during operations*, a taxonomy underpinning Frontex’ complaint mechanism, we study how bureaucratic language produces categories that shape perceptions of border operations. Its terms are not neutral descriptions but intentionally designed to organize information, guide technological systems, and authorize specific actions. Language functions as a stabilizing mechanism that aligns political decisions, technical infrastructures, and public perception. Drawing on media and infrastructure studies, as well as abolitionist thought, this paper argues that language in border governance is both representational and performative. It constructs interfaces between institutions, technologies, and human lives. The border, in this sense, is not only a line on a map but a distributed system of communication, classification, and translation. By treating language as infrastructure, we can better understand how bureaucratic and algorithmic systems reproduce hierarchies of belonging and exclusion. This approach also opens space for imagining alternative infrastructures grounded in care, accountability, and participation. From this perspective, abolition democracy involves rethinking not only the physical and legal structures that sustain borders but also the linguistic and semiotic ones that make them possible.

Dietmar Offenhuber is Professor of Design and Public Policy at Northeastern University, Boston, where he is currently chair of the Department of Art+Design and leads the semantic matter lab. Dietmar’s current research examines material visualization practices and the production of evidence, synthetic data, and non-representational aspects of data. He is the author of the award-winning monograph “Waste is Information” (MIT Press) and has published books on urban data and accountability technologies. His new book “Autographic Design – the Matter of Data in a Self-inscribing World” (MIT Press) examines material visualization practices and the production of evidence.

Paula Martín Rivero is an artist and researcher pursuing a PhD in Interdisciplinary Design and Media at Northeastern University, supported by a La Caixa Fellowship. Her work explores the intersections of language, bureaucracy, and spatial governance through sound, installation, and digital media. Paula’s current research investigates how infrastructures of control—such as documents and border architectures—mediate perception and

subjectivity. Her ongoing project *Tower of Babel* (2024–present) uses binaural recordings from the U.S.–Mexico border to translate the atmospheres and silences of border infrastructures into immersive sonic experiences.

Language, Belonging, and Homeland: A Comparative Analysis of Caribbean and American Political Narratives

From Preventable to Inevitable: Discourses of Custodial Death in Official Reports

Stephanie Latty and Joshua Price (Toronto Metropolitan University, Canada)

This paper focuses on genre, rhetoric, language, and repetition. In particular, we are interested in official inquiries, inquests, and reports by government agencies in Canada into the deaths of incarcerated people or people otherwise held in a custodial setting (migrant detention, youth detention, remand, and so on). The concern centers on a conceptual transformation through rhetoric, discursive style and through repetition – how the preventable (as in preventable custodial death) is transformed into the inevitable. “Any death that occurs in the custody of a provincial correctional facility is one too many,” begins one report. Through the very discourses circulating within reports such as this, the preventable deaths are nevertheless turned into the expected and normal furniture of everyday life. The central irony of these studies is embodied in the many iterations of reports, inquests, and inquiries produced after a death. Since the tone of the recommendations that these documents put forward is sometimes urgent (and sometimes not), their repetition, combined with their apparent ineffectiveness (at least measured in terms of concrete policy changes or fewer deaths), leads to their consequent devaluation. Thus, just as preventable becomes inevitable, the urgent becomes banal and anodyne. As our points of entry, this paper takes as its examples the 2023 inquest into the death of Abdurahman Hassan and “An Obligation to Prevent: Report from the Ontario Chief Coroner’s Expert Panel on Deaths in Custody” (January, 2023). We assert that through their repetitiousness, reports, inquests and inquiries become technologies for upholding and reproducing the status quo. These reports and inquiries serve as implicitly racializing technologies of the state, naturalizing the disproportionate premature deaths of Black, Indigenous and other racialized people. We assert that state-orchestrated premature deaths are framed as implicitly inevitable much in the way that the existence of the state is presupposed inevitable: though in fact contingent, through the genre of the report, they produce death as an inevitable outcome of detention. Ultimately, we challenge the notion of the inevitability of custodial deaths and the carceral state more broadly.

Stephanie Athey is a professor of cultural studies and Research Associate of the Human Rights Institute of SUNY-Binghamton, US. She publishes *The Wells Record: Torture Networks, Policing, and Prisons*, curating global news, research, and analysis on the human infrastructure of state violence, available on Substack and www.wellsrecord.com. Her book, *Torture in The National Security Imagination*, looks to everyday torture in the context of

police violence, mass incarceration, and racial capitalism, arguing that, state torture has been foundational to US empire and is propelled by local social functions, conducted by social networks, and publicly supported by a durable social imaginary. She served as President of the Association of Academic Programs in Latin America and the Caribbean and co-directs a Mexican educational partnership. Her essays on human rights, colonial discourse, eugenics, and race have appeared in a variety of scholarly journals.

Joshua Price writes on structural and institutional violence, race and gender violence, incarceration and life after incarceration. Josh also writes on the role of language in the colonization of the Americas. He is the author of *Prison and Social Death* and several other books. He is Professor of Criminology at Toronto Metropolitan University.

Carceral Pedagogies: The After-lives of the Hombre Nuevo in El Mercurio de McCoy

Omar Granados (University of Wisconsin La Crosse, U.S.)

This presentation examines *El Mercurio de McCoy*, a bilingual newsletter published at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, between June and September 1980, to assist in the resettlement of Cuban refugees from the Mariel exodus. Produced collaboratively by U.S. Army Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) personnel, Fort McCoy resettlement staff, and the refugees themselves, its fifty-three issues constitute a rare textual record of ideological negotiation within a carceral-humanitarian environment. The newsletter's pedagogical tone and civic rhetoric reveal how the political formation of Cubans as *hombres nuevos*—Che Guevara's model of the disciplined, productive, and morally regenerated revolutionary subject—was rearticulated through the moral grammar of American exceptionalism. Cuban Mariel migrants who wrote articles and created comic strips for *El Mercurio* assumed the role of what Antonio Gramsci termed *organic intellectuals*, mediating between competing state languages and producing a hybrid discourse of instruction and self-representation. Through this labor of translation and performance, revolutionary virtues of work, discipline, and moral renewal were recast in the idioms of democratic citizenship and civic gratitude. *El Mercurio de McCoy* thus reveals a performative encounter between two ideological projects: the Cubans' reenactment of revolutionary self-discipline and moral regeneration, and the Americans' self-representation as humanitarian redeemers. The newsletter's exhortative tone exposes how refugees recontextualized the rhetoric of productivity, virtue, and gratitude to demonstrate compatibility with the moral economy of the United States. In this convergence, the camp became a stage where socialist and liberal pedagogies mirrored one another, transforming political education into a performance of belonging within the mythos of the American Dream.

Dr. **Omar Granados** is Associate Professor of Spanish and Latin American Studies and Director of the Institute for Latin American and Latino Studies at the University of Wisconsin–La Crosse. Born and raised in Havana, Cuba, he earned his Ph.D. in Latin American Cultural Studies from

Emory University. His research explores migration, exile, and collective memory in contemporary Cuban and Latin American culture, emphasizing the role of public scholarship in the humanities. He has published widely in academic journals and edited collections, and recently completed *Uprooted*, a public memory and history project on the 1980 Mariel Exodus Refugee Camp Program across several U.S. military bases.

PANEL #13: SOCIO-POLITICAL MOVEMENTS AND DYNAMICS OF BELONGING

From Discord to the Streets: Digital Camps of Belonging and the Reimagining of Democracy in Morocco's Gen Z 212 Movement

Mohammed Zarkan (Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Morocco)

This study examines Morocco's Gen Z 212 movement as an instance of digital-born civic awakening and collective belonging. Emerging from a Discord community, the movement transformed online dialogue into coordinated street demonstrations calling for socio-political reform, particularly in the areas of transparency, accountability, and dignity. Using digital ethnography and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the research investigates how young Moroccans construct political meaning across digital and physical spaces, turning affective connection into civic performance. The paper draws conceptually on Agamben's notion of the "camp" to interpret Discord as a semi-autonomous space of political potentiality, and on Butler's performative theory of assembly to understand protest as an enactment of democratic presence. These frameworks, combined with insights from digital anthropology, allow for an understanding of how belonging and moral agency are collectively negotiated in constrained participatory contexts. By tracing the transition from digital discussion to embodied protest, this study situates Gen Z 212 within a broader global pattern of youth mobilizations that reimagine democracy beyond institutional structures. Ultimately, the movement reflects a generation's effort to redefine political participation through emotion, discourse, and digital infrastructures of solidarity.

Mohammed Zarkan, from Morocco, is a PhD candidate at Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University (USMBA), specializing in linguistic diplomacy. His research sits at the intersection of discourse analysis and AI, examining how political speeches construct meaning and influence. He is a part-time teaching assistant at the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (ESISA), where he runs interactive speaking workshops for software-engineering students. A seasoned public speaker and debater, Mohammed connects language, politics, and civic engagement in his work. Beyond academia, he identifies as an unapologetic, unaffiliated activist and happily so.

The Space Between the Bars: Narratives of Belonging in an Egyptian Activist's Memoir

Ahmed Maher (Independent Scholar)

What does it mean to belong when the state has placed you in a cell? This session presents readings from *Going Behind the Sun*, the forthcoming memoir of Ahmed Maher, co-founder of the April 6 Youth Movement. Maher was arrested in 2005 for protesting the Mubarak regime, and later sentenced to three years as the first to receive the maximum sentence under Egypt's Protest Law. The excerpts trace a counter-narrative to carceral isolation: the unexpected solidarities between political prisoners and violent offenders; connection built within solitary confinement; friendships forged with fellow prisoners from Britain, Australia, and Egypt's former security apparatus; and international solidarity — from a Lego installation at Alcatraz to letters smuggled on toilet paper — that kept hope alive behind walls designed to extinguish it. Together, these passages illuminate how belonging is not simply something the prison destroys, but something human beings actively, stubbornly reconstruct in its shadow.

Ahmed Maher, a civil engineer and researcher in international relations, has been actively engaged for more than 15 years in supporting democratic transition and human rights and has participated in numerous initiatives related to environmental justice and addressing climate change. He holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering, along with several specialized diplomas in political science, civil society, and NGO management. He was a co-founder and coordinator of the April 6 Youth Movement and a member of the Coalition of Revolutionary Youth. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in international relations at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Alexandria University.

(American) Southern Youth at the Global Crossroads

Todd Michael Rowan (Louisiana State University, U.S.) & **Jenna Ann Altomonte** (Mississippi State University, U.S.)

The American South has historically embraced a provincialist identity, one defined by a monolithic narrative that oscillates between the *heritage* and *hate* paradigm. This stereotype is complicated further by generational perpetuations of an explicitly southern regionalism. However the American South is comprised of innumerable identities, many of which are historically marginalized, obfuscated, and/or erased. In an age where spaces of information and culture-sharing perform across actual and virtual platforms, how do historically marginalized communities and populations within the American South seek to access, engage, and connect regional/community actions to greater, *global* solidarity movements? This paper will focus on how youth movements across the American Southern states of Louisiana and Mississippi incorporate community and regionally specific protest/community-organizing methods to connect *local* issues with more expansive *global* movements. I will include case studies that ground and exemplify how post-9/11 policies, state-sponsored kidnappings (ICE Detention facilities and Guantanamo Bay), and the US interventions in places like Venezuela and Palestine both reflect (and refract) local community actions in Louisiana and Mississippi; and demonstrate how said interventions connect and engage with solidarity movements worldwide. I will address how diverse Southern culture and expression is inevitably tied to its politics (e.g. the Blues agenda), and explain how youth movements utilize advocacy to engage a greater sense of belonging to place(s). Questions to consider -how do Southern identity (-ies) serve as a vehicle(s) for cross-solidarity and community building? How do identity/expression serve as a platform through which young people connect to other solidarity movements/actions outside their local and regional communities in the American South?

Todd Michael Rowan is a Mississippi-born interdisciplinary artist and musician. He received his Master of Arts in Justice Studies from the University of New Orleans and is a current PhD candidate in Justice Studies at Louisiana State University, New Orleans. His work critiques current social and political issues using a diverse array of visual media forms. Recent and forthcoming publications include: “Bridging Campus and the City: Visualizing Activism in New Orleans,” in *Colleges and Their Communities* (University of Oregon Press, anticipated Spring 2026) and “Outrageous! Subversive Humor and Play Activism in *The Red Hat Reader*,” in *American Fury: Collective Action and the Politics of Moral Outrage*, (McFarland Press, 2024).

Jenna Altomonte is an Associate Professor of Art History at Mississippi State University. Her primary areas of research center on global contemporary art and digital performance studies with a specialization in political and social intervention practices. She is a recent Charles E. Scheidt Faculty Fellow in Atrocity Prevention through Binghamton University’s Institute for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention. Recent and forthcoming publications include: “Look to the Skies: Aerial Aesthetics in the Age of Telepresence” in *Human Rights in the Age of Drones*:

Critical Perspectives on Post-9/11 Literature, Film and Art (2026) and “Interdisciplinary Approaches to Discourses of Terrorism in the Post-9/11 Classroom: Teaching Across Visual Culture, Literature, and Law,” in *9/11 and Its Aftermaths* (2026).

PANEL #14: LOCAL STRUGGLES, GLOBAL DESIGNS: US MILITARIZATION IN PUERTO RICO AND THE GREATER CARIBBEAN

Domestic in a Foreign Sense: U.S. Militarization in the Caribbean Parallels its Own Authoritarianism

Maritza Stanchich (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)

This talk aims to frame geo-political contexts to address local/global in/visibilities of critique regarding recent rapid U.S. militarization of the Caribbean, and the Trump administration’s open threats to remove Presidents Nicolás Maduro and Gustavo Petro from office in Venezuela and Colombia, respectively (Lindsey Graham interview, *Face the Nation*, CBS, Oct. 26, 2025). The illegality of military strikes against boats in the region, with 62 killed so far, has sparked more US Congress and United Nations debate than calls for overthrowing Maduro and Petro. This has been of great concern in Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Barbados, triggering protests in tension with declarations by politicians of dominant political parties in Puerto Rico and Trinidad, with leaders in Barbados taking more critical positions. Tensions have also arisen between Venezuela and Trinidad, which relies on oil imports from their neighbor. Massive military assets have been deployed rapidly, with the USS Gerald Ford carrier strike group sent from the Mediterranean to Venezuelan territorial waters. According to a military expert, a carrier strike group equates the firepower of a US Army Corps of roughly 25k soldiers plus artillery and other weapons, which was used to invade Iraq. In October, the US Federal Aviation Administration, under directives from the Department of Defense (renamed War), restricted air space through March 2026 off Puerto Rico's southeast coast in Ceiba, site of a large former US military base that was closed in 2004, with historic ties to the former base in Vieques and the active one in Guantánamo. In Arroyo, another southeastern coastal town in Puerto Rico, a military ship disembarked 300 armed troops for exercises. Being that Venezuela and Guyana are oil-rich nations, with wealth of rare earth minerals in Colombia and Guyana, justification under the guise of the decades-long "war on drugs" echoes an old ruse. The decolonial theorist Ramón Grosfoguel recently framed U.S. imperial relations with Venezuela citing Aimé Césaire’s *Discourse on Colonialism* (1950), in identifying the rise of European Fascism leading to WWII as a civilizational crisis previously practiced in its colonies, to link US foreign policy with its own rising domestic authoritarianism.

Maritza Stanchich is Professor of English at University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras. She is the author of *De huelga a pandemia en Puerto Rico: una década de intervenciones periodísticas internacionales* (Editora Educación Emergente 2024), scholarship on William Faulkner, Puerto Rican diaspora

literature, and crisis at UPR, as well as columns for *The Huffington Post*, *The New York Times* and *The Guardian*. She and Hilda Lloréns won the 2020 LASA-Puerto Rico Section Blanca G. Silvestrini Prize for Outstanding Article. A long-time activist, she is from New Jersey, of Croatian and Peruvian descent, and has lived in San Juan for 25 years.

Vieques in the Interplay of Militarized and Settler Colonial Logics

Marie Cruz Soto (New York University, U.S.)

