

Qu'est-ce qu'être nomade au fil des temps passés, présents et futurs ?

What does it mean to be nomadic in the past, present and future?

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Colloque en présentiel avec retransmission en visioconférence
Passé sanitaire obligatoire

Inscriptions, programme, informations : <https://nomads.sciencesconf.org/>

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Summaries

(English versions)

Thursday, November 25, 2021 (inaugural session)

Conferences

From the « Nomad Lives » Outcome to the Conference: Perspectives of an Archaeologist, a Sociologist and an Ethnologist on Nomads and Nomadism by Serge Bahuchet¹, Jean-Paul Demoule² et Sylvie Mazzella³

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Keywords: Archeology, Sociology, Ethnology, Nomads

At the crossing of the perspectives of an archaeologist, a sociologist and an ethnologist, the conference will raise questions such as: what does it mean to be a nomad according to you and your discipline? What are the links between prehistoric nomads, present-day nomads and "future nomads"? What kind of future can we envision for nomadism and nomads?

Lexicographic Considerations on being a Nomad: what are we talking about and in what terms? by Jean-Pierre Digard

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Keywords: migration, nomadism, pastoralism, sedentarization, transhumance

The evocative power of the term « nomad » has encouraged the multiplication of its use and misuse. By returning to its primary etymological meaning, which portrays the joint seasonal movement of herbivorous animals and human societies, we shall attempt an inventory of the words to prefer and of those to avoid in designating the different modalities of such movements.

Friday, November 26, 2021 (sessions 1 & 2)

Session 1: What is "Being nomadic" at the crossroads of different disciplinary fields of the humanities and social sciences?

Conferences

Nomadism or "the" nomad figure by Denis Retaillé

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Keywords: Ethnic nomadism, individual nomadism, space of representations, mobile space.

Boultoum. 1981-1984. Around a deep well at the southern outlet of the Ténéré, an old village inherited from the Bornou (15th and 16th centuries) was still coupled with a major market. Before this place faded, Tuareg and Toubou "nomads" were sedentary, while Kanuri and Haoussa "sedentaries" controlled the movement. Neither ethnic nor political borders, nor ecological zonation, nor cultural areas made it possible to give meaning to a mobile space stretched along a trans-Saharan route that has been reawakened by the Boko Haram movement after a colonial and postcolonial period of territorial allotment.

Nomadism commonly designates a form of relationship with terrestrial space. However the figure of the nomad goes far beyond this geographical framework reduced to "nature". As much as, for several decades, the figure of the metaphorical nomad has contributed to an inversion of values, moving attention towards an individual's journeys rather than towards collective lifestyles.

It is however possible to identify a constant: the primary mobility. Negative or positive values of appreciation are built around the movement. Nomad, wanderer, migrant, transhumant, commuter and some others including tourist, have mobility in common. That is all, but that is a lot to further our understanding when power is established by movement vs. control of movement, more than by territorial fuzzy claims. The dominant space of representations is at stake with the hypothesis of a mobile space of reference in view of the open World.

Birth of a nomadic European people. Territories of the migrants of globalization among the poor in Southern Europe by Alain Tarrus

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Keywords: Southern Europe, migrants, nomadic people, globalization among the poor

1980s: Since 1962, Algerian immigrants, barely visible on the public scene, develop transnational commercial initiatives to supply vast underground markets emerging in France,

Italy, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, then in Spain, while strengthening their ties with the Maghreb.

