



WORKSHOP

Where the stones lie: between historical practices and spatialities

16 -17 June 2025, Sala del Torrino (Villa Salviati)

Organisers: Alexandre Claude (EUI, Material and Visual History Working Group) & Leonardo Ariel Carrió Cataldi (CNRS researcher and permanent member of the LARHRA research lab)

History tends now to be more and more nourished by material, anthropological, and ecological approaches to the past. From this perspective, the Visual and Material History Working Group, in collaboration with the LARHRA-CNRS (Lyon, France), brings together a great variety of historians and scholars, from different backgrounds (history of knowledge, literary studies, social history, anthropology) to rework the comprehension of earth materials and their underground environment by early modern and modern actors.

'Where the stones lie' is a one-day-and-a-half workshop that seeks to situate the understanding of lithic entities through their natural history, socio-technical, and confessional frameworks. The speakers and discussants will address the question of how these main frameworks, among others, were challenged, across Europe and beyond, by the great enlargement of the diversity of lithic entities since the early modern period.

In particular, they will discuss how Earth's materials rooted the "local" and challenged other socio-spatial configurations under historical construction (regional hinterlands, long-distance or global geographies). In other words, by studying practices of extraction, crafting, and classification of stones, we seek to understand how different forms of spatiality were territorialised. The analysis of these processes of appropriations and experiences with lithic materials will open the perspective over how these operations give depth, relief and, in some cases, life, to ideas about the (under)ground, the land and the Earth itself.

The workshop will be mainly, but not exclusively, conducted in English. Other languages (French, Italian) are allowed and welcomed, especially during the Q&A.

Programme

List of speakers:

- Miruna Achim, Associate Professor, Metropolitan Autonomous University, Mexico City
- Elisa Andretta, CNRS researcher, LARHRA, Lyon
- Dominique Brancher, Henri M Peyre Professor of French, Yale University, New Haven
- Caroline Callard, Professor, EHESS, Paris
- Leonardo Ariel Carrió Cataldi, CNRS researcher, LARHRA, Lyon
- Lola Cindric, PhD researcher in anthropology, EHESS-CESAH, Paris
- Alexandre Claude, PhD researcher, EUI, Florence
- Kyria Grieco, Post-doc researcher, EHESS, Paris
- Adam Mezes, Max-Weber Fellow, EUI, Florence
- Claire Sabel, Post-doc researcher, SCARCE-Project, Vienna
- Margherita Trento, Head of the Indology department, French Institute, Pondicherry

List of discussants and chairs:

- Guillemette Crouzet, CAPASIA research fellow, EUI, Florence
- Paula González Fons, PhD researcher, EUI, Florence
- Lauren Kassell, Professor, EUI, Florence
- Gabriele Marcon, Senior postdoctoral fellow, University of Vienna
- Igor Melani, Associate Professor, University of Florence
- Francesco Montuori, PhD researcher, EUI, Florence
- Jakub Ochocinski, PhD researcher, EUI, Florence
- Jennifer Oliver, Assistant Professor of Romance languages, Harvard University
- Ewa Zakrzewska, PhD researcher, EUI, Florence
- Solveig Vanniez-Salvesen, PhD researcher, EUI, Florence

Day 1 (16 June – Villa Salviati, Sala del Torrino)

09:30–10:00

Coffee & Greetings

10:00–12:15

Panel 1 – The making of (under)ground materials by digging and extracting

- Caroline Callard: 'La pulsion extractive au XVI^e siècle: un premier "âge minéral" de la modernité ?'
- Adam Mezes: 'Dangerous Exhalations: Unearthing corpses and ores in an 18th-century Habsburg mining colony'
- Kyra Grieco: 'What is marble? Multiple ontologies of a living stone'

Discussant and chair: Gabriele Marcon & Solveig Vanniez-Salvesen

12:15–13:30

Lunch

13:30–15:00

Panel 2 – Walking around: exploring and grasping the lithic world

- Dominique Brancher: '« Éloquer » et dis-loquer la pierre: Itinéraires lithiques de Montaigne'
- Alexandre Claude: 'Discovering Rocks and Writing Local Natural History: The Case of the Green Corsican Jasper c.1600'

Discussant and chair: Jennifer Oliver (online) & Ewa Zakrzewska

15:00–15:15

Break

15:15–16:45

Panel 3 – Sociohistorical hinterlands of stones

- Leonardo A. Carrió Cataldi : 'Lodestones, compasses and social conflicts in the Sevillian hinterland (mid-16th century)'
- Margherita Trento: 'From Coast to Hinterland: Pearls in Tamil South India, 1532-1750s' (online)

Discussant and chair: Lauren Kassell & Francesco Montuori

16:45–17:00

Break

17:00–18:30

Panel 4 – Crafting the craft at different scales: manufacturing stones in colonial context

- Lola Cindric: 'Inventing and mastering the craft of stone inlaying: hierarchisation of skill between Florence and Āgra'
- Claire Conklin Sabel: 'Conducing to the knowledge of the universe and trade': the Role of Goldsmiths in Materializing the Early Modern Globe'

Discussant and chair: Guillemette Crouzet & Jakub Ochocinski

19:30

Dinner (for speakers and discussants)

Day 2 (17 June – Villa Salviati, Sala del Torrino)

09:00–09:30

Coffee

9:30–11:00

Panel 5 – Old stones, new geopolitics: localising materials of the two Indies

- Miruna Achim: 'Radiant idols. A natural history of conversion in sixteenth-century Mexico'
- Elisa Andretta: 'Lithic Encounters in Sixteenth-Century Rome. Bezoars from the Two Indies between Knowledge and Geopolitics'

Discussant and chair: Igor Melani & Paula González Fons

11:00–11:45

Group reflection and concluding remarks

12:45–13:45

Visit of the Opificio delle pietre dure

13:45

End of the workshop & informal lunch



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