In the 1940s, the U.S. Navy took over three-fourths of the island of Vieques and remade the landscape into an ammunition depot, a live target range, and a one-fourth land strip of enclosed civilians. The occupation lasted over six decades and only came undone through organized civilian protest and disobedience. The victory of the Viequense community and allies, which entailed so much labor and sacrifice, was momentous. Yet, the seeming end of militarized colonialism led to the rise of settler colonialism. Relationships to the (Is)Land thus keep on being severed and weakened. The dynamic colonial regime imposed on the island continues to—with the accustomed impunity—foster vulnerability. And decolonial unruliness. This presentation will explore the interplay of militarized and settler logics in Vieques, Puerto Rico, under the colonial regime imposed by the U.S. It will question notions of clean ruptures to emphasize instead on the difficulty of dismantling oppressive structures while under colonial subjugation. The presentation will also explore how the Viequense community insists on unruly dismantling and the cultivation of decolonial futures.

Marie Cruz Soto (B.A. UPR, Ph.D. UMICH) is a historian of Vieques who broadly focuses on colonialism and unruliness. She teaches at New York University and participates in different community initiatives. From the Archivo Histórico de Vieques, she works alongside others to empower the Viequense community in the narration of its history, and from the Colmena Cimarrona she similarly collaborates to flourish food sovereignty in the Puerto Rican archipelago. She likewise participates in efforts to ensure access to Land for the Viequense community and its future generations. Currently, she is working on a book on the history of Vieques.

A Week in the Life: (Re)militarization in the Greater Caribbean

Zorimar Rivera Montes (Tulane University, U.S.)

The second Trump regime has increased modalities of militarization both on US soil and abroad, from the dramatic increases in ICE's operational budget and resulting growth of migrant detention camps to calls of imperial intervention and war in Latin America. Diverse but connected military technologies are deployed across Caribbean geographies to serve distinct goals of remilitarization and ethnic cleansing. Trump's calls to intervention

in Venezuela have resulted in the remilitarization of the Caribbean and Puerto Rico's coasts—my coastal hometown of Arroyo has been subjected to live naval military exercises and even the deployment of hundreds of US troops on the shores of public beaches as they 'practice' for deployment in Venezuela. This re-militarization has undone decades of activism against the presence of US troops on Puerto Rican soil, especially in Vieques. As this happens, the state where I live, Louisiana, becomes a center of migrant detention, housing the second largest number of migrants in the US (following Texas). In this paper, I will juxtapose these forms of militarization to each other through my own experience as a diasporic Puerto Rican living in New Orleans, Louisiana, a part of the greater Caribbean. This will show the way Caribbean geographies are central targets of what Katherine McKittrick has called “plantation futures,” sites designed for military and colonial extraction that harken back to plantation logics.

Zorimar Rivera Montes is Assistant Professor of Latinx Literatures at Cultures at Tulane University. Her research focuses on contemporary Puerto Rican culture in relation to colonialism, late capitalism, labor, migration, and diaspora. Her upcoming book, *Against Resilience: Aesthetic Refusals in Contemporary Puerto Rican Culture*, examines how negative affects such as laziness, exhaustion, and nostalgia produce forms of resistance based on not-doing. Her articles appear in *Latino Studies*, *Centro Journal for Puerto Rican Studies*, and *Small Axe*. She is originally from Arroyo, Puerto Rico and studied at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras before pursuing a PhD at Northwestern University.

The Limits of Abolition Democracy: Haitian Refugees at Fort Allen, Puerto Rico

Fabio Santos (University of Copenhagen, Denmark)

In 1981–82, Haitian refugees fleeing the U.S.-backed Duvalier dictatorship found themselves detained at Fort Allen, a military base in southern Puerto Rico. Nearly two centuries earlier, Haiti had become the first independent Black republic in the world – the only state born from a successful mass self-liberation of enslaved people. That the descendants of this revolutionary rupture could be caged on U.S. colonial soil, in a territory whose residents cannot vote for president, exposes the unfinished project of abolition democracy and the persistent entanglement of race, empire, and belonging in the Americas. Fort Allen emerged in the context of longstanding Cuban and Haitian migration, with a peak in the 1980 Mariel boatlift that revealed the starkly geopoliticized and racialized logic of U.S. asylum policy. When facilities overflowed, the Carter administration turned to Puerto Rico, an “unincorporated territory” that posed no electoral risk. As one editorial noted, the island served as “a colonial dumping ground” for Washington’s political problems. This raises a fundamental question: Can a polity that governs millions of colonial subjects without representation claim to be a democracy? Within the camp, detainees endured extreme heat, psychological deterioration, and one suicide. Yet they also resisted – staging protests, writing letters, and building solidarities with Puerto Rican civil society. Many Puerto Ricans recognized in Haitian detention a mirror of their own colonial subjection. Drawing on W.E.B. Du Bois and Angela Davis, I argue that abolition democracy remains unrealized so long as

empire operates through the carceral management of racialized mobility and the differential inclusion of places and people deemed “foreign in a domestic sense.” Fort Allen reveals not only the limits of U.S. democracy but also the trans-Caribbean solidarities that might yet challenge them.

Fabio Santos is a tenure-track assistant professor in Histories of Migration at the Centre for Advanced Migration Studies, University of Copenhagen. He interweaves the intimate and local with the global and structural, revealing how people’s everyday lives are shaped by broader entanglements—an approach at the heart of his book *Bridging Fluid Borders: Entanglements in the French-Brazilian Borderland* (Routledge, 2022). The recurring themes of his teaching and writing – migration, inequality, and colonialism – are explored through ethnographic and archival methods.

PANEL #15: ENSURE, BELONGING, AND CRITICAL INTERVENTIONS

I, Art-I, Empire: On Black Sites, “Exhibits,” and Erasures

Mahshid Mayar (University of Innsbruck, Austria)

Philip Metres’s *Sand Opera* (2015)—itself extracted out of the title of the 2003 “Camp Delta **Standard Operating Procedures**”—presents an intermedia collage that zeroes in on some of the specific forms that destruction and despair take at the heart of crisis crafted by the neoliberal empire. *Sand Opera*’s erasures emerge from war documents (including voices from both sides, detainees and guards), Saddam Hussein’s fingerprints upon his capture in 2003, words of prayer, and layered layouts of prison cells. The book therefore carries in it an intergeneric, complex image-textual script of empire that Metres composed in “[a]n attempt to confront the disgusting.” Next to document-based erasure poems, this confrontation happens when, in the middle of “II. first recitative” (36-39) and “IV. second recitative”, the following sequences appear: a blank, black page (on the left), a vellum paper with renderings of the Yemeni detainee Mohamed Farag Ahmed Bashmilah’s drawings of the prison cells he was kept in during his 19-month detention in a series of black sites (in the middle), and Bashmilah’s words about his time in black sites (on the right). Each of these three-page sequences (“Exhibit I,” “Exhibit K,” “Exhibit M,” and “Exhibit Q”) works as an image-textual space that, spreading over several pages, reproduces Bashmilah’s painstakingly thorough renderings of the prison cells where he was kept and his memories of life in detention. Surrounded by poetry, the exhibits reveal the intercutting limits of access (to information about the nature of the war and its legalese) and of accountability (concerning such atrocities as the systemic use of torture) in the current neoliberal moment. It is as if *Sand Opera* speculates about what resides *inside* the very spatiality of black sites—spaces that have been designed so that they float away and recede from legal entrée and humanitarian supervision. Through these exhibits, I argue, *Sand Opera* outlines the extralegal stretches of the carceral as a spatial fix within the

imperial (and the vast network of neoliberal complexes that enable and then conceal it), rendering visible the range of invisibilities and exposing the limits of our knowledge concerning

Mahshid Mayar is Assistant Professor of American Studies at the University of Innsbruck. She works on the intersections of literature and history, with particular attention to race, racialization and the cultural operations of the U.S. empire. Currently, Mayar is the principal investigator of the research project *W()oles and ()holes: Politically Engaged Erasure Poetry in Twenty-First-Century United States*, funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). She is the author of *Citizens and Rulers of the World: The American Child and the Cartographic Pedagogies of Empire* (University of North Carolina Press, 2022), winner of the Shelley Fisher Fishkin Prize for Original Research in Transnational American Studies (American Studies Association).

From JoAnne to Assata: A Journey of Resistance, Naming and Belonging in *Assata: An Auto-biography* (1987)

Lena Elisabeth LeBlhumer (University of Salzburg, Austria)

Assata Shakur's *Assata: An Autobiography* (1987) functions as a personal narrative and as a political testimony, providing a first-hand account of the systemic oppression she endured as a Black woman, revolutionary and political prisoner in the US in the 1970s. As a piece of life writing, the autobiography operates as a site of witnessing, enabling Shakur to document her lived experiences and to render visible the human realities of incarceration and political repression, which are frequently omitted or misrepresented in mainstream discourses. In this regard, her narrative exemplifies Angela Y. Davis' observation that "prisons do not disappear social problems, they disappear human beings" ("History is a Weapon"). Shakur's account vividly demonstrates how the US carceral system seeks to efface her corporal presence and (political) identity while obscuring the structural inequalities that enabled her prosecution. A central concern of the autobiography is the question of Shakur's belonging or, more precisely, the denial of it. From her upbringing in racially segregated communities to her experiences within the US prison system, Shakur examines the mechanisms that determine who is permitted social and political inclusion and who is marginalized, silenced or erased. The narrative also foregrounds the interplay between her given name, JoAnne Chesimard, and her chosen name, Assata Olugbala Shakur, which highlights the transformative power of self-naming as an act of asserting identity and claiming a sense of belonging. Moreover, by talking/writing back through her autobiographical account, Shakur contests dominant narratives that criminalized Black political resistance and, thereby, asserts personal and political belonging. For bell hooks (2015), the movement from silence into speech is particularly powerful because it "is for the oppressed, the colonized [...] [and] the exploited, [...] a gesture of defiance that heals, that makes new life, and new growth possible. It is that act of speech, of 'talking back,' [...] that is the expression of *moving from object to subject*, that is the liberated voice" (9; *my emphasis*). Connected with Davis' critique of incarceration, this

presentation examines how autobiographical testimony can function as a vital platform for reclaiming agency, articulating identity and documenting systemic injustices within contexts of structural oppressions.

Lena Elisabeth Leßlhuber is a doctoral candidate and university lecturer at the Department of English and American Studies at the University of Salzburg, Austria. Her research interests are within Anglophone literary and cultural studies, Black studies, life writing, post-/colonial and transnational studies, which is reflected in her four-year dissertation project. Here she investigates how the complexities of lived experiences, trauma and resistance are depicted in Black life writing, with a particular focus on autobiographies and memoirs, in the US and UK from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries.

Scaling the Prison Wall Together: Collaborative Erasure Art in Erasing Frankenstein

Sandra Tausel (University of Innsbruck, Austria)

Incarceration is an erasure of belonging and, to some degree, of personhood. Following Paulo Freire, who argues that “an act is oppressive only when it prevents people from being more fully human” (56-7), Rachel Fayter asserts that her incarceration at Grand Valley Institution for Women (GVI) in Kitchener, Ontario, was dehumanizing. She and the other incarcerated women were “seen as inmates (rather than citizens), known primarily by our Fingerprint Section (FPS) number” and had “no voice, no choice and no identity outside that of ‘criminal’” (58). Because imprisonment is one of *Frankenstein*’s “overlooked themes” (Effinger 3), Elizabeth Effinger and her colleagues chose Mary Shelley’s seminal 1818 novel for their collaborative erasure project *Erasing Frankenstein: Remaking the Monster, A Public Humanities Prison Arts Project* (2024). Incarcerated women at Grand Valley Institution for Women in Kitchener, Ontario, members of the Walls to Bridges Collective, and students at the University of New Brunswick used whiteout tape, crayons, markers, pastels, and blackout techniques to transform *Frankenstein* into the book-length erasure poem *I or Us*, itself an erasure of Shelley’s title (*Frankenstein: Or the Modern Prometheus*), to foreground themes of incarceration, monstrosity, and collective identity. I will argue that *Erasing Frankenstein* seeks to counter the omission of “the writing of prisoners . . . from the literary archives” (Rymhs and Rinstead 8) and to amplify women’s critical voices on incarceration. Working on *I or Us* enabled incarcerated women to participate in public life as artists and poets, while also fostering a sense of belonging by facilitating a meaningful exchange between themselves, students, and members of the community – people who would otherwise not have been likely to collaborate.

Sandra Tausel (she/her) is a PhD candidate at the Department of American Studies at the University of Innsbruck. Her dissertation examines the societal pressure of reproductive prescriptions and proscriptions that shift depending on age and affect women, trans, and nonbinary characters in

contemporary US-American fiction. Her research centers on gender and feminist theory with a focus on reproductive and social justice in contemporary American literature and culture. Tausel is currently a doctoral researcher in Mahshid Mayar's DFG research project *W(oles and)holes: Politically Engaged Erasure Poetry in Twenty-First-Century United States* and examines erasure poetry as a transformative feminist practice that holds space for the resistance against long-standing political and cultural structures of patriarchal power.

PANEL #16: LITERARY CHOICES AND ABOLITIONIST IMAGINARIES

“As a result of the interview, my family name was reduced to No. 13660.” The Calvary of the Japanese American Incarceration in Miné Okubo's Illustrated Memoir

Nicolangelo Becce (Roma Tre University, Italy)

Relabeled in recent years as a “graphic novel”, Miné Okubo's *Citizen 13660* (1946) offers an experimental usage of the visual medium to represent the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II when it was still considered as a taboo subject. Apart from taking inspiration from comics as sequential art (a medium with a long tradition in Japan and that had already demonstrated at that time both in the US and in Europe a high degree of maturity and flexibility), *Citizen 13660* also works as a portable museum exhibit, a visual catalogue with captions which can be considered as an entryway to the incarceration experience that defies the censorship enacted against photography as a problematic tool to portray the camps. Moreover, Okubo's choice to develop a rather stringent bidirectional interaction between text and image, which is more limited than the intricate and creative ways in which text and image typically interact on a comics page, also draws a poignant parallel with traditional religious rituals such as the Catholic Via Crucis. In these rituals, iconic images placed at different stations often reinforce the meaning of the Biblical passages and foster a sense of emotional participation among believers as they vicariously walk through Christ's crucifixion. Interestingly, the Calvary was also perceived by Japanese Americans as an effective metaphor for their incarceration, at a time in which their experience was interpreted by many prisoners as a sacrifice to help the war effort, while what it did was only demonstrate the weakness of democratic institutions against fake news and war hysteria. Therefore, readers' limited freedom to go through the visual composition as with typical comics replicates the restrictions experienced by Japanese Americans during the incarceration. The text works as Okubo's own testimony—thus anticipating her recollections during the 1980s redress hearings—while the images represent a personal depiction of her metaphorical Way of the Cross. The paper will delve into the conscious choices made by Okubo in terms of representation of the incarceration, whose aim was also to replicate for mainstream readers the sense of constraint experienced within the camps by the Japanese Americans.

Nicolangelo Becce, Associate Professor of American Literature at Roma Tre University, earned his Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of Naples “L’Orientale” and worked as an Assistant Professor at the University of Fukui (Japan). His publications include essays on American literature, corpus linguistics, the CEFR, American TV series, and graphic novels as well as two monographs: one on Modern Spiritualism and 19th century ghost stories, the other on a placement interview system for EFL students. Currently, he focuses on literary and media representations of the Japanese American incarceration experience, with a new monograph set to be published in 2026.

From Colonial Compounds to Contemporary Camps: African Literary Interventions in (Be)longing and Abolition Democracy

Youssef Diallo (Cheikh Anta Diop University, Senegal)

This paper examines camps and confinement through a focused literary analysis of three African novels: Nuruddin Farah’s *Crossbones* (2011), Ahmadou Kourouma’s *Allah Is Not Obligated* (2000), and Abdulrazak Gurnah’s *By the Sea* (2001). Read together, these texts trace a carceral continuum linking refugee camps in East Africa, displacement and militarized camps in West African civil wars, and migrant detention regimes in contemporary Europe. Rather than exceptional spaces of humanitarian care, the novels depict camps as technologies of containment that manage African mobility, suspend political belonging, and normalize prolonged states of unfreedom. Drawing on W.E.B. Du Bois’s concept of abolition democracy and Ruth Wilson Gilmore’s analysis of punitive governance, the paper argues that these literary representations expose camps as sites where colonial modes of enclosure persist under the guise of protection and administration. At the same time, the novels foreground everyday acts of narration, memory, and relationality as practices that contest carceral isolation. By centering African literary perspectives, this paper contributes to abolitionist debates by showing how African experiences of camps complicate dominant, U.S.-centered frameworks and demand a transnational rethinking of freedom, belonging, and mobility.