After 1990, the Algerians of Europe, still reeling from the aftershocks of the civil war in Algeria, withdraw to local micro markets while the great Moroccan migration is unfolding: In the following decade, more than a million people create all sorts of European networks for housing, working ... and taking over the cross-border commercial activities of the Algerians, with improved, flexible and diversified logistics. During the early 2000s. they meet the Afghan, Georgian, Russian and Ukrainian cohorts of East Asian transmigrants working for Southeast Asian firms, negotiating the movement of electronic equipments "poor to poor", i.e. "by the poor for the poor", duty and quota-free. Goods are sent from Hong Kong to the Persian Gulf Emirates, where they escape the control of the WTO, in order to invade, through sales at half price, the huge market of the poor in Europe, who are solvent under these conditions. Through the trans-Balkan route, they merge in 2003 in Italy with the Moroccans: a major route of Globalization from below i.e., among the poor, grows from the Black Sea to Andalusia via Bulgaria, Albania, Italy, Southern France and the Spanish Levant. Informal "notaries" ensure the ethics of these invisible if not criminal exchanges along this "circulatory territory". Bypassing the survival markets of the big metropolises, such as Istanbul, Sofia, Naples, Marseilles, or Barcelona, the capitals of the territories of the transmigrants of the "poor among the poor" are medium-sized cities, such as Perpignan in France. More than 200 000 nomades are forming today together with several millions of sedentary partners, a cosmopolitan society .in motion.

The Roma/Gypsy figure. Prototype or Stereotype of Nomadism ? by Martin Olivera

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Keywords: Roma, Gypsies, Travellers, Nationalism, Autochthony, Social Sciences

Gypsies or, to use an anglo-saxon acronym, the GRT (Gypsies, Roma and Travelers), represent a central figure of "nomadism" in the imaginary of so-called Western societies. This communication proposes firstly, to confront this representation with the historical and socio-cultural realities of the groups thus designated, on the basis of work carried out over the last 30 years by historians and anthropologists. It will then explore the roots of the nomadic/sedentary opposition which has nourished, at least since the 19th century, national imaginaries based on the myth of autochthony. By focusing on the conceptual but also political and administrative creation of the "nomads" at the very heart of European societies, and its persistence despite its inadequacy against fieldwork realities, we will finally be led to question the vagueness of the elementary categories of analysis of "methodological nationalism" which still strongly structures the field of social sciences and its disciplinary fragmentation.

Being nomadic in the Upper Palaeolithic by Claudine Karlin¹ & Jean-Philippe Rigaud²

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Keywords: Mobility, Supply, Territory, Way of Thinking [Worldview], Palaeolithic

For prehistoric times, what data would allow us to characterize the mobility of the ancient people we study? We have carried out numerous research projects on Upper Paleolithic cultural groups that lived in rock shelters of the Dordogne as well as Magdalenian hunters that moved back and forth along the banks of the Seine River. All these groups are for us “nomadic,” primarily because our archaeological view provides a limited picture of them at a single moment and place in their lives, ignoring where they are coming from and where they are going. To gain a better understanding of the mobility behavior of our palaeolithic subjects, we examined data from current-day nomads living under similar climatic and environmental conditions. Among the living peoples we examined are the Inuits Nunamiut of Alaska and the Dolganes and Koriaks of Siberia.

The goal of our investigation into select hyperboreal populations was to enrich our archeological research through ethnographic inquiries, to outline an interpretative framework for our data and observations collected by our excavations in sites occupied 10 000 years ago and more, and to develop a better understanding of palaeolithic nomadism. To that end, we addressed the following questions:

- How did palaeolithic foragers integrate with their environment and how did they utilize it?
- How was their behaviour linked to the seasonal ethology of the animals they depended on for meat in the absence of any substantial vegetal alimentation?
- What does ethnographic inquiry reveal about the domains of social relationships, spirituality and links with ancient cultural landscapes?

Pastoralist first, at times nomadic. Diverse and flexible forms of pastoral mobility in mainland Asia by Carole Ferret

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Keywords: Pastoralism, Nomadism, Central Asia, Kazakhstan.

I will present a typology of pastoral nomadism practiced in mainland Asia, among the Turco-Mongol peoples of Central Asia and Siberia, emphasizing the diversity and flexibility of various forms of mobility. The layout of certain nomadic routes shows remarkable continuity, despite the major upheavals represented by collectivization in the 1930s and de-collectivization in the 1990s. However, from one year to the next, the pastoralists can choose whether or not to follow them, depending on their individual situation and the condition of their herds. One of the paradoxes of nomadic Central Asian pastoralism is that it is believed to be both timeless and constantly on the verge of disappearing - because it is supposed to be incapable of change. By levelling out climatic variations, seasonal movements make it possible to stabilize the living conditions of breeders and their livestock. However, far from being immutable pastoral life is committed to flexibility.

My intervention will be completed by a short film I directed: ***A transhumance in the south-east of Kazakhstan.***

Session 2: What are the links between nomads of yesterday and today?

Conferences

When Anthropology and Geochemistry meet: methodological contributions to the study of past and present Nomadism based on a Mongolian Altaï case study by

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Keywords: Mongolia, Anthropology, Geochemistry, Archaeology, GPS

Beginning in the 1930s, anthropologists and geographers began to study past and contemporary nomadisation routes in Mongolia, in connection with local bioclimatic conditions or major socio-political developments. If the diversity of current practices still deserves in-depth research, the paucity of archaeological traces left by past nomadism since the Bronze Age, has not enabled us to characterize it with precision until now.

Over the past few years, we have developed a multidisciplinary approach that combines ethnographic surveys, multi-year GPS monitoring of herds and isotopic analysis of animal teeth. Our objective is twofold: 1) to document the parameters involved in contemporary nomadic practices from both a synchronic (by comparing practices between neighbours) and diachronic point of view, in order to better understand their dynamics; 2) to propose a new way of closely following the movements of animals based on the analysis of the strontium isotopic composition of their teeth and a local isotopic map. This approach can be refined to be applied in both Anthropology and Archaeology. It makes it possible, on the one hand, to better understand the inter-annual variations among today's breeders, and on the other, to identify the origins and movements of animals found on archaeological sites.

Living in the skin of my reindeer - Leatherwork among the Koriaks and Chukchi of Kamchatka (Siberia)". Film by S. Beyries, C. Karlin, Y. Tchesnokov, commented by Sylvie Beyries

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Keywords: Siberia, Reindeer, Koriaks, Chukchi, Leather work

Based on this film made on populations of the Far East of Siberia and through the example of the exploitation of reindeer, will be illustrated different aspects of the relationship between man and animal among the Koriaks and Chukchi of Kamchatka. Among these populations, still partly nomadic, reindeer and man live closely linked existences. Reindeer skin, flesh, blood, tendons... circulate in all spheres of society, whether they be technical or symbolic.

Communications (short format)

Neolithic Nomadism in the Syrian Steppe: the Archaeologist and the Nomad by Frédéric Abbes

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Keywords: Steppe, Neolithic, Nomads, Camps, Imaginary

The current climate of the steppes of the Near East is gradually emerging on the eve of Neolithization around the 12th millennium. The Syrian Steppe is then traversed by mobile groups of hunter-gatherers belonging to the Natufian culture. In the steppe, their camps can sometimes be simple hunting stops. These same groups also live in hard-built villages on the outskirts of steppe areas. This situation, which persisted with the neolithization, generated different development scenarios, that have in common shared reference to the same symbolic world.

Around the eighth millennium, the situation changes with a division of the steppe between fully sedentary cultures occupying favourable environments, groups of nomadic pastoralists and groups whose main activity seems to be hunting, mainly gazelles. Neolithization could thus be seen as much as a radical change in the occupation of the steppe as a simple adaptation to a new economy.

However, what exactly are we talking about when we talk about neolithic nomadism? A few stones, some ash stains, traces of flint and bone which are in the best of cases the only evidence of these groups' seasonal camps. Nowhere more than with nomads are we confronted by an Archaeology of absence. The camp is ephemeral, but paradoxically the presence of the nomad has left indelible marks on the steppe. The traces are both physical and in the imagination of both archaeologists and Bedouins participating in the excavations.

Unity and Diversities in Nomadic Societies over time: the example of the Egyptian Eastern Desert since 5 000 years by Quentin Cecillon¹, Maël Crépy², Isabelle Goncalves³, Julie Marchand⁴.