Youssef Diallo is a PhD candidate whose research examines postcolonial identity, heritage, and cultural memory in contemporary African and Francophone literature. His comparative study engages with themes of neocolonialism, displacement, migration, gender and politics, and resilience through the works of African and diaspora authors. By analyzing the intersections of literature, history, and cultural identity, his scholarship contributes to broader debates on postcolonialism and globalization. Diallo’s academic work highlights literature’s role as a critical space for negotiating identity and reimagining collective belonging in African and postcolonial contexts.

Colonialism, Carcerality and Abolition: Reimagining and Dismantling the Canadian Residential Schools in Cherie Dimaline's *The Marrow Thieves* (2017) and *Hunting by Stars* (2021)

Lucio De Capitani (Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy)

Cherie Dimaline's *The Marrow Thieves* (2017) and *Hunting by Stars* (2021) are among the most prominent literary reimaginings of the history of the Canadian residential schools. A significant example of what Woolford & Gacek (2016) call "genocidal carcerality", this system of boarding schools, running from the nineteenth century to 1996, resulted in an infamous and tragically impactful campaign of genocidal assimilation against Indigenous Peoples. Dimaline engages with this history by portraying a dystopian future Canada in which Indigenous Peoples are captured and murdered so that their bone marrow can be extracted to produce medicine for a now dreamless settler society, and the residential schools are resurrected in a new form as the sites of this renewed colonial assault. I argue that, while stressing an explicit continuity with the original model, Dimaline's new residential schools turn out to be, throughout the series, shapeshifting institutions that variously evoke and dramatize different forms of carcerality, variously resembling prisons, detention centres, re-education facilities, camps, and even industrial slaughterhouses. By placing (historical) residential schools in direct conversation with a plethora of modes of imprisonment and (genocidal) violence, Dimaline thus uses the residential schools as point of departure to represent settler/capitalist colonialism as pervasive, ongoing and inherently interwoven with various forms of detention and imprisonment. Consistently, she refuses a reassuring narrative of reconciliation, recently adopted by the Canadian state as regards relationships with Indigenous Peoples and the history of the residential schools, especially after the conclusion of works of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) in 2015. Instead, she advances what I frame as an abolitionist imaginary: a creative and (often literally) fiery destruction of the settler/capitalist system, as well as its carceral institutions, and a simultaneous imagining of radical alternatives of care and liberation.

Lucio De Capitani is a tenure-track researcher at Ca' Foscari University of Venice. His research interests include Anglophone, colonial, postcolonial, and Indigenous literatures (particularly the work of Robert Louis Stevenson, Amitav Ghosh, Anita Desai, Ursula K. Le Guin, and Cherie Dimaline), theories of world literature, connections between anthropology and literary studies, as well as ecocriticism and speculative fiction, with a focus on cli-fi, solarpunk, abolitionist, utopian, and dystopian imaginaries. He has co-edited the collection *Venice and the Anthropocene. An Ecocritical Guide* (2022, wetlands) and published *Ethnographic Narratives as World Literature. Uneven Entanglements in European and South Asian Writing* (2023, Palgrave).

PANEL #17: PUBLIC MEMORY AND NARRATIVES OF RESISTANCE

Telling Stories for an Invisible Audience: Narrative Agency in the Guantánamo Public Memory Project

Mónika Fodor (University of Pécs, Hungary)

“Guantánamo serves as a site of memory and amnesia,” writes Terri Tomsy about the Guantánamo Public Memory Project, an interactive media initiative curated by Columbia University. The project situates the detention camp within the broader history of the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay by utilizing digital humanities tools to revitalize and recontextualize individual memories within an open, multimodal archive. This presentation adopts a narrative hermeneutic approach to selected oral history interviews available at <https://www.gitmomemory.org> to explore how digitally constructed collective remembering transforms personal storytelling and redefines narrative agency within the digital afterlife of the camp where storytellers also adjust their narratives to their invisible and ever-changing audience. The analysis builds on the fact that memories are not fixed or statically stored mental records, but narrative acts reconstructed at each retelling considering the actual or possible audiences. Narrative sense-making operates on two intertwined levels. As an explicit narrative frame, they use language creatively to organize past events in the present, distancing the storyteller and the experience. The second level of storytelling involves constructing an implicit narrative. This narrative analytical tool reveals how the explicit storyline incorporates personal and sociocultural contexts, thereby shape the social representations of Guantánamo. Once archived, memories lose the immediacy of live storytelling and take a fixed form addressing an imagined often invisible audience, transferring the process of sense-making to the audience. Examining implicit narratives of ambivalence, dissociation, and silence the paper argues that digital archiving both preserves and transforms camp memory, revealing how the Guantánamo archive represents containment and erasure that sustain the camp as a site of suspended human rights.

Mónika Fodor is an Associate Professor in the Department of English Literatures and Cultures at the University of Pécs. Her research focuses on narrative meaning-making, memory, trauma, identity and narrative, and the narrative ramifications of reconstructing and digitalizing memories. She has published on the conversational and discourse analysis of narratives, identity, ethnicity, oral histories, narrative, memory, and trauma in identity construction. She also researches the forms of adapting and using culture as content in the EFL classroom. Her most recent work has been published in the journals *Memory Studies* and *Narrative Inquiry*.

The Evasive Other: Narrating Relational Surveillance and Re-Sentencing in Albanian Communist Political Prison Memoirs

Manjola Nasi (University of Tirana, Albania)

This paper examines the literary representation of relational surveillance and repeated sentencing in memoirs of Albanian political prisoners under the communist regime, with particular attention to Fatos Lubonja's *Second Sentence* and a corpus of interviews and autobiographical accounts. In these texts, the prison emerges not merely as a site of confinement but as a complex social and narrative ecosystem in which prisoners themselves are co-opted as informants and provocateurs, generating additional charges and sentences before the completion of their original terms. This recursive logic of punishment renders the carceral experience effectively unending, producing a perpetual state of vulnerability and ethical negotiation reminiscent of Michel Foucault's analysis of disciplinary power and panoptic surveillance. Focusing on narrative strategies, I argue that these memoirs articulate the pervasive surveillance and relational dynamics of confinement through fragmented temporalities, polyphonic perspectives, and careful attention to the interiority of both victim and surveillant. Analyzed via Cathy Caruth's insights on trauma and testimony, these texts reveal how memoir transforms lived suffering into structured literary narratives. Through the lens of Wacquant's concept of hyperincarceration, the memoirs illuminate the precarious legal and existential status imposed on prisoners and the systemic forces at play on them as a population marked for exclusion. Memoirs by Lubonja and others construct a literary ethics of witnessing that documents psychological and social mechanisms sustaining authoritarian power, while interrogating the porous boundaries between self and Other, loyalty and betrayal, truth and coercion within the carceral context. By analyzing these works as literature, this study demonstrates how writing functions both as a means of survival and a vehicle for critical reflection, offering readers access to forms of carceral experience often absent from historical or legal records. These narratives resonate with broader discussions of belonging, systemic injustice, and the relational logic of camps and detention, while also providing a site for examining the imaginative and ethical capacities of literature to critique power, bear witness, and envision alternative forms of social and political life.

Dr. **Manjola Nasi** is a faculty member in English and Literature at the Faculty of Foreign Languages, University of Tirana. Her research focuses on 20th-century literature, modernist poetics, creative writing, and the exploration of identity, surveillance, and power in literature, including dystopian and politically engaged narratives. She is also a poet and literary translator. A Fulbright Visiting Scholar and Western Balkans Fund–Visegrad Fund Fellow, she combines interdisciplinary perspectives to examine literature's capacity to illuminate historical and contemporary experiences of power structures and human complexity.

Abolition, Care, and Decolonial Feminism: Nadja Dizdarević and the Gendered Politics of Resistance in Postwar Bosnia

Rabija Osmanagić (University of Graz, Austria)

This presentation explores the story of Nadja Dizdarević, a Bosnian woman whose husband was among six citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina of Algerian descent transferred to Guantánamo Bay in 2002. Her long struggle through hunger strikes, protests, and public testimony reveals how U.S. detention policies extended into the moral and political life of postwar Bosnia, shaping both local complicity and global structures of power. Through this case, the presentation looks into how one woman's persistence challenged the empire's reach and redefined the meanings of justice and belonging beyond state borders. Drawing on a semi-structured interview with Dizdarević and a critical discourse analysis of Bosnian and international media coverage, the study situates her activism within abolition democracy (Du Bois, Davis) and decolonial feminist thought (Lugones, Vergès, Tronto). It reads Dizdarević's acts of care, grief, and refusal as a gendered abolitionist politics emerging from the periphery of empire. Her voice exposes the limits of Western human rights discourse and demonstrates how female activism in postwar Bosnia intervenes in global carceral and imperial systems. By connecting Bosnia's post-conflict landscape to the afterlives of the War on Terror, this paper argues that Dizdarević's resistance embodies a decolonial feminist abolitionism grounded in endurance and ethical care. Her story illustrates how grief can transform into political agency, centering care and persistence as abolitionist practices that disrupt patriarchal and imperial power and imagine justice beyond the boundaries of sovereignty and the Western human rights paradigm.

Rabija Osmanagić is an MA student in American Studies at the University of Graz. Born and raised in Bosnia and Herzegovina, she focuses on the global dimensions of female experience, literary feminist theory, and decolonial feminist thought. Her research explores how women's resistance reshapes understandings of care, belonging, and justice across borders. Through an interdisciplinary approach that bridges personal testimony, narrative, and creative expression, she examines how these forms operate as decolonial tools for confronting systems of domination. Her current work researches how contemporary political activism extends earlier feminist traditions of moral and affective resistance.

PANEL #18: MARTYRDOM, PSYCHO-CARCERALITY, AND THE ABOLITIONIST IMPERATIVE AGAINST ICE AND ELITE IMPUNITY

The Clubhouse Model of Mental Health as Resistance to Psycho-Carceral Architecture

Estella Pettus (Vassar College, U.S.)

This paper seeks to assess whether community mental health care can be considered an abolitionist praxis. My approach consists of contextualizing traditional psychiatric treatment within broader psycho-carceral infrastructures, including court-mandated institutionalization and medical treatment models. I center testimonies from members participating in a Clubhouse Model mental health community in New York's Hudson Valley—a non-clinical day program aimed at supporting those with serious mental illness, many of whom had spent decades held in psychiatric facilities. Through these qualitative interviews and integrated observation, I explore the voluntary participation, non-hierarchical relationships, and unconditional access to advocacy and care that is core to the Clubhouse Model. By organizing and uplifting its own community, the Clubhouse Model better addresses the systemic oppressions that disrupt mental health care access in its local environment. Many members of the Clubhouse Model mental health community share the lasting trauma of psychiatric systems: feeling "disappeared," inabilities adjusting to life post-treatment, experiencing complete social and relational abandonment, and even having troubling imagining a life beyond the unit's walls. Collectively, their experiences reveal that the treatment structures of the psychiatric unit—including its spatial and architectural logics—mirror carceral environments rather than offering refuge or rehabilitation. The interviews I have conducted bring to the fore a critique of "conditional care" frameworks that leverage access to treatment on requirements of compliance, surveillance, and confinement—reproducing carceral modes. Utilizing a Clubhouse Model though, mental health care is thus not "corrective" but rather a function of mutual accountability and supported belonging intent on reducing harms of serious mental illness often exacerbated by unmet structural needs.

Estella Pettus is a 4th-year undergraduate at Vassar College majoring in psychology with a correlate in prison studies. Her academic and interest focus on the inter-relationships of systemic oppression and mental health treatment in the United States and its criminal-legal system. She has interned with Exodus Transitional Community and the Hudson Valley Clubhouse in Poughkeepsie, NY, along with Pace University Counseling Center in New York City. Estella plans to pursue multicultural and complex trauma counseling methods at a graduate level, hoping to continue working with students and individuals with serious mental illness and criminal justice histories.

ICE and the Battle Over the Digital Visibility of Its Actions

Demetri Sedita (Vassar College, U.S.)

Large swaths of the American public support the concept of immigration enforcement in the abstract. ICE has engaged in increasingly brazen, on-the-ground violence necessary to support this goal. This highly visible violence has inspired many previously disengaged Americans to oppose the agency's actions. Among the undocumented migrants who are directly impacted by ICE's violence, anti-ICE sentiment has existed as long as the agency has existed. Now, a growing number of Americans who are not from the demographic groups targeted by ICE, and who previously accepted the agency's existence, are mobilizing against it. The case of the filmed and widely publicized killing of Renée Good is one such highly visible incident that has inspired backlash. Through filming, guerrilla social media campaigns, and the proliferation of anti-ICE memes, those who oppose ICE create digital counter-narratives to display and deepen awareness of the agency's violent actions. Leaders within the Trump administration and the ICE and DHS offices of public affairs have responded by attempting to both invisibilize certain aspects of ICE operations and to justify the necessity of its existence. This paper explores the interplay between the increasing digital visibility of ICE's activities and the PR campaigns, secrecy, censorship, and lying ICE carries out to manipulate public perceptions. From promoting memes that dehumanize ICE's targets to blocking congress members, journalists, and the public from accessing detention facilities, ICE employs various tactics to promote half-truths and lie about what the public has witnessed. The agency's willingness to manipulate the public shows ICE to be fearful of the backlash it would receive if all aspects of its operations were fully visible to the public. As Michel Foucault states: "where there is power, there is resistance." This may be true, but only if people perceive the power being exerted over them. Those who fall into the racialized category of undocumented migrants have long perceived the violence of US immigration enforcement. ICE is fighting to prevent that powerful violence from becoming visible and objectionable to the rest of America.

Demetri Sedita is a 4th-year undergraduate student at Vassar College. He is graduating in May with a B.A. in International Studies, with focuses in Political Science, Geography, Environmental Studies, and Prison Studies. In 2025, Demetri was recognized as an Edinburgh-Vassar Scholar for his work at the University of Edinburgh's Futures Institute researching Scottish local-level climate policymaking. Additionally, he is interested in understanding manifestations of dissent and refusal in a variety of global contexts, particularly in relation to incarceration. Currently, Demetri is writing a senior thesis analyzing resistance to far-right politics in the Republic of Ireland through a postcolonial lens.

Witness as Humanity: Comparing The Passion of Perpetua and ICE Detainees' Stories

Eva Martinez (Vassar College, U.S.)

St. Perpetua was a Christian Roman noblewoman, imprisoned in Carthage for her beliefs. Her status afforded her better conditions than other prisoners: she was visited by her family, was able to bribe the guards for better treatment, and she was able to write. Grappling with the knowledge that she was soon to die, she rejected notions of human pain and suffering as they became part of her faith. Harpinder Chauhan, a British man, who had legally lived in the U.S. on an entrepreneur's visa since 2016 was the owner of a barbecue business. He was detained by ICE on February 11th 2025. Describing his incarceration, he suffers "inhumane" treatment. Chauhan was cut off from his family, denied necessary medication, and repeatedly made fun of by guards. In comparing The Passion of Perpetua, a 203 AD firsthand account of St. Perpetua's incarceration, alongside ICE detainees' recent firsthand accounts around the U.S., I approach martyrdom as witness to human cruelty. This paper explores the complicated relationship between detention and martyrdom by asserting the premise that while detention aims to annihilate humanity, martyrdom relies upon it. Martyr derives from the Greek *mártys* meaning witness. To witness and share one's own story is a critical aspect of our shared humanity. ICE's continued suppression of detainees' voices indicates an awareness of that fact. Despite ~1800 years between Chauhan and Perpetua, the cruelty of imprisonment has not abated. Critically, both of these people are not the "standard" prisoner for their respective systems. Despite their difference in class, they are both wealthy enough to contact and receive outside assistance, and both are literate in the primary language of the country they are incarcerated in. Chauhan survives incarceration, St. Perpetua is beheaded for her crimes, yet the recountance of both of their stories can be read as a martyrdom. In separating Chauhan from his family and community, and stripping him of his humanity he undergoes a "social death." St. Perpetua is a martyr (and therefore witness) killed by the Roman empire, so too is Chauhan who is socially killed by ICE.

Eva Martinez is a 4th-year undergraduate at Vassar College. Graduating in May with a B.A. in Religion, they study the intersections between race, American religion, and politics. They have previously been a Vassar College Ford Scholar, University of Chicago Research Intern, and are currently Religion Department Academic Intern. Eva has studied Spanish and Latin, with a focus on Latin translation. They are writing a senior thesis discussing the Nation of Islam, Black American religion/resistance, and sacred food. Eva remains particularly fascinated by how American religion interacts with carceral systems, especially regarding MOVE and the Nation of Islam.

“Free Jeffrey Epstein?” Abolition, Impunity, and Imaginings of Accountability

Mariya Novosad (Vassar College, U.S.)

What does it mean to challenge impunity through demands that paradoxically reinforce carceral logics? To address this question, I interrogate whether “abolitionist punishment” is a coherent concept or an oxymoron. Beginning from reflexive tension—what it means to hesitate, as an abolitionist, to say “Free Jeffrey Epstein”—I describe how abolitionist commitments are strained when confronting perpetrators with social status that insulates them from accountability. My presentation stems from an urge to delve into how and why reactions to calls for penal abolition diverge depending on modes of criminality, with particular attention to crimes of power and regimes of power. To examine how social status, motivation, and perceived harm shape moral intuitions about violence and punishment, I draw from the abolitionist dilemma of the “dangerous few,” and attempt to establish who the term refers to using a framework that positions crime as being of survival or of power, and as an act of interpersonal violence or of systemic violence. Through a case analysis of the Epstein files, I conduct a thought exercise that considers how transformative justice shifts depending on whether Jeffrey Epstein is framed as an individual rapist who has committed interpersonal acts of violence or as a trafficker whose violence is systemic, networked, and protected. This exercise seeks to imagine alternative modes of accountability that recognize the intersection of interpersonal and systemic forms of malice perpetrated by those who benefit from elite impunity, as well as challenge the dichotomy of the interpersonal and systemic. Ultimately, this paper seeks to invite dialogue on how abolitionist praxis might address crimes of the powerful without reproducing the punitive frameworks abolition aims to dismantle.

Mariya Novosad is an undergraduate student at Vassar College, studying prison studies and psychology. She is passionate about disrupting carceral logics and co-creating systems informed by somatic embodiment and the politics of care. Her areas of academic interest include conceptualizations of morality, violence, and pleasure, and their relationship with motivation.

Anti-Carceral Digital Resistance: Online Public Memory of Syria's Saydnaya Military Prison

Rosie Elebyjian (Vassar College, U.S.)

After 2011, tens of thousands of prisoners in Saydnaya Military Prison, north of Damascus, Syria, were systematically tortured, hanged en masse, and deprived of necessary care. Saydnaya's extermination policies overwhelmingly targeted civilians deemed enemies of the government. Because Bashar al-Assad's regime was ruled by systems of enforced disappearance and censorship, information regarding the whereabouts and conditions of Saydnaya's inmates seldom left the prison walls. In December 2024, rebels forced their way in, shutting down the prison. Leading up to and in the wake of Saydnaya's abolition, Syrians have continuously and collaboratively utilized online practices, such as Facebook pages and digital archives, to disseminate testimonies of prisoners and document violations—in effect, preserving artistic resistance. This paper examines how these digital endeavors assert Syrians' autonomy over the public memory of Saydnaya, otherwise obscured by violent repression. Organizations like *Creative Memory of the Syrian Revolution* gather this output into a singular, evolving website. Delving into this virtual repository, I analyze the concept of online public memory as a praxis of Syrian resistance against carceral surveillance and censorship. Through artistic analysis and oral testimonies of detainees and archivists, I seek to answer the question: How is public space being reclaimed by Syrians in the digital world? Examining both the archival practices and several political cartoons, infographics, and photography campaigns, I aim to evaluate abolition as an active process of creation and reconstruction, both before and after the fall of Assad. I argue that the digital curation of public memory in Syria is a collective, grassroots practice, creating a living and pluralistic history. This free and public history functions as a safeguard of equity against imprisonment, torture, silence, and disappearance. Ultimately, this paper asserts that the online preservation of Saydnaya's history by Syrians protects individuals' stories and resistance against homogenization, censorship, and slaughter. In taking control of the narrative of the past, Syrians use archival practices as an abolitionist tool of counter-memory.

Rosie Elebyjian is a 3rd-year undergraduate student at Vassar College, studying History and Prison Studies. Her academic focus is on carceral histories and colonialism in the Middle East after the 20th century, with a particular emphasis on the artistic practices of resistance. She is interested in how autobiography, poetry, and art escape the confines of prison walls to preserve life, dissidence, community, and radical celebration.

Repackage to Reconcile? Colonial Carcerality, UNESCO Heritage, and the Politics of Memory

Sandrine Canac (École des hautes études en sciences sociales, France)

Heritage designation has become a key site of political negotiation in postcolonial contexts, where competing claims over memory, recognition, and sovereignty frequently come into tension. This paper examines France's bid to inscribe the remains of the French penal colonies in Kanaky-New Caledonia and French Guiana on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Proponents of this project, which include local government officials, French historians, and descendants of the convicts and free settlers who established themselves on these territories, present this inscription as a tool for reconciliation with France's penal history and its devastating impact on indigenous populations. They also frame this potential inscription as a driver of economic and tourism development, which would benefit local communities. However, drawing on penal colonies studies and memory politics, this paper argues that France's proposal advances partial narratives that reaffirm colonial authority and repackages them within a heritage framework that turns sites of confinement into symbols of national unity and legitimacy. These dynamics are particularly salient in the current political moment, marked by renewed calls for independence from France, including those articulated by the Front international de décolonisation (FID), founded in January 2025 by independentist groups from French overseas territories, including French Guiana and Kanaky-New Caledonia. This paper analyzes the political stakes of this candidacy in relation to the reconciliation discourse it promotes, and examines how the mobilization of the local carceral history and memory politics may ultimately reinforce the very colonial project the initiative claims to challenge.

Sandrine Canac is an art historian and a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellow at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris. She graduated with a PhD in Art History & Criticism from Stony Brook University and held fellowships at a variety of institutions including the Independent Study Program of the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and the Interdisciplinary Centre for European Enlightenment Studies in Halle, Germany. Her work has been published in journals such as the *Oxford Art Journal*, *Perspective* and *The Journal of Modern Craft*.

Educational Counterspaces, Acompañamiento, and Carceral Humanitarianism in U.S. Refugee Detention

Suma Cheru (University of Texas at Austin, U.S.)

For my paper presentation, I draw from a pilot qualitative project with five former ORR teachers located in the Rio Grande Valley region in Texas. In this work, I demonstrate how the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement's (ORR) formalized physical and social constraints, including limited mobility, operate in ways that hinder the possibility for humanizing approaches to education for unaccompanied im/migrant youth in detention.

Transcending the formal educational apparatus that focuses on learning solely occurring within public schools, I also highlight how some teachers were effective in fostering educational counterspaces (Shirazi, 2018) of-and-with- 'acompañamiento,' which is a border thinking philosophy (Sepulveda, 2011; Dyrness & Sepulveda, 2020) that centers critical reflection, dialogue, and community-building to cultivate critical consciousness and the co-construction of knowledge across informal learning contexts (Freire, 1970). I trace how educational counterspaces-of-and-with-acompañamiento provide sites of belonging by ephemerally rupturing the oppressive constraints of ORR's stringent formal policies. Academic and legal scholarship have vastly documented the experiences of unaccompanied im/migrant children arriving at the U.S. southern border, facing detention by U.S. Border Patrol, and those eventually transferred to U.S. ORR detention facilities (Heidbrink, 2019; Visico, 2019; Cardoso et al., 2021). I build on this scholarly foundation by offering understandings about the persistence of youth's mandatory schooling experiences inside these carceral ORR detention facilities. I situate my paper within American and global discourses that examine the pedagogical ethos and social implications of compulsory education within carceral learning contexts, paying particular attention to how humanizing might and does unravel against the backdrop of physical and social state-sponsored confinement. These ruptures are reflective of 'liberal reform,' though they offer potential insights for theories and actions that advance abolition democracy (Davis, 2005). My scholarly objective is not to "soften" the carceral logics (Annamma et al., 2024) that otherwise drive the penal criminalization of undocumented im/migrants. Instead, I ground my paper in "carceral humanitarianism," (Brankamp, 2022) to illustrate how counterspaces accentuate both the "steady material build-up of...detention infrastructures" and "...the liberal pragmatism that acquiesces to militarized policing" (p. 112). Cloaked in 'acompañamiento,' these counterspaces offer a (albeit fleeting) *potential* assurance of humanizing learning and belonging.

Suma Cheru (she/her) is a first-year doctoral student in the Cultural Studies in Education program at the University of Texas at Austin. Broadly, her research interests center on the informal educational experiences of unaccompanied im/migrant youth residing in U.S. federal detention. She draws on border thinking and critical pedagogies to explore how education within detention sites can subvert the carceral logics of state-sponsored confinement. Suma holds a Bachelor's degree in Anthropology and Educational Studies from Wellesley College, a Master's in Education degree in International Education Policy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and a Master's in Education degree in Anthropology and Education from Teachers College, Columbia University.

PANEL #20: EXHIBITION AND PRESENTATION: SUPPORT OF PRISONERS IN AUSTRIA

Union For The Rights Of Prisoners

Monika Mokre (Austrian Academy of Science), **Elena Balthese, Leah Doll and Mimi Schmidl** (Solidary Group for a Prisoner's Union, Austria)

Guided Tour through Exhibition on Artworks and Text from Prisons in Austria followed by presentation

The "Union for the rights of prisoners (URvG) " was founded by inmates in Austrian prisons. All regular members are prisoners. Extraordinary members outside support the prisoners and try to raise public awareness for problems in prison. This is the official description of our work. In practice, the collaboration between prisoners and people outside faces multiple difficulties. Probably, the biggest problem is the fact that prisoners are rarely allowed to speak for themselves. Thus, those members who see their task in the support of prisoners become, in fact, the voices and faces of the URvG. Furthermore, while members inside and outside share the objective of improving the situation of prisoners, they differ with regard to many other political positions. While the members outside are abolitionists, this does not hold true for the majority of the members inside. The demand for abolitionism stands in a tension to the concrete prison reform work of the members outside. Also, not all members inside share the antiracist, antisexist, and antifascist principles of those outside. Still, they are supported by URvG regarding their rights in prison. Our presentation will include an exhibition of artworks and texts by prisoners as a means for prisoners to speak for themselves. After a short, guided tour through the exhibition, we shall share our experiences in a discussion with the conference participants and introduce examples of our practical work, such as letter writing to prison.

Elena Balthesen has been a member of the "Solidarity group for a Prisoners' Union Austria" since 2024. She studies anthropology at the University of Vienna where she wrote her bachelors thesis about prisons, surveillance and state violence.

Leah Doll is an activist and social worker. She holds a master's degree in Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Cádiz. Her activist works focuses on the issues of patriarchal violence, feminicides, prisons and abolitionism.

Monika Mokre is a political scientist and Senior Researcher at the Institute of Culture Studies of the Austrian Academy of Sciences as well as a member of the "Union for the Rights of Prisoners" and the "Solidarity Group for a Prisoners' Union Austria." She did her doctorate at the University of Vienna and her habilitation at the University of Innsbruck. Her fields of interest as a researcher and a political activist are asylum, migration, prison and abolitionism. She is also doing research in theory of democracy, gender studies, and cultural politics.

Mimi Schmidl is a cultural worker and filmmaker based in Vienna. They are part of the "Solidarity Group for a Prisoners' Union Austria" since 2024. Within the Solidarity group they are organizing various events like letter writing workshops, film screenings and reading circles regarding the topics of prison and abolition.

PANEL #21: BELONGING AND IMAGINATION AS ABOLITIONIST TOOLS

Mirroring, Paranoid Security Imaginations: The US, El Salvador, and Detention Envy

Stephanie Athey (SUNY-Binghamton, Human Rights Institute, U.S.)

This presentation reframes the Salvadoran–U.S. relationship as a transnational project of security-making in which each state feeds on the other’s experiments in order to imagine, justify, and refine its own camps, detention and expulsion regimes. Over the last forty years, across counterinsurgency, postwar migration, gang and labor policy--from the Cold War to the “war on terror” and current deportation spectacles-- El Salvador and the United States repeatedly exchange templates for casting certain populations as risky—migrants, gangs, “terrorists”—and keep those subjects in constant motion through an array of carceral spaces. Within and against these circulations, Salvadoran migrants and Salvadoran residents in the United States have built dense social, economic, and cultural worlds that sustain communities and regional economies even as the workers themselves remain vulnerable to shifting legal statuses, sudden raids, and deportation. Centering CECOT in El Salvador and selected sites in Maryland, Minnesota, and Los Angeles, the talk reads these locations as interconnected spaces that feature differently in the US vs. the Salvadoran security imagination. It traces how U.S. advisers co-produced counterinsurgency during the Salvadoran civil war then transferred that model to Iraq as the “Salvador Option” two decades later; how Salvadoran youth were identified with gangs and cycled through U.S. jails and detention centers before deportation and demonization as MS-13; and how today’s ICE raids and deportations have elevated CECOT as the ultimate spectacle of Trump’s America and Central American mobility. Across these examples, the “subjects” of security are managed through circulation—between prisons, immigration detention, community supervision, and cross-border expulsion—so that clandestine and contested movement itself becomes a technology of control. Yet, these nations look to each other to develop better dungeons, Salvadoran life continually reworks and exceeds the carceral futures imagined for it.

Stephanie Athey is a professor of cultural studies and Research Associate of the Human Rights Institute of SUNY-Binghamton, US. She publishes *The Wells Record: Torture Networks, Policing, and Prisons*, curating global news, research, and analysis on the human infrastructure of state violence, available on Substack and www.wellsrecord.com. Her book, *Torture In The National Security Imagination*, looks to everyday torture in the context of

police violence, mass incarceration, and racial capitalism, arguing that, state torture has been foundational to US empire and is propelled by local social functions, conducted by social networks, and publicly supported by a durable social imaginary. She served as President of the Association of Academic Programs in Latin America and the Caribbean and co-directs a Mexican educational partnership. Her essays on human rights, colonial discourse, eugenics, and race have appeared in a variety of scholarly journals.

Belonging in Movement

Túlio Zille (Bowdoin College, U.S.)

At a time of heightened expressions of xenophobia and racism in the Global North, due in part to the rise of the extreme right in places like the United States, this essay seeks to interrogate what it means to claim legitimate belonging to a place. I juxtapose two study cases in different contexts to reflect on how belonging is reimagined and enacted by “new” and “old” populations of a place. The first case involves how locals displaced by the Belo Monte Dam in the Brazilian Amazon renegotiate relationship to the land and river in a context where development as progress is the dominant discourse. The second addresses how discourses of newness are employed by different actors in the state of Maine in the United States to denote legitimate presence (or lackthereof), in the context of recent influx of migrants who come primarily from the Global South. By putting these cases in conversation, this paper seeks to gesture toward understandings of belonging, and ultimately, relationality, that complicate reliance on common notions such as identity, ancestry, newness and priority.

Túlio Zille grew up in Minas Gerais, Brazil, and as a young adult, he moved to the US in order to pursue his higher education. He received my PhD in Political Science from Johns Hopkins University, and is currently an Assistant Professor in Government at Bowdoin College. His research and teaching interests span topics in development, political ecology, migration, humanitarianism and queer studies. His work focuses generally on Latin America and the Global South (broadly construed).

Capital Punishment and Discrimination in Japan: Explicit and Implicit Lurking in the Criminal Justice System

Shinichi Ishizuka & Mika Funakoshi (Ryukoku University, Japan)

Japan is one of G7s that retains the death penalty. From 2022 to 2025, executions were suspended, raising hopes that Japan might become a de facto moratorium country. However, our expectations were dashed by an execution. On September 26, 2024, death row inmate Mr. HAKAMATA was definitively acquitted 58 years after his arrest. More Four death row inmates were definitively acquitted following retrials. Currently, lawyers,

activists, and politicians are debating the enactment of a retrial law, but the Japanese government is attempting to maintain the status quo regarding institutional reforms related to miscarriages of justice and the abolition of the death penalty. This report introduces the history and current state of the death penalty since World War II and examines the existence of “discrimination” hidden behind it, as well as the discriminatory attitudes of investigative agencies and the criminal justice system that persist to this day. Finally, Japan’s criminal justice system is characterized not only by overt ethnic discrimination (Koreans, Asians, Latinos, etc.) but also by hidden forms of discrimination (BURAKUMIN, BORYUKODAN, etc.) to argue the underlying deep-seated sense of inferiority toward Westerners.