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Nomad's Lands is a junior laboratory (axis 5 of MOM research) funded by the Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée Jean Pouilloux, Lyon, for the years 2021-2022.

<https://www.mom.fr/recherche-et-formation/axes-strategiques/labos-junior/nomads-lands>

Keywords: Egypt, Bedouins, Desert Economy, Traveller Notes

Although archaeological evidences of their occupation are few and far between, the nomads of the Egyptian Eastern Desert have been known since the earliest Pharaonic times, based on comments from residents of the banks of the Nile and from travellers. Today largely sedentary or

semi-sedentary, they live mainly in the Valley and on the shores of the Red Sea. Sometimes feared and fled by the Egyptians, sometimes commercial and diplomatic partners, they were essential to the country's economy. Until recently, they exploited desert resources and participated in the operation of trade routes that remained essential until the opening of the Suez Canal.

Although different groups have been described in this desert in 5 millennia, we observe common features, in particular at the functional and material levels: What are the marks of unity and diversity carried by the Egyptian nomadic societies of yesterday and today ?

In order to characterize Bedouin societies over the long term, the Nomad's Lands collective will reflect on the links that unite different tribes and different peoples through the centuries in the Egyptian Eastern Desert, based on textual data (pharaonic; narratives of 17th - 20th century travellers), archaeological data (excavations by the French Archaeological Mission of the Oriental Desert - MAFDO), material data (ceramics produced by the populations of the desert in the Greco-Roman period), and anthropological data (observations at the end of the 20th century).

Origin of state and Emergence of Pastoral Nomads Bureaucrats in late 4th millennium Iran by Rouhollah Yousefi Zoshk¹, Atena Abdoli Masinan², Maryam Ravanbakhsh³

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Keywords: Pastoral Nomadism, Complex societies, Proto Elamite, Ancient Iran, Clay Tablet

Reading archaeological literature on ancient Iran, one cannot fail to be impressed by the momentous achievements with which the societies of the 4th millenniums B.C. Utilising both excavation and survey, archaeological research into the origins of complex societies in Iran has only started since 1970s.

In recent decades, the antiquity of pastoral nomadism and transhumanism has been questioned, while through the study of writing on clay tablets and of administration techniques, large amount of information surfaced about the origin of state in Iran, origin correlated with the emergence of complex pastoral nomad societies in late 4th millennium B.C.

The Proto Elamite pastoral nomad communities were highly bureaucratized in the Iranian Plateau from west to east. Their chiefdom superstructure, known almost exclusively from around 1700 clay tablets and numerous seal impressions, has recently been studied in detail from the view point of tax payment, gender division of labor, specialized unit of works, and so on. This article focuses on pastoral nomadism socio-political landscape, that surprisingly occurs at the highest administrative level, in order to elaborate how pastoral nomadism bureaucracy and administration techniques contributed to the birth of the first transhuman state in Iran in late 4th millennium B.C.

Nomads of the Zagros and Transhumance with the Bakhtiariis. Observations of an Archaeologist by Zahra Hashemi ¹ & Omid Hashemi ²

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Ethnoarchaeological axis of the LurPaP project (Luristan from Past to Present), financed by Labex (Les Passé dans le Présent), directed by Martin Sauvage and Christine Lorre

Keywords: Iran, Zagros, Nomadism, Ethno-Archaeology, Bakhtiariis

Occupying the entire western part of Iran, the Zagros mountain range is both a natural obstacle and a crossroads of cultural influences between the Iranian plateau and the Mesopotamian plain. Despite its important geostrategic location, it was of little interest to twentieth century archaeologists fascinated by the great empires of the plain or the plateau.

The various lifestyles in Zagros are one of the main concerns of archaeologists working in the region. The region is indeed a patchwork of vast meadows favourable to livestock and nomadism as well as wide valleys favourable to agriculture and a sedentary lifestyle.

Nomadism, anchored in the region for a very long time, is a very difficult subject to tackle from an archaeological point of view. Because of this gap in archaeological knowledge, it is essential to begin our study with anthropological observations.