Dr. Shinichi Ishizuka is a legal scholar specializing in criminology and criminal policy. He completed his legal studies at Chuo University and earned a Doctor of Law from Kyushu University. After teaching at Kitakyushu City University, he served as Professor of Law at Ryukoku University from 1998 to 2023 and now holds emeritus status. Ishizuka has also been a visiting professor at the University of Göttingen and served as President of the Japanese Association of Sociological Criminology. His work focuses on criminal justice reform, drug policy, and sociological approaches to law, reflected in numerous influential publications.

Mika Funakoshi is a journalist and author with extensive international reporting experience. A graduate of Sophia University, she joined Kyodo News in 1989 and served as bureau chief in Phnom Penh, Hanoi, and Manila. She later worked as Deputy Editor of the web news section, covering human rights, conflict, and refugee issues across multiple regions. After leaving Kyodo News in 2019, she became a visiting researcher at the Criminology Research Center of Ryukoku University. Funakoshi is also the author of several books documenting conflict and post-conflict societies.

PANEL #22: COUNTERSPACES, DEPORTATION, AND POLICY

The Human Investment: Con-sequences of the AFT's Operation Fast & Furious

Raven Burns (Northern Arizona University, U.S.)

The “War on Drugs” has been seen mainly through the scope of drugs flowing north into the United States but has only hinted at the massive flow of firearms and money moving south into Mexico. By only discussing the issues of the illegal drug economy from the ways in which it negatively impacts the U.S. leaves out crucial understandings of how the transborder economy and subsequent attempts at controlling its function. Additionally, there has been little U.S. scholarship which explores the role of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) and its impact on the southern flow of firearms. Through this presentation, I will demonstrate how gun laws, ATF investigations, and American arms manufacturing

have impacted the arming of crime organizations in Mexico and the subsequent dehumanization of people residing within Mexico. I draw my research from the DOJ's investigation into Operation Fast & Furious, strategy manuals from the ATF, and declassified emails from the early 2000s, a period crucial to understanding the expansion of U.S. law enforcement activities in the southern borderlands since it marks the transition of the ATF from the Department of the Treasury (TREAS) to the DOJ in 2003. This move was a part of a major change in the way that the United States viewed the issue of firearms and explosives as something to be controlled through policing rather than through taxes. Thus, it becomes necessary to see this transition of the ATF as another piece of the growing state police presence that has affixed itself to the U.S.-Mexico borderlands. Without upholding other agencies' work as successful or justified, it is important to examine why the ATF has allowed for guns to flow over the border with very few seizures or apprehensions. Additionally, it is important to show the conditions which were necessary for these investigations to come to an end and the context in which these cases were deemed as being problematic.

Raven Burns is graduating in May 2026 from Northern Arizona University with a B.A. in Comparative Cultural Studies, a B.S. in History, and minors in both Latin American Studies and Museum Studies. She will begin a graduate program in fall 2026, continuing research into militarized border spaces, shifting her emphasis into how the United States envisions oceanic borders, specifically, how the U.S. militarization of the Gulf of Mexico has impacted coastal communities and economies in both nations. She is a recipient of the William H. Lyon History Scholarship and holds a competitive Interns to Scholars paid Research Assistantship for the 2025-2026 academic year focused on how laws and practices surrounding Guantánamo Bay detainees are reflected in current raids and migrant detention.

The Weaponization of ICE: Mass Deportation, the Suspension of Due Process, and the Logic of the 'Camp' in the Americas

Otto Herschmann (University of Graz, Austria)

Since its inception in 2003, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has evolved from a security agency into a key instrument of mass deportation. This paper examines the critical turning point in 2025, where the institutional “weaponisation” of ICE driven by “invasion rhetoric” and the nationwide expansion of expedited removal has effectively suspended due process for non-citizens. By analysing the transformation of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) into an enforcement agency and the deployment of military resources for interior enforcement, this paper will argue that current policies represent a fundamental break from traditional civil immigration law. Central to this analysis is the concept of the “camp” as a modern space of legal exceptionalism. Using Giorgio Agamben’s “State of Exception” and Angela Davis’ framework of “Abolition Democracy,” this paper will investigate how new 2025 facilities, such as “Alligator Alcatraz” in Florida, embody a historical logic of confinement where citizenship status determines human rights. Ultimately, this paper aims to fill a gap in the “cimmigration” literature by specifically documenting the

2025 weaponisation phase. By connecting these domestic shifts to Inter-American human rights standards, the paper challenges contemporary notions of belonging and argues for an abolitionist reimagining of migration control in the Americas.

Otto Herschmann is a student at the University of Graz, pursuing a bachelor's degree in English and American Studies along with a teaching degree in History and English. He is further specializing through certificate programs in Inter-American Cultural Studies and Political Science. His academic interests center on the intersection of political communication and the erosion of democratic institutions. His bachelor's thesis, titled "The Escalation of Authoritarian Rhetoric in President Donald Trump's Rally Speeches," utilizes poststructuralist discourse theory to analyse how specific rhetorical strategies are employed to undermine democratic norms and delegitimize political systems.

Borders of Belonging: Economic and Social Dimensions of Migrant Detention

Kamal Tasiu Abdullahi (Istanbul University, Turkey)

Migrant imprisonment in the Americas is a complex convergence of social, political, and economic dynamics that influence senses of belonging and exclusion. Migrant camps and detention centers serve not just as physical confinement facilities, but also as means for states and institutions to regulate mobility, citizenship, and access to critical resources. This study investigates how administrative policies, financing mechanisms, and institutional arrangements affect the treatment, social status, and perceived validity of migrants in these settings. It places contemporary detention practices into a broader historical and inter-American framework, examining continuities in displacement, labor migration, and border governance. The economic components of migrant imprisonment are highlighted, including governmental resource allocation, privatization of detention services, and the impact of international financial mechanisms on operational procedures. By shedding light on the connections between policy frameworks and social outcomes, the analysis illustrates how structural disparities and market-driven imperatives influence human rights, freedom of movement, and access to justice. It also investigates how migrants traverse bureaucratic systems, institutional hierarchies, and regulatory processes, showing the complex dynamics of exclusion and conditional belonging. Migrant imprisonment emerges as an important place for comprehending the larger logics of governance in the Americas. The convergence of economic, political, and social pressures inside these places demonstrates how contemporary control regimes create new moral and spatial boundaries for citizenship. In mapping these relationships, the study advances a deeper comprehension of how detention functions as a technology of state power one that redefines inclusion, legitimizes inequality, and crystallizes the tensions between mobility, sovereignty, and human dignity in the modern world.

Kamal Tasiu Abdullahi is a PhD candidate in Economics at Istanbul University. He attended the GUSSEG Summer School and is a member of the International Association for Research in Income and Wealth (IARIW) and the Pan-African Network for Economic Analysis of Policies (PANAP). He was awarded the Young Research Scholarship by the Social Science & Humanities Research Association (SSHRA) in the United Arab Emirates and has published papers in peer-reviewed academic journals.

PANEL #23: ICE, SOLIDARIDAD Y PERSPECTIVAS HUMANISTAS

Guantánamo Bay: Violación de los derechos humanos. Colonización cultural.

José Sánchez Guerra (Casa de Historia, Ciudad de Guantánamo, Cuba)

La base naval de Guantánamo es el resultado de una inescrupulosa e ilegal imposición política, edificada contra la voluntad del pueblo cubano, un enclave donde se han violado de manera sistemática los derechos humanos. La instalación bélica de ultramar, la más antigua de los E.U. (1903), plataforma de numerosas invasiones que quebrantaron la soberanía de países latinoamericanos, que provocaron la muerte de miles de ciudadanos. El objetivo: Proteger los intereses económicos y políticos de Norteamérica y destruir gobiernos y movimientos progresistas. A partir de 1940, se incrementaron los crímenes de los militares estadounidenses cometidos contra la población cubana, incluyendo trabajadores del enclave. La cárcel de Carabela Poig, situada en una península de la bahía, se convirtió en un sitio “celebre” por las violaciones de los derechos humanos, donde se aplicaban procedimientos condenados por las leyes internacionales. Prácticas criminales que ponen de manifiesto la abolición de la democracia en un territorio que legalmente es de la soberanía de la isla mayor del Caribe. En 1994 algunas áreas del enclave, convertidas en centros de concentración de emigrados (cubanos y haitianos), campos que no poseían aceptables condiciones higiénico-sanitarias, donde residieron confinados 56 mil detenidos, situación que fue denunciada por la prensa internacional. Espacios que en el 2002, son transformadas en “cárcel internacional” donde fueron concentrados 776 prisioneros de cuarenta y ocho países, centro que aplicaban procedimientos brutales a los detenidos que están prohibidos por las leyes internacionales. Se argumenta que al estar fuera del territorio continental de E.U.A., los detenidos no tienen protecciones constitucionales completas. Prisión donde cumplieron, muchos de ellos, largas condenas sin estar juzgado por tribunales. Una cifra, fueron liberados, después de vencer décadas de encierro y sin percibir ninguna compensación material. El presente trabajo, además, expone las acciones de colonización cultural, proyectadas hacia la población civil cubana, complemento de la política hostil estadounidense. Estrategia donde la estimulación a las rivalidades nacionales, la promoción del modo de vida estadounidense, el apoyo a asociaciones religiosas opositoras y la creación de instituciones culturales, como el USO, en la ciudad de Guantánamo, desempeñaron rol revelador en la política de “Buenos Vecinos”. Proyecto dirigido a consolidar la hegemonía política y cultural norteamericana en el Caribe.

José Sánchez Guerra. Licenciado en Historia y Ciencias Sociales, Máster en Estudios Cubanos y del Caribe. Académico Correspondiente de la Academia de la Historia de Cuba. Historiador de la Ciudad de Guantánamo. Autor de más de veinte libros. Ha participado en talleres internacionales sobre las bases militares extranjeras. Impartió conferencias en España, Austria y Venezuela. Tiene dos Premios Nacionales en Investigación del concurso 26 de Julio. Posee la Distinción por la Cultura Cubana. Participó como delegado y conferencista en los eventos Camps, (In)justice, and Solidarity in the Américas, Graz, Austria, 2022 y 2024. Reside en la ciudad de Guantánamo, Cuba.

Identidad de la negritud, pertenencia y democracia abolicionista: genealogías del Encierro y horizontes de libertad decolonial

Melquisedec González Dávila (Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras)

Esta ponencia se deriva del trabajo doctoral del autor, centrado en la identidad de la negritud en el mundo poscolonial, en diálogo con autores como Fanon, Mbembe, Thiong'o y Gyasi. El presente estudio amplía esa línea de investigación desde el marco de la democracia abolicionista, explorando las tecnologías del encierro y las genealogías contemporáneas de la libertad negra. Partiendo de un marco decolonial poscapitalista y crítico, se realiza un análisis de las formas en que el lenguaje, la memoria y la subjetividad del otro se convierten en territorios para la resistencia frente a estructuras carcelarias del poder colonial. Basado en el pensamiento de Frantz Fanon, Achille Mbembe, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o y Yaa Gyasi, el estudio propone una genealogía del confinamiento como continuidad simbólica de la esclavitud y la colonialidad, haciendo un vínculo entre ello y las prácticas discursivas de deshumanización que se dan en contextos contemporáneos de racismo epistémico estructural, migración forzada y exclusión social. A la luz del marco de la democracia abolicionista, se argumenta que la abolición no se limita a disolver sistemas punitivos o carcelarios; más bien nos exige una transformación radical del imaginario sobre la identidad, la libertad y la pertenencia. Los campamentos son presentados como escenarios donde se permuta la humanidad, el cuidado y la posibilidad misma de la vida y del bien común. Específicamente, se explora todo ello con una perspectiva sobre la negritud desde el Caribe y la diáspora africana, planteando la verdadera libertad negra como praxis ética y política. Se pretende una realidad que encarne un nuevo humanismo, uno que imagine una democracia que trascienda la lógica del castigo, el aislamiento, la educación subalternada y las fronteras imaginarias en los constructos sociales. En consecuencia, la ponencia sostiene que la democracia abolicionista constituye un punto cardinal de justicia radical que vincula la memoria colectiva, la vulnerabilidad del subalterno y la creación de comunidades solidarias e integrativas en el proceso continuo de descolonizar lo humano.

Melquisedec González Dávila es doctor en Filosofía en Estudios Culturales y maestro en Administración Estratégica y Liderazgo, Teología Ministerial y Neuroteología. Su investigación doctoral explora la identidad de la negritud en el mundo poscolonial y su relación con la decolonialidad, el racismo epistémico, la memoria y la subjetividad. Actualmente cursa una Maestría en Administración Pública en la Universidad de Puerto Rico,

Recinto de Río Piedras. Su trabajo integra filosofía, estudios culturales y pensamiento teológico contemporáneo para repensar la libertad, la pertenencia y la democracia desde una perspectiva abolicionista y humanista.

La libertad del saber en prisión: humanidades en contextos carcelarios

Eliani A. Parrilla Rodríguez (Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras)

Este trabajo explora la enseñanza de las humanidades en contextos de confinamiento en Puerto Rico como una práctica de pedagogía crítica que cuestiona las narrativas hegemónicas asociadas a la modernidad occidental y las lógicas carcelarias que producen exclusión, deshumanización y muerte social. A partir de mi experiencia como docente de los cursos Humanidades: Temas y Problemas de la Cultura Occidental I y II, analizo el aula en prisión como un espacio político-pedagógico donde la construcción colectiva del conocimiento se convierte en una forma de concebir y ejercer la libertad en condiciones de encierro y donde se reconfiguran nociones de ciudadanía, legalidad, memoria histórica y humanidad. Situada en un contexto caribeño marcado por la esclavitud, el colonialismo, la ocupación militar y la migración forzada, esta pedagogía concibe la “tradicción occidental” no como un referente fijo o universal, sino como un proceso histórico y relacional de construcción de significado. Desde esta perspectiva, dicha tradición dialoga críticamente con experiencias, saberes y prácticas que cuestionan la modernidad. El currículo permite al estudiantado examinar cómo los discursos de civilización, progreso y modernidad han legitimado regímenes de encierro, exclusión y control. Al mismo tiempo, abre la posibilidad de imaginar formas alternativas de memoria, interpretación y pertenencia. En diálogo con el pensamiento de Achille Mbembe y desde un marco abolicionista, propongo entender el aula en contextos de confinamiento como un espacio que desestabiliza las lógicas necropolíticas y punitivas que sostienen el sistema carcelario. Leída desde esta perspectiva, el aula se configura como un lugar de memoria colectiva y de construcción de conocimiento situado que interrumpe el continuum de los espacios de encierro. La práctica pedagógica, lejos de limitarse a la transmisión de saberes, se convierte así en una forma de resistencia cotidiana que afirma la vida, posibilita la creación de comunidad y abre horizontes de libertad frente a un régimen que organiza la exclusión, el castigo y la gestión diferencial de las vidas.

La Dra. **Eliani A. Parrilla-Rodríguez** es profesora e investigadora en el campo de las Humanidades, adscrita a la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras. Su trabajo se sitúa en la intersección de los estudios caribeños, la filosofía de la estética, la teoría crítica, los estudios visuales y la historia del arte. Doctora en Humanidades con especialización en Teoría del Arte por la Universitat Pompeu Fabra, su investigación se centra en el análisis de lenguajes simbólicos coloniales y sus transgresiones desde perspectivas anticoloniales. Su producción académica articula docencia, investigación y práctica cultural como herramientas críticas para repensar arte, poder y pertenencia.

After the Square: Belonging and the Consequences of Nonviolent Resistance

Ahmed Maher (Independent Scholar) & **Bruce Pearson** (Center for Nonviolent Conflict Research, U.S.)

When nonviolent activists accept imprisonment as a foreseeable consequence of their struggle, the prison does not end the resistance but relocates it. This paper draws on the forthcoming memoir of Egyptian activist Ahmed Maher, co-founder of the April 6 Youth Movement, to examine how carceral spaces designed to atomize and silence become sites where solidarity, community, and human connection are actively reconstructed. Reading Maher's account of his imprisonment alongside the nonviolent action literature and scholarship on confinement and belonging, we argue that the human bonds forged inside the cell are not merely survival mechanisms but continuations of the same values that animated the Arab Spring. Maher's experience speaks directly to questions of abolition democracy, the politics of belonging, and what resistance looks like after the cameras have left the square.