The Luristan region, in the heart of central Zagros in western Iran, is still visited today by several nomadic tribes living in tents and making their transhumance on horseback. As part of the ethno-archaeological axis of the LurPaP program, in spring 2021 we followed the nomadic families of the Bakhtiariis tribe, in their seasonal transhumance, from their wintering in the Susiana plain to their summer in the valleys of Luristan.

Our main objective was to understand their way of life and analyse the possibilities of its presence in ancient societies. From an archaeological point of view, we studied what one can expect to find from the remains of a nomadic life. Among our main ambitions were the tracing of transhumance paths, the identification of layover, worship and burial place characteristics, the interpretation of passage strategies and the use of space and environment as well as the recording of their different know-hows. We are back with promising results and a documentary film produced in collaboration with the Rekhneh collective.

Nomad/Sedentary (Inter)dependencies: the example of the Turks on the Iranian and Central Asian margins of the Islamic Empire in the 10th century by Camille Rhoné-Quer

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Keywords: Identities, Interdependence, Adaptation, Society, Economy

Although the imperial rhetoric in 10th century medieval Islam highlights the defensive functions of the political leader in the face of Turkic tribe depredations and assigns to their nomadic identity a threatening dimension, a regional or even local analysis of economic exchanges and daily practices testifies to the relationships of dependence between “nomads” and “sedentary people”. In fact, in the Iranian and Central Asian margins of the medieval Islamic Empire where the

official discourse disseminated by the relays of the caliphal power often associates the Turks with the infidel barbarians threatening the Islamic world, natural environment data (geomorphological fragmentation, water network) and the cartography of human presence (cities, rural townships, steppes and desert areas) help to qualify this dichotomous representation. The analysis of economic practices in textual sources and in particular of commercial exchanges, reveals the need in which local populations find themselves to adapt to the presence of others, to resolve to share natural resources (water networks, pastures) and to work on the development and exploitation of raw materials. The example of breeding and exploitation of animal raw materials will constitute a central element of reflection around the question of universals, without excluding the theme of the access of nomad populations to manufactured products (in particular of mining origin).

Tuareg Nomads: Borders, Trajectories and Adaptation in Crisis by Ladjji Ouattara

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Keywords: Tuaregs, Nomad, Saharo-Sahelian Africa, Borders, Crisis

The Tuaregs are Berber populations (possessing a language –Tamashaq - and an alphabet – the Tifinagh), organized in tribes from four large mountain basins constituting a space of nomadization in an arid environment and connected to diverse political and ecological balances. In the twentieth century however, new borders inherited from the colonial divisions of Saharo-Sahelian Africa separated the Tuareg-dominated areas between five different states: the Hoggar massif and the Kel Ahaggar sanctuary attached to Algeria, the Tassili massif of the Ajers where the Kel Ajers live, separated between Libya and Algeria, The Adrar of the Ifoghas, where the Kel Adrar originated from, attributed to French Sudan and the Air massif, stronghold of the Kel Air, now in Niger.

Our communication in sessions 1 and 2 aims, through a socio-historical and geopolitical approach, to analyze the evolutions of nomadic systems among the Kel Adrar and Kel Air. Firstly, it will question the specificity of Tuareg nomadism, the founding myths, the trajectories of cross-border transhumance, the representations of common space, the nation-state and *Temout* (the Tuareg nation). Next, we will attempt to apprehend the profound upheavals in nomadic lifestyles and production over recent decades. Then we will see how these radical transformations engendered the phenomenon of *ishumar* (young “deterritorialized”, idle and often exiled individuals) and a political current of resistance, drawing its identity references in traditional nomadism (*teshumara*), in order to adapt to our times (*tidalt az amazan*). Finally, we will analyse the present changes (*tamotayett*) of these nomadic societies in the light of multiple ecological, health, economic, political, migratory and security crises in order to understand towards which new future forms of “hybrid nomadism” Tuaregs are now moving, at the heart of this “gray area” of the world.