Ahmed Maher, a civil engineer and researcher in international relations, has been actively engaged for more than 15 years in supporting democratic transition and human rights and has participated in numerous initiatives related to environmental justice and addressing climate change. He holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering, along with several specialized diplomas in political science, civil society, and NGO management. He was a co-founder and coordinator of the April 6 Youth Movement and a member of the Coalition of Revolutionary Youth. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in international relations at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Alexandria University. **Bruce Pearson** is Senior Program Officer at the Center for Nonviolent Conflict Research, where he supports online learning, fieldwork, and writing on the use of civil resistance tactics to secure rights, freedom, and justice. He holds a Master of Arts in International Relations from the School of International Service at American University, with an emphasis in international negotiation and conflict resolution. Pearson was a 2023 Professional Fellow with the National Council on US–China Relations, which provided the opportunity to work with and learn from human rights groups in Mongolia.

Reckoning With Restorative Justice: Hawai'i Women's Prison Writing

Leanne Trapedo Sims (Knox College, U.S.)

Prisons in Hawai'i indicate an ongoing colonial relationship to the United States of America, which overthrew the Hawaiian kingdom by force. As an occupied people, Native Hawaiians have been subject to systemic surveillance and discipline that persists in the contemporary Hawaiian carceral

system. Women of color, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander women are disproportionately incarcerated both nationally and in Hawai'i. This paper/presentation will present research from my book *Reckoning with Restorative Justice: Hawai'i Women's Prison Writing* (Duke University Press), rooted in the author's experiences as a feminist ethnographer and creative writing facilitator at the sole women's prison on O'ahu – the Women's Correctional Community Center (WCCC). The work addresses a scholarly lacuna in a tradition that privileges male prison writing by examining women's prison writing in two gender-responsive programs: the Kailua Prison Writing Project and its adjacent Prison Monologues. The philosophy of the writing program is rooted in Hawaiian practices of *ho'oponopono* (reconciliation and forgiveness) that resist state-sanctioned inscriptions on Indigenous bodies. Imagined by its founders as a place of refuge and transgressive cultural site, the WCCC is a troubled site: a carceral landscape against a backdrop of colonialism – a space between hope and despair. The story that unfolds is a cartography – a bridge between advocacy and scholarship that interrogates social justice failures in the contemporary carceral archipelago. I will additionally present the women's poetry and performance—resistive praxis. I argue that while the writing project served as a vital resource for the inside women, it also remained deeply embedded within carceral logics at the institutional, state, and federal levels.

Leanne Trapedo Sims was born in South Africa: Apartheid was the early ferment for her political and social commitments. She is the Daniel J. Logan Associate Professor of Peace and Justice and Chair at Knox College and Director of the Knox-Henry Hill Prison Education program. Her book—*Reckoning with Restorative Justice: Hawai'i Women's Prison Writing* (Duke University Press, 23) interrogates the intersections of gender, Indigeneity, violence and state power in colonized Hawai'i. At Knox College, she heads an interdisciplinary program in Peace and Justice with a focus on critical carceral studies and abolition. Her work has appeared in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* and *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies*.

Identity, Belonging, and Childhood: Insights from Rohingya Refugee Camps in Bangladesh

Sreetapa Chakrabarty (Rabindra Bharati University, India)

The Rohingya constitute the largest number of dispossessed people in South Asia whose everyday lives are trapped in carceral junctions, namely, refugee or Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN) camps in Bangladesh. More than half of this population are children, for whom home constitutes an integral element. The notion of home may recur 'in the collective memory and is associated with the place of origin as well as the current situation of displacement.' (Almenara-Niebla, 2020) Further, the notion of home may be explored in the camps along with the broader quest

for identity and notions of belonging. This paper explores the concept and practice of home among different groups of Rohingya children and youth in Bangladesh. Based on ethnographic narratives, oral memories and interactions, the paper attempts to uncover kaleidoscopic forms of belonging existing among three heterogeneous categories of Rohingya children and youth – Rohingya children who came to Bangladesh during the 1992 exodus, Rohingya children who came with the influx of 2017 and Rohingya children who were born in the camps after 2017, thus harping on a kaleidoscopically socio-cultural and legal-political analysis of refugee camps, where the camps are examined as sites which are not merely temporary, physical shelters, but are complex social, cultural, and political environments that are actively produced and transformed by their inhabitants, and which in turn transform the inhabitants. It explores how the camp architecture, with its logic of power, is intertwined with everyday languages of belonging and (non)belonging, the homeland, and political discourse, where the Rohingya children navigate between the past and the present and inhabit as liminal, rightless beings waiting to get emancipated. In such a situation of rightlessness (Arendt, 1951 and Gundogdu, 2014) where the children are reduced to *bios*, or biological life, without any *zoe*, or political life, and where they exist in a state of exception (Agamben, 1998), assumed to lack agency and any form of socio-political identity, the paper attempts to uncover various aspects of the evolution of their political identities, challenging traditional ideas of childhood as a pre-political, clean state where children are only vulnerable beings meant to be goaded and are where they do not possess any agency. The methodology adopted in this paper include the following: primary and secondary quantitative and qualitative data and ethnographic research. Primary research methods as carried out in the various camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh in 2023-24 include the following: semi-structured, face-to-face interviews including one-on-one interviews, oral narrative interviews, focus group discussions, informal conversations, ethnographic and participant observation, and analysis of paintings by Rohingya children.

Sreetapa Chakrabarty is an Assistant Professor in Political Science at Rabindra Bharati University (Salt Lake Campus), West Bengal, India. She completed her graduation in Political Science (Honours) from St. Xavier's College, University of Calcutta and her post-graduation in Political Science from Rabindra Bharati University, India. Her doctoral thesis was from Rabindra Bharati University and was focused on citizenship, rights and Rohingya children in Bangladesh. She is also a Research Affiliate at the Refugee Law Initiative, School of Advanced Study, University of London and is a core committee member of the Refugee Law Initiative Working Group on Externalization. She has worked and published extensively along the following issues in the context of South Asia: Refugee camps, Refugee Studies, International Refugee Law, Citizenship, Human Rights, Refugee and Stateless Children.

Beyond Encampment: How In-formal Settlements in the Global South Cultivate Belonging, Resistance, and Everyday Abolition Practices

Gertrude Mensah (University of Ghana, Ghana)

Across the Global South, informal settlements have long been framed as spaces of precarity, disorder, and deprivation. Yet these communities exist within wider architectures of exclusion that mirror many features of the “camp” spatial marginalization, restricted mobility, intensified surveillance, and racialized forms of vulnerability. Rather than reading these settlements solely through deficit or humanitarian lenses, this paper proposes an abolitionist rethinking of such spaces as sites where alternative forms of belonging, care, and collective resistance are enacted daily. Drawing on the theoretical grammar of abolition democracy articulated by W.E.B. Du Bois and reinterpreted by Angela Davis, the paper examines how residents of informal settlements in Ghana generate counter-carceral practices that challenge dominant narratives of dispossession and non-belonging. Using ethnographic insights and existing literature on informal urbanism, the paper demonstrates that informal settlements often operate as “beyond-camp” spaces geographies that are shaped by structural exclusion but also animated by rich forms of social organization, mutual aid, indigenous knowledge, and political creativity. These practices include community-led dispute resolution, informal security networks, gendered forms of care labour, and spatial claims that resist state-led displacement and gentrification. Such everyday strategies not only secure survival; they also signal the emergence of grassroots abolitionist imaginaries that reconfigure understandings of citizenship, rights, and personhood. By situating Ghana’s informal settlements within broader Global South debates on carcerality, migration, and urban governance, the paper argues that these communities illuminate new directions for theorizing belonging outside the logics of the state. The analysis foregrounds the voices and lived experiences of marginalized urban residents whose agency is frequently overlooked in dominant policy and academic discourses.

Gertrude Mensah is a doctoral researcher in Marketing and Entrepreneurship at the University of Ghana, with a research focus on community resilience, Indigenous knowledge systems, and socio-economic practices within marginalized urban spaces in the Global South. Her work explores how informal economies and settlement communities negotiate identity, belonging, and survival amid structural exclusion. She has presented her research at international conferences across Africa and the Middle East and is committed to advancing interdisciplinary scholarship that links human rights, urban informality, and everyday practices of resistance. Her broader interests include abolition democracy, decolonial thought, and community-led approaches to social transformation.

PANEL #25: Beyond Guantánamo: Empire, Camps, and Freedom

Political Discourse and the Illusion of Freedom

Matthew Masotto (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)

Those who participate in political matters, such as members of government, press secretaries, and representatives of political parties among others, have historically been selective with language use in order to persuade and shape narratives. In many cases, they have the upper hand in influencing juries and how the public perceives discourse about the topic at hand. This paper will consider the following question: How does political discourse function to influence the process and outcomes of legal cases involving non-citizens detained within international waters? In order to answer this question an assortment of evidence, legal documentation, and press coverage from *Weir v. The United States (2017)* will be analyzed and discussed in depth. In this case, the U.S Coast Guard apprehended four Jamaican fishermen between Jamaica and Haiti in the fall of 2017. As mentioned in an ACLU video, for over a month they were barely fed, chained down to a ship deck, exposed to the Caribbean sun, taken to Puerto Rico and Guantánamo Bay among other locations, then charged with drug trafficking and providing false information. This paper will rely on the framework of Political Discourse Analysis (PDA) developed by Van Dijk (1998), Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) to dissect language use related to the case. The main goal is to describe how their identities and the initial incident were presented in a court of law, both of which played a fundamental role in the outcome of this case.

Matthew Masotto is a doctoral student currently studying English linguistics at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. He holds a master's degree in Spanish literature from the University of Stony Brook. His academic interests revolve around discourse analysis, Creole studies, and the psychology of second language acquisition.

Resisting Erasure in Carceral Spaces: How Silenced Voices Speak

Alondra S. Acevedo Pérez (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)

During the 2000s, approximately 780 detainees were brought to the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay as a result of the “War on Terror.” They were detained without being charged with any crimes. More recently, thousands of asylum-seekers and other migrants have been arrested by ICE agents and held in detention centers, camps, and other facilities, including Guantánamo. They are significantly different groups, yet they both have been subject to incarceration and dehumanizing practices mandated by the U.S. government. Both groups have been targeted and villainized, and ultimately, they have become victims of a regime that seeks to silence them. How is resistance against this silencing and related processes of erasure practiced within spaces of incarceration? The paper will respond to this question by exploring writing as a strategy that is set into motion by individuals who are held in captivity. The focus is two memoirs: *Guantánamo Diary* by Mohemadou Ould Slahi, and *Don’t Forget Us Here* by Mansoor Adayfi. A close reading of the letter “The Declaration of Tarlis Marcojne De Barros Goncalves” will also be done. Slahi, Adayfi, and De Barros Goncalves’ accounts of their experiences in Guantánamo shed light on the problematic dynamics that take place in the base. Their narratives will be studied as transformative literature, for they put front and center the lived experiences of the marginalized voices that face erasure. Their perspective is a crucial element in the fight for social justice. The paper will compare the Guantánamo accounts, with some of those identified in Doran Larson’s “Writing Resistance, Writing the Self: Literary Reconstruction in the United States Prison Witness,” because in it he argues for the importance of keeping alive the *American Prison Writing Archive* (APWA). He mentions: “Writing from inside often presents a moment not only of resistance to the prison regime, but of reconstruction of the self that is the premise for all further resistance” (161). Written personal accounts of those who have been incarcerated are transcendental for raising awareness and visibility to those who have been kept in the dark.

Alondra S. Acevedo Pérez is a doctoral student in the Department of English at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus who is specializing in the study of Caribbean literature. Their academic interests include Latina/o literature and the study of gender and sexuality as it relates to the dynamics of colonized spaces, among other topics. Alondra’s poetry is forthcoming in a volume of *Tongvas*.

Translation as Counter-Discourse: Against Empire, Towards Abolition Democracy

Alicia Figueroa Carlo (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)

This paper examines translation as a site of contestation within imperial systems, arguing that it functions not only as an instrument of governance but also as a form of counter-discourse and meaning-making. Drawing on Susan Bassnett’s reconceptualization of the translator as an active agent

of meaning-making, and Amy Kaplan's claim that empire "fears translation" for its destabilizing potential, the paper situates translation within broader struggles over justice, citizenship, and belonging. With a focus on the Haitian and Cuban refugee crises, it explores how access to asylum is mediated through narrative legibility, with language competency and translation playing a decisive role in determining who is credible, recognized as human, and worthy of belonging. Special attention is given to Nikòl Payen's short story "Something in the Water," in particular, the analysis of the interpreter's fraught relationship with Kreyòl and her position within the U.S. immigration apparatus. I argue that her narrative both exposes and complicates the role of translation in processes of exclusion and consider it alongside the translated collection *Poems from Guantánamo: The Detainees Speak*, where translation enables the circulation of detainees' experiences under conditions designed to suppress them. In both cases, translation is a practice embedded in structures of power yet capable of rehumanizing subjects and dismantling dominant representations, particularly those identified by Helen Scott in her critique of U.S. discourses on Haiti. By framing translation as a practice that is conduit to who is heard, believed, and allowed to belong, this paper argues that it contributes to the work of what can be understood as abolition democracy. In doing so, it places the role of translators as powerful agents of potential change who are displacing imperial narratives while creating space for alternative forms of recognition and community.

Alicia Figueroa Carlo is in the process of completing her master's degree in translation at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. Her work has focused on translation theory, including the relationship between language and power, as well as literary and academic writing in Spanish and English.

Community Participation in Correctional Reform: A Public Health Approach from Puerto Rico

Ángel R. Ocasio Gracia (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus)

Arguing that the punitive correctional model has not succeeded in achieving the rehabilitation and social reintegration of incarcerated individuals, as mandated by the Constitution of Puerto Rico, various community sectors joined efforts to promote transformative and restorative approaches to the correctional system of the island. Grounded in public health principles and community participation, this project aimed to explore the role of citizen engagement in generating actionable proposals for the rehabilitation and reintegration of incarcerated individuals. Multiple sectors worked together to establish the Coalition for the Transformation of the Correctional System of Puerto Rico and commissioned a committee to organize a public forum that included key stakeholders such as formerly incarcerated individuals, family members of incarcerated persons, community leaders, researchers, social workers, former public officials, lawyers, students, faculty, among others. The goal was to foster a participatory dialogue among individuals from diverse backgrounds and sectors to develop proposals based on lived experiences. The forum featured six ten-minute presentations,

a panel with formerly incarcerated individuals, and five facilitated group sessions for proposal development. Presentation topics encompassed six core domains: (1) demographic characteristics of the incarcerated population; (2) opioid overdose mortality in correctional institutions; (3) rehabilitation programming; (4) restorative justice frameworks; (5) community participation in rehabilitation and reintegration processes; and (6) stigma. Participants then formed five groups, each assigned a guiding question and tasked with producing at least three specific action points. Results: A total of 80 participants attended the forum. Five posters summarizing community-generated proposals were produced following open and participatory discussions. The proposals emphasized the importance of community engagement, training of correctional staff, the involvement of higher education institutions, family support, and mental health care as pillars of rehabilitation. Multisectoral spaces that include individuals with lived experience are essential for developing grounded and transformative correctional proposals and initiatives. Future efforts should expand these forums to focus more deeply on specific thematic areas, fostering sustained community engagement and policy innovation. Acknowledgments: This initiative was supported by the Autonomous Municipality of Caguas and community donations. None of the authors report any conflicts of interest.