Saturday, November 27, 2021 (sessions 3 & 4)

Session 3 : What traces have nomadic people left or still leave in human history?

Conferences

Human mobility influence on the genetic evolution of hunter-gatherer populations from Central Africa by Paul Verdu

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Keywords : genetic diversity, Homo sapiens, mobility, Congolese Basin, hunter-gatherers, farmers.

Cultures and lifestyles represent major evolutionary forces that influence human population genetic diversity over time. Indeed, socio-cultural behaviours related to spatial mobility of individuals and communities, such as effective dispersal (relative distance between offspring and parental birthplaces) or philopatry rules (spouse mobility before and after marriages) often determine the distribution patterns of genetic diversity among and within groups. Forest hunter-gatherer populations from the Congo Basin are often thought to have a highly mobile way-of-life amidst the forest, while agricultural neighbours are seen as largely more sedentary within the same geographical space. Using population genetics paradigms and tools, we will show that interactions between mobility behaviours and socio-cultural relationships among and within groups of populations in the Congo Basin have massively determined, and still determine, the evolution of genetic diversity in the region, in a more complex manner than expected with the simplistic categories “nomadic or sedentary”.

Geo-historic trajectory of the city of Zinder: the model for nomadic urbanisation in the Sahel? by Laurent Gagnol

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Keywords: Nomadism, Urbanisation, Caravan Routes, Tuaregs, Sahara

This conference looks at the long-term urban trajectory of Zinder, currently the second largest city in Niger. Since the founding of the city at the end of the 18th century, Zinder has never been homogeneous in terms of both morphology and ethnic identifications. Shaped by caravan route exchanges and contacts between nomads (Tuaregs) and sedentary people (Kanouris and Hausas), the city has long been twofold (Birni and Zango districts).

Not simply retracing the geo-historic phases of Zinder by re-reading 19th century European explorer accounts and surveys on oral memory, we wish to consider urban development from the nomad viewpoint, which most (colonial and postcolonial) studies have largely ignored by

showing a partial and biased representation from the sedentary point of view. Our first objective is to question the commonplace according to which the nomadic and urban worlds are historically and anthropologically incompatible and conflicting. By highlighting the design and nomadic practices of the city, we will show above all that through caravan trade exchanges, the Tuaregs participated in a specific urban development, as showed by the revealing example of Zinder. From a nomadic perspective on the city, we can shed new light on past and present urban dynamics and powers.

Communications (short format)

Leaving, coasting and returning: how are we to understand maritime nomadism in France during the prehistoric Holocene? by Gregor Marchand¹, Jorge Calvo Gomez², Catherine Dupont³, Philippe Guillonnet⁴, Marylise Onfray⁵ & Michel Philippe⁶

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Keywords: Geoarchaeology, Mesolithic, Navigation, Seasonality, Technique

In the first half of the Holocene the rise in sea level caused major reconfigurations of the coastlines in mainland France. Like the current “eco-refugees”, the coastal populations of the late Paleolithic and Mesolithic experienced drastic reductions in certain areas, the creation of islands and the inundation of ecosystems (estuaries, coastal marshes). Direct archaeological evidence available in settlements dating from the 7th and 6th millennium BC in Brittany reveal ways of life combining land and sea resources, interwoven in several natural cycles (seasons, tides). How can archaeology reconstruct the mobility practices that drove these networks of occupation? Can we capture their changes over time? Navigation techniques occupy a central position in this survey. Given the scarcity of boats preserved on a European scale for these periods, we propose an indirect analysis method, combining ethnographic references, *lato sensu* functional analyses and experiments. The perception of the rhythms of habitat occupation is another aspect of our research, which, in this case, associates geo-archaeology, isotopic dating, sclerochronology and wildlife studies, taking care to differentiate their respective chronological scales. An intangible object of research, maritime nomadism can only be understood through such disciplinary confrontations.

Sea nomadism in Southeast Asia in the long term by Bérénice Bellina¹ & Jean-Christophe Galipaud²

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Keywords