Ángel Ocasio-Gracia was raised in Corozal, Puerto Rico, and holds a bachelor's degree in Biomedical Sciences from the University of Puerto Rico, Ponce Campus. He is currently a third-year dual-degree MD–JD student at the University of Puerto Rico. His interests lie at the intersection of public health, human rights, and public policy, with a focus on correctional reform and vulnerable populations. He currently serves as Coordinator of the Coalition for the Transformation of the Correctional System of Puerto Rico, a multisectoral alliance promoting restorative and transformative approaches. Ángel aspires to a career in psychiatry and criminal law.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Location: Heinrichstraße 36, ground floor

Time: Friday, June 5 (during coffee breaks)

Name	Title
Haseeb Amjid	ICE Agents: Enforcing Immigration and Fear in the United States
Berke Akpınar	Border Camps in North American Film: Human Rights, Surveillance, and Belonging
Annabel Biasi	SEEN: An Art Exhibit
Karolina Chybová	Seeing Guantánamo: Visual Focalization and Fragmented Witnessing in Guantánamo Voices
Sophie Döhrn	Prisoners Under the Sun: The Mexican Farmers of the Coachella Valley
Bettina Genser	Freedom and Belonging in Margaret Atwoods' "Hello, Martians. Let Moby-Dick Explain"
Katharina Huber	Dance as Female Resistance in P. Djéli Clark's <i>Ring Shout</i> (2020)
Sebastian Krejci	"The War on Drugs": A Continuation of Systemic Violence and Weaponization of Narratives in the U.S.
Lina Lamraoui	The Other Face of Paradise: Tourism, Colonialism, and Inequality in Jamaica Kincaid's <i>A Small Place</i>
Manuel Lang	Thou Shalt Not Enter What Was Forcefully Taken From You: Sacred Spaces and Stolen Lands in Gothic Fiction
Nicole Lauchart	Creative Resistance against ICE: Protest, Fear, and State Power in the United States
Shameer Raza	Borders as Camps: Migrant Detention and the Politics of Belonging in the Americas
Sabrina Reiter	Voting Rights and Systemic Oppression
Julia Roßmann	From Slavery to Prison: Mass Incarceration and the Urge for Abolition Democracy
Sarah Scherf	Captivity in the City Scape: The Effects of Redlining in San Diego and its Chicax People
Sophie Schlamberger	Who Belongs? Filmic Representations of Guantánamo, Migration, and Abolition Democracy
Hanna Thaller	Writing from Confinement: Experiences of Detention in <i>Guantánamo Diary</i>

CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP**Location: Heinrichstraße 36, HS 11.01****Time: Saturday, June 6, 4.00 pm- 5.30 pm / Please sign up at the information desk beforehand.**

This workshop, which is open to everyone, will be structured around discussion and generative exercises that involve writing prompts. Participants will be invited to consider the weight of the choices that they make as storytellers—from the words we select, to the subjects we cover, to the characters we speak—and how to bring openness, intentionality, and beauty to the choices we make in our craft, whether it is in poetry, memoir, or academic research. We'll discuss what it means to approach every line with authenticity, awareness, and an appreciation for the lyric possibilities of language. We will also have a chance to consider the relationship between visual art and poetry.

Don E. Walicek is Professor of English and Linguistics at the University of Puerto Rico's Río Piedras Campus, where he currently serves as Director of the Institute of Caribbean Studies in the College of Social Sciences. He earned a BA in Cultural Anthropology and an MA in Latin American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. He holds an MFA in creative writing from New York University's Writers Workshop in Paris and a PhD in English from the University of Puerto Rico. His publications include *Guantánamo and American Empire: The Humanities Respond* (2018) and a special journal issue titled, *Guantánamo: What's Next?*, both of which he co-edited with Jessica Adams. In 2019, he was a Fulbright Scholar at the Karl-Franzens University of Graz and a Fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies. In 2023, he offered the Annual Emancipation Lecture in the Valley, Anguilla. His poetry has been published in *Caribbean Writer*, *Sapiens*, *The Wild Word*, and *Clackamas Literary Review*, among other magazines and literary journals.

Mohamedou Ould Salahi Houbeni is a writer, advocate, and former prisoner from Mauritania. He was detained at the U.S. government's Guantánamo Bay prison without charge for approximately fourteen years. Houbeni wrote a memoir during his incarceration, which the U.S. government declassified in 2012 with numerous redactions. An international bestseller and the first memoir to be published while the author was still detained in the naval base, it was released as *Guantánamo Diary* in January 2015. In 2017, a "restored edition" was published with thousands of redactions removed and new life added. The memoir was used as the basis for "The Mauritanian," a 2021 film starring Tahar Rahim, Benedict Cumberbatch, and Jodie Foster. Slahi wrote four other books in detention, one of which he describes as being "about finding happiness in a hopeless

place.” In 2021, his novel *The Actual True Story of Ahmed & Zarga* was published by Ohio University Press in its Modern African Writers series. At the time of this writing, he is writer-in-residence at Noord Nederlands Toneel, a Dutch theatre company.

BOOK PRESENTATIONS

Location: Heinrichstraße 36, HS 11.03

Time: Saturday, June 6, 4.00 pm- 5.30 pm

Alicia Kozameh: la obra y su multiplicidad (2026) (Erna Pfeiffer y Norah Giraldi Dei Cas, eds.)

Alicia Kozameh relata en “Bosquejo de alturas” la resistencia ante el terrorismo de Estado en Argentina. La voz poética descifra sus vivencias en una lucha constante entre Eros y Thanatos, con imágenes que arrojan los centelleos de una imaginación desbordante. Su obra, en prosa y en verso, se sitúa en las cumbres de la literatura latinoamericana. Posee el arte que consiste en llegar a un horizonte abierto a la interpretación, un camino que hace resurgir de un texto a otro contenidos que van diversificándose con tonalidades minúsculas y, a la vez, poderosas, que iluminan, en particular, la oscuridad de la noche social y política que se vivió en Argentina durante un pasado que sigue presente. En la Segunda Conferencia Internacional sobre Derechos Humanos de Graz/Puerto Rico desde una Perspectiva Interamericana Alicia Kozameh intervino con la lectura de parte de sus relatos y con comentarios sobre los trabajos de especialistas en su obra y de la puesta en escena de “Bosquejo de alturas”, reunidos aquí con una selección de sus cuentos y algunas de sus traducciones.

Norah Giraldi Dei Cas Profesora emérita de la Universidad de Lille, cursó la Licenciatura de Letras en la UDELAR (Uruguay) y se doctoró en U. de La Sorbonne. Sus trabajos actuales se centran en la violencia política representada en la obra de Juan Gelman, Saúl Ibargoyen, Carlos Liscano, Edda Fabbri y Alicia Kozameh. Fundó la red NEOS (Nortes-Estes-Oestes-Sures) sobre los flujos migratorios actuales y las políticas de migración. Coordinó y codirigió: *Juan Gelman, écriture, mémoire et politique*; *Lugares y figuras de la barbarie*; *Fernando Aínsa, escritor e intelectual entre dos mundos*; *Navegaciones y regresos*; *Migrantes, encuentros con el otro*; *Les Amériques au fil du devenir* y el capítulo “Exilios, migraciones y diásporas en Hispanoamérica” para el libro *Trauma y memoria cultural*. Dirigió, hasta 2023, la colección Trans-Atlántico de las Ediciones Peter Lang.

Alicia Kozameh es autora de ocho novelas, seis colecciones de poesía y dos colecciones de cuentos, entre muchos otros textos. De todos sus libros al menos cinco (*Pasos bajo el agua*, *259 saltos*, *uno inmortal*, *Bruno regresa descalzo*, *Ofrenda de propia piel*, *Ofrenda de propia piel 2*, *Sal de sangres en sangre*) abordan el tema de la experiencia carcelaria propia y de su generación durante los años previos a la última dictadura cívico-militar-eclesiástica, durante la dictadura misma, y durante los años de exilio. Sus libros están traducidos a varios idiomas. Alicia es frecuentemente invitada a dar charlas y a hacer lecturas de su obra en Europa, Latinoamérica y Estados Unidos, además de enseñar creación literaria en el Creative Writing Program del Departamento de Inglés de Chapman University, en el sur de California.

De 1997 hasta 2014 **Erna Pfeiffer** fue Profesora Titular de Literatura Hispánica en la Universidad de Graz. A raíz de un congreso en Puerto Rico en 1987, empezó a trabajar sobre literatura de mujeres en Latinoamérica. En este ámbito, publicó varios libros: *EntreVistas, Exiliadas, emigrantes, viajeras, Territorium Frau, Aus der Rolle geFallen!* También editó un volumen colectivo, *Alicia Kozameh: Ética, estética, y las acrobacias de la palabra escrita* (2013). Como traductora literaria ha publicado varios libros de autorxs españoles y latinoamericanxs en alemán. También editó y tradujo varias antologías con textos literarios de autorxs latinoamericanxs, a quienes se ha dedicado en numerosos viajes de lecturas, conferencias y simposios internacionales. En el año 2020 recibió el Premio Europeo de Tolerancia y en 2021 el Premio Nacional de Traducción en Austria. Su novela *Eine Widerrede* se publicó en 2019. *Mateu Cristina* (Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina): *Resistencia Cultural Durante la Última Dictadura Militar en Argentina*.

NON-ACADEMIC PROGRAM

ART EXHIBITION: PAST PORTALS TO FUTURE WORLDS

Location: Heinrichstraße 36, ground floor

Time: Friday, June 5

Located in the main conference foyer, this interactive installation features over 100 artworks created by 36 participants from across the globe who study and live border realities. Developed through a WhatsApp-based process using weekly music and photography prompts, the works express how intergenerational memory and everyday environments can provoke imagination for more humane migration futures.

The accompanying workshop offers a guided tour of the installation, alongside dialogue and light creative prompts through which participants can reflect on and create their own visions of migration futures.

Carolyn Defrin is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at the University of Graz, researching the role of art in border zones. A socially engaged artist, researcher, and facilitator, her practice centers less-heard voices; bringing disparate communities into dialogue through creative activity around urgent societal issues such as migration, housing, health, and social cohesion. Originally from the United States, with an early career in Chicago theatre, her work now spans installation, music, and poetry across the UK, Europe, and beyond. Recent artistic research projects include a series of films about migrant artists navigating the UK's hostile environment policies (London Southbank University), an interactive digital mural for a London children's health centre (Dulwich Picture Gallery), and an intergenerational housing exhibition with low-income elders (Levitt Bernstein Architects, Hammersmith United Charities). www.carolyndefrin.com

ART EXHIBITION: GUANTÁNAMO ART EXHIBITION

Location: Heinrichstraße 36, ground floor

Time: Saturday, 6.00-8.00 pm; Meerscheinschloss

The exhibition, curated by Mansoor Adayfi, will be on display on Saturday evening and includes numerous paintings which demonstrate some of the diverse functions of art: a vehicle for memory, testimony to pain and suffering, as well as mental escape from the circumstances of incarceration. The pieces were created by prisoners at the US naval base at Guantánamo Bay, most of whom began to paint after years of imprisonment. They were made in conjunction with the offering of art classes that began at the prison in 2010. While they invigorated their creators and often were a source of pride, these paintings and others like them were also included in exhibits which prison authorities used to cultivate the illusion that the detainees were treated humanely. The art was created between 2010 and 2016.

ART EXHIBITION: ELASTIC BORDERS CONNECTION LAB

Location: Heinrichstraße 36, 1st floor

Time: June 5-7

Created by the team of the NOMIS Research Project “Elastic Borders: Rethinking the Borders of the 21st Century” at the University of Graz.

This installation brings together insights and findings from their research across Greece, Spain and Tunisia, including photos, excerpts from field notes, and interview fragments on different forms and spaces of migration detention and camp structures. The team invites you upstairs to the first-floor hallway to engage with their research and to connect it with your own. Precisely because camps are not isolated local devices, but global technologies of control that circulate, adapt, and learn from one another, creating connections across situated research on camps becomes all the more urgent.

Follow the red path upstairs.

Buy your books here!

Location: Heinrichstraße 36, ground floor, June 5- June 7, 2026

Bibliobox, founded by Arwa Elabd, offers curated book packages to engage the Insta Generation in reading. As a former teacher, Arwa noticed the lack of literature that resonated with students, particularly those with diverse backgrounds. In response, she launched Bibliobox during the Covid lockdown, providing not only books but also online recommendations. Arwa believes novels are key to understanding the world, offering historical insights through relatable protagonists. She emphasizes the importance of literature reflecting cultural heritage and addressing current issues. Through workshops, Arwa guides educators in selecting appropriate literature. Her bookstore in Ottakring, Vienna (Austria) provides not only books but also a welcoming space for readers. Arwa's mission is to empower youth through literature, promoting diverse voices and narratives. She challenges the dominance of the white, male-centric literary canon, advocating for more inclusive representation in education.



GENERAL INFORMATION

LOCATIONS

Center for Inter-American Studies

Schubertstr. 21/GF

8010 Graz



Graz Museum

Schloßberg 5

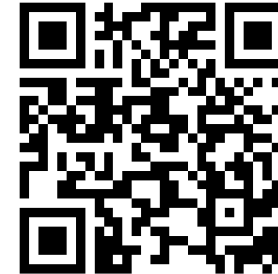
8010 Graz



AULA of the University of Graz

Universitätsplatz 3

8010 Graz



Burg Graz

Hofgasse 15

8010 Graz

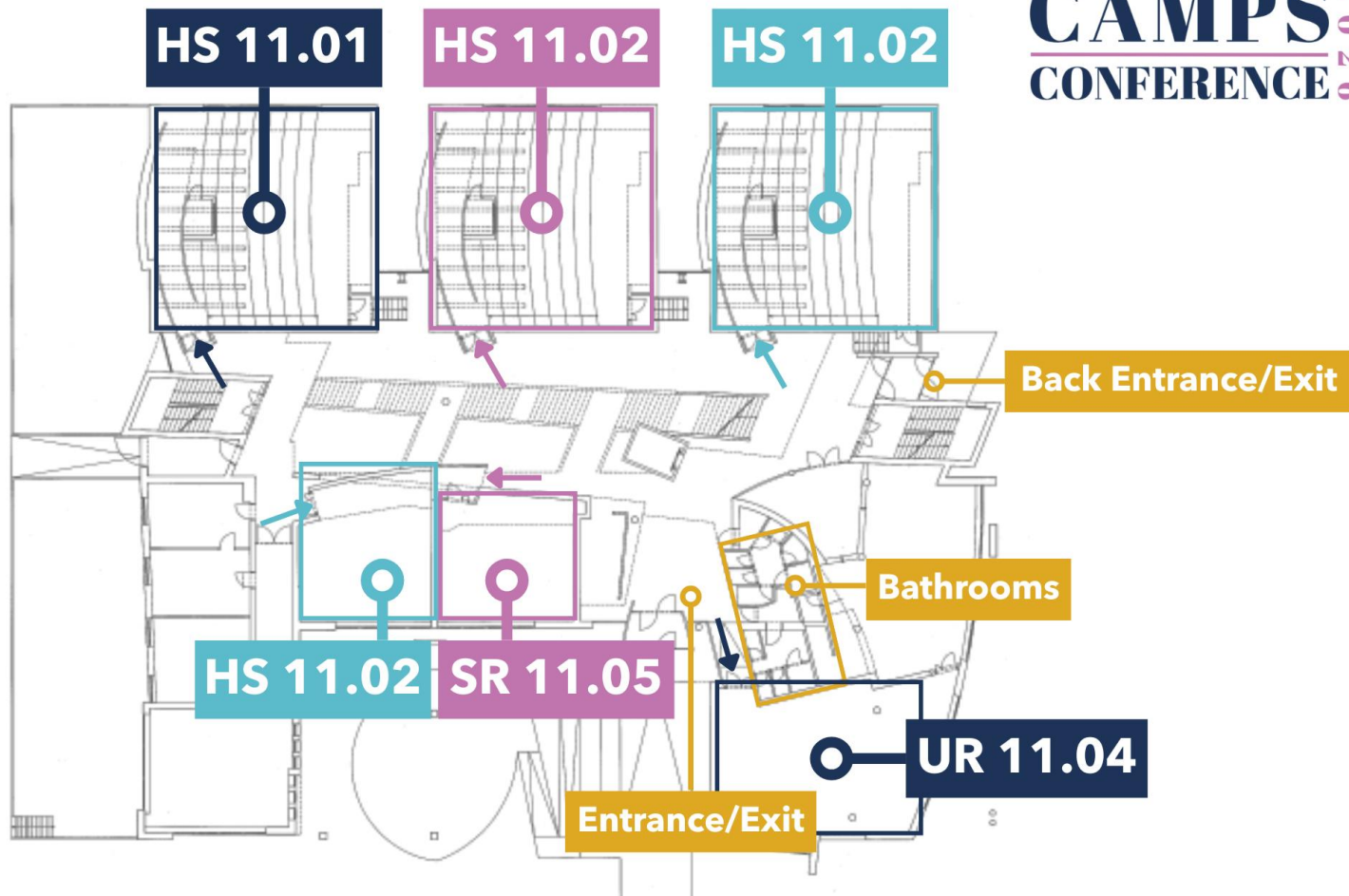


University of Graz (Mathematics / English/ Geography Department)

Heinrichstraße 36

8010 Graz





RECEPTION, LUNCH, AND COFFEE BREAKS

Opening reception, lunches, coffee breaks, and the conference reception at the Burg Graz are included in the conference fees.

Opening Reception *(Thursday, June 4, Universitätsplatz 3, first floor, 7:00 p.m.)*

A buffet and drinks will be served outside of the AULA Magna after the Opening Ceremony of the conference.

Conference Reception by the Governor of Styria *(Friday, June 5, Burg Graz, Hofgasse 15, 7:00 p.m.)*

A warm buffet and drinks will be served at the Burg Graz sponsored by the Governor of Styria.

Lunches *(Friday-Sunday, Heinrichstraße 36)*

On Friday, Saturday and Sunday, hot lunches will be served at the conference venue outside of the seminar rooms at Heinrichstr. 36 on the ground floor; this will take place during the lunch breaks indicated in the program. All lunches are vegan; glutenfree options and other dietary restrictions may be offered upon asking.

Coffee Breaks *(Friday-Sunday, Heinrichstraße 36)*

Coffee, tea, and other drinks will be served with snacks at the conference venue outside of the seminar rooms at Heinrichstr. 36 on the ground floor during the coffee breaks indicated in the program.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND TAXI

Public Transport Graz: www.holding-graz.at

From Jakominiplatz/ Motel One (central transfer point)

Bus: Line 30 direction Geidorf to stop “Mozartgasse” and Line 31 direction Uni- Resowi to stop “Uni Mensa”

From main train station (Hauptbahnhof)

Bus

- line 58 direction Mariagrün to stop “Mozartgasse”
- line 63 direction St. Peter Schulzentrum to stop “Universität”

Taxi Graz

- **Graz Taxi 24:** +43 (0) 316 812 190
- **Graz Taxi 878:** +43 (0) 316 878
- **Taxi Graz:** +43 (0) 676 510 1993

RESTAURANTS AND CAFÉS NEAR THE UNIVERSITY OF GRAZ

Uni Café (*at the conference venue*)

Heinrichstraße 36

8010 Graz

Parks Café (vegetarian/vegan Coffeeshop)

Zinzendorfgasse 4

8010 Graz

Galliano (Pizza/Italian)

Harrachgasse 22

8010 Graz

Dean & David (Salad and Bowl Bar)

Zinzendorfgasse 30

8010 Graz

Beanery Speciality Coffee Bar (Coffeeshop)

Zinzendorfgasse 20

8010 Graz

Auer Café & Bakery

Zinzendorfgasse 29

8010 Graz

CONTACT

General Contact: **Center for Inter-American Studies (C.IAS)**



Schubertstr. 21/ Ground Floor
8010 Graz

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ACADEMIC BOARD

Don E. Walicek



Don E. Walicek is Professor of English and linguistics at the University of Puerto Rico's Río Piedras Campus. He earned a BA in Cultural Anthropology and an MA in Latin American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin and was awarded his PhD in English from the University of Puerto Rico. More recently he completed his MFA in Creative Writing (poetry) at New York University. Much of his scholarship has focused on issues of language, migration, and social life in the Caribbean. In addition, he has completed work on Guantánamo. His publications include *Guantánamo and American Empire: The Humanities Respond* (2018) and an issue of the Caribbean Studies journal *Sargasso* titled, "Guantánamo: What's Next?", both of which he co-edited with Jessica Adams. The founder of the Guantánamo-Puerto Rico Project, he has been a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Graz, a Fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies, and a Research Fellow at the University of Bayreuth. He has acted as editor of the Caribbean studies journal *Sargasso* since 2009.

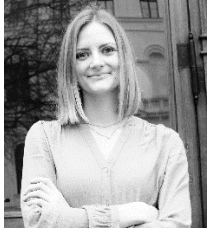
Nicole Haring



Nicole Haring is (Senior) Scientist in American Studies and Director of the Center for Inter-American Studies and Co-Director of the Graz School of Interdisciplinary Transnational Studies at the University of Graz, Austria. Her research interests focus on feminist theories, contemporary US-American literature, and Inter-American studies. Currently, she works on carcerality, abolitionist theory, and intersectional environmentalism. She co-edited a special issue of *Sargasso* titled "Camps, (In)Justices and Solidarity in the Americas" (with D. Walicek, J. Adams, R. Maierhofer, 2024) and is currently co-editor of the volume *Reconfiguring Carceral Imaginaries: Across Camps, Prisons, and Borders* (with D. Walicek, Palgrave, forthcoming 2026).

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITTEE

Eva Katharina Bauer



Eva Katharina Bauer earned her Joint Master's degree in English and American Studies from the University of Graz (Austria) and the Université Paris Cité (France). Currently active as the project coordinator for the Erasmus+ project "Eco-Stories" (www.ecostories.org), coordinated by the Center for Inter-American Studies, University of Graz, she is engaged in the intersection of language, culture, and environmental issues. Her academic interests mainly revolve around socio- and psycholinguistics as well as feminist and African American literature. Her ongoing research investigates the temporal aspects of environmental concerns in the field of ecolinguistics and environmental humanities.

Artiola Kajtazi



Artiola Kajtazi is a MA student at the University of Graz, specializing in English and American studies. Alongside her academic commitments, Artiola serves as a student assistant at the Center for Inter-American Studies. Her research interests are on Migration Literature and Feminist Studies, with a particular focus on Albanian-American Literature. She previously worked as ESL teacher and executive assistant. She currently serves as the co-editor for *Off Campus: C.IAS School of Thought Journal*. Since 2024, she has been part of the organization team for Graz International Summer School Seggau (GUSEGG).

Christina Korak



Christina Korak is (Senior) Scientist and vice-president of the Austrian Association of Studies on Latin America (LAF). Since 2012, she has explored agents and power relations between resource extractivism and indigenous self-determination in the Ecuadorian and Peruvian Amazon region focusing on the use of indigenous languages and political questions of (non-) translation. In the project "Towards a Cosmvision Turn, together with Rafael Schögler, she questioned the historical relations between Translation Studies and the evangelical missionary organization Summer Institute of Linguistics which from 1958 contacted Ecuador's Waorani people. In her current project "Remembering_Resistance. Women's Translations of Territorial, Linguistic and Cultural Rights"

(in collaboration with Adriana Caguana Rodríguez of the Andean Program for Human Rights, Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar) she works with a group of Waorani women making collective memory on practices and knowledges.

Maria Niedermayr



Maria Niedermayr is office manager and project assistant at the Center for Inter-American Studies at the Graz School of Interdisciplinary Transnational Studies (University of Graz). They hold a Joint Master's Degree in English and American studies from the University of Graz (Austria) and Ca'Foscari University (Italy) with a focus on film studies. Personal interests include but are not limited to visual media, in particular film and (narrative) video games, as well as questions and representations of gender and queerness.

Şeyma Yonar



Şeyma Yonar holds a Master's degree in English and American Studies from the University of Graz, Austria, and she completed a mobility semester at the Autonomous University of Barcelona as part of the European Joint Master's Programme. She is currently a project assistant for the Erasmus+ project Eco-Stories (www.ecostories.org), coordinated by the Center for Inter-American Studies at the University of Graz. Her research interests include North American and transnational literary studies, with a focus on Canadian short fiction, ecocriticism, and gender studies.

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

Roberta Maierhofer



Roberta Maierhofer is Professor of American Studies at the Center for Inter-American Studies (C.IAS) at the University of Graz, Austria. From 1999 to 2011, she held a series of Vice-Rector positions for International Relations (1999-2003), International Relations and Affirmative Action for Women (2003-2007), and International Relations and Interdisciplinary Cooperation (2007-2011). Her expertise in regional and interregional collaboration has been fundamental to her leadership role at the Center for Inter-American Studies, which she has directed from 2007-2025, and determined how the University of Graz established a second regional focus area in terms of North-, Central- and South America in 2012. Since 2004, she has directed the Graz International Summer School Seggau, which was established as an interdisciplinary and intercultural platform in European and Inter-American Studies.

Bilgin Ayata



Bilgin Ayata is Professor of Migration and Transnational Studies at the Graz School of Interdisciplinary Transnational Studies, University of Graz. Her research and teaching focus on migration, borders, postcolonial studies, and affective politics. In 2022, she received a NOMIS research award for her interdisciplinary and comparative study “Elastic Borders”, which develops an empirically grounded new theory of contemporary borders. Ayata is co-speaker of the Cluster „Migration, Mobility and Borders in Europe and Beyond“ within the Field of Excellence „Dimensions of Europe“ at the University of Graz. Her previous research projects, funded by the German Science Fund (DFG), Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and the Swiss Network for International Studies (SNIS), investigated Affective Citizenship and Infrastructure Space and the Future of Migration Management. Ayata has published widely on migration, diasporas, transnationalism, affective politics, and citizenship. From 2019 to 2023, she served as DFG-Mercator Fellow at the Collaborative Research Center „Affective Societies“ at Freie Universität Berlin. Beyond academia, she regularly collaborates with artists and cultural institutions to foster cross-fertilization between science and the arts, including with the Kunstmuseum Basel, Maxim Gorki Theater Berlin, Werkstatt der Kulturen Berlin and Kunsthaus Graz

Leila Rodríguez Soto



Leila Rodríguez Soto, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. She is also the academic director of the journal *Caribbean Studies*, which is affiliated with the Institute of Caribbean Studies. She holds a master's degree and a PhD in Anthropology and Demography from Pennsylvania State University. Additionally, she has a bachelor's degree in Anthropology from the University of Costa Rica. Her current research focuses on the use of cultural expertise as a tool to improve access to justice, as well as international migrations in Central America and the Caribbean. She is the author of the book *Culture as Judicial Evidence: Expert Testimony in Latin America* (2021) and has published dozens of academic articles, including *From Quantitative Fact to Discursive Practice: Techniques for Asserting the Reliability of Anthropological Knowledge in Expert Testimony* (2022), *Cultural Expert Testimony in American Legal Proceedings* (2018), and *Valorizando los Efectos de las Emigraciones y las Remesas: Una Comunidad Costarricense ante la (Re)estructuración de Jerarquías de Género y Clase* (2016).

Julia Roth



Julia Roth is currently teaching American Studies at Bielefeld University, where she was also director of the Center for Interamerican Studies (CIAS) and PI at the DFG Graduate School "Experiencing Gender". Previously, she was Professor of American Studies with a focus on Gender Studies and Inter-American Studies in Bielefeld and postdoctoral fellow in the research project "The Americas as Space of Entanglements" in Bielefeld and in the interdisciplinary network "desiguALdades.net - Interdependent Inequalities in Latin America" at Freie Universität Berlin. She was well as a lecturer at Humboldt-Universität Berlin, Universität Potsdam, and Universidad de Guadalajara, Mexico and La Plata, Argentina. Her research focuses on postcolonial, decolonial and gender approaches, intersectionality and global inequalities, anti-racist feminist knowledge from the Caribbean and the Americas, Hip Hop and social transformation, gender and genre, law and literature and legal imaginaries, gender and citizenship, and right-wing populism and gender. In addition to her academic work, she co-/organizes and -curates cultural and political events.

Frithjof Nungesser



Frithjof Nungesser is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Sociology at the University of Graz and a Visiting Researcher at the Hamburg Institute for Social Research. His main research interests include social theory, cultural and political sociology, the sociology of violence, and human-animal relations. Recent publications are: “Defying Guantánamo: Resistance to Indefinite Detention and Torture in a Prison Camp,” *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 66(3)/2025; “Die plurale Aktualität der Folter: Plädoyer für eine entmythologisierende Forschungsperspektive,” *Mittelweg* 36 34(2), 2025; and “Verletzbarkeit und Gesellschaft: Soziologische Perspektiven auf Vulnerabilität,” *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 54(1)/2025 (co-authored with Eddie Hartmann).

Maritza Stanchich



Maritza Stanchich, Ph.D., is Professor of English at University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras, where she teaches Puerto Rican diaspora, Latinx, Caribbean and US American literatures at the BA, MA and doctoral levels. Her essays on Faulkner in a circum-Caribbean context, Puerto Rican diaspora literature, and the crisis in Puerto Rico have been published in peer-reviewed journals and books, including *Sargasso*, *Mississippi Quarterly*, *Latino Studies*, *Cultural Dynamics*, and *Prospero's Isles: The Presence of the Caribbean in the American Imaginary* (2004), *Writing Off(f) the Hyphen: New Critical Perspectives on the Literature of the Puerto Rican Diaspora* (2008), *Hispanic Caribbean Literature of Migration: Narratives of Displacement* (2010), *Acknowledged Legislator: Critical Essays on the Poetry of Martín Espada* (2014), *Essays on Tato Laviera: The American Poet* (2014), *Poets, Philosophers, Lovers: On the Writings of Giannina Braschi* (2020). An award-winning journalist, her columns for *The Huffington Post*, *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* helped bring international attention to Puerto Rico's crisis, starting in 2010. She is the author of *De huelga a pandemia en Puerto Rico: una década de intervenciones periodísticas internacionales* (2024 Editora Educación Emergente), a collection of select, annotated articles translated by Zinnia M. Cintrón-Marrero.

Esther Whitfield



Esther Whitfield is Associate Professor of Comparative Literature and Hispanic Studies at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, USA. She is author of *Cuban Currency: The Dollar and 'Special Period' Fiction* (University of Minnesota Press, 2008); co-editor with Jacqueline Loss of *New Short Fiction from Cuba* (2008); and co-editor with Anke Birkenmaier of a collection of essays on post-1989 Havana, *Havana Beyond the Ruins* (2011). She has published articles on literary writing in post-Soviet Cuba and borders, visibility and surveillance at the Guantánamo naval base. Whitfield is also the author of *A New No-Man's Land: Writing and Art at Guantánamo, Cuba*, which proposes reading the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo and the surrounding areas of Eastern Cuba as a borderland region that shares a natural environment, a marking of human lives by isolation, and a body of literature and art privileging survival over political hostility.

MEN CURRENTLY HELD IN THE U.S. MILITARY PRISON IN GUANTÁNAMO BAY, CUBA

Muieen Abd Al-Sattar

Gouled Hassan Dourad

Ali Hamza Al Bahlul

Ismael Al Bakush

Mustafa Al Hawsaw

Ramzi Bin Al Shibh

Waleed Bin Attash

Abd Al-Rahim Al-Nashiri

Abu Zubaydah

Abu Faraj Al-Libi

Ali Abd Al Aziz Ali

Riduan Isamuddin

Khalid Shaykh Mohammed

Abd Al-Hadi Al-Iraqi

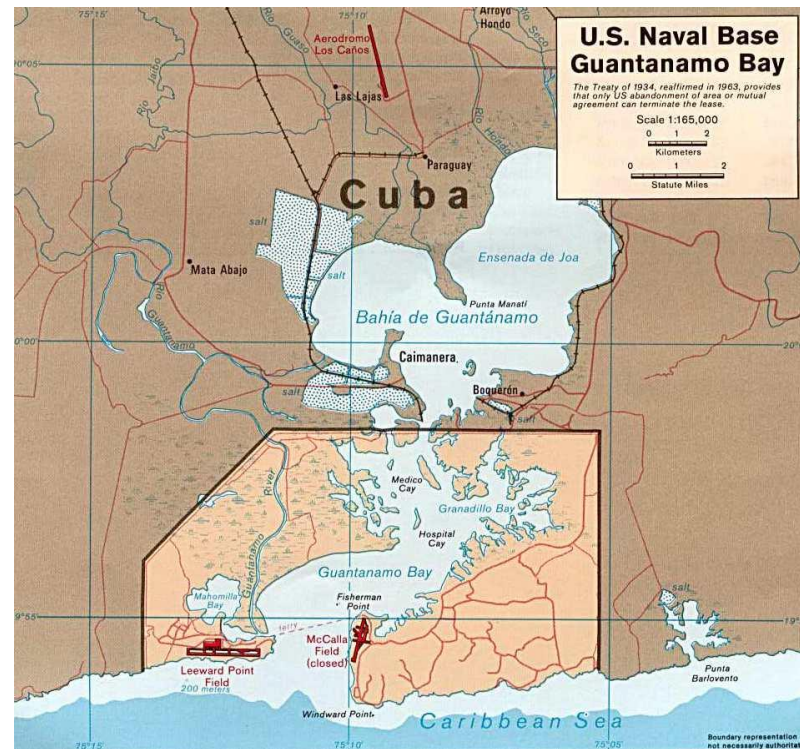
Muhammad Rahim

MEN APPROVED FOR RELEASE AS OF JUNE 1, 2026

Muieen Abd Al-Sattar (approval Jan. 22, 2010: 5,974 days)

Gouled Hassan Dourad (approval Nov. 10, 2021: 1,664 days)

Ismael Al Bakush (approval Sept. 23, 2022: 1,347 days)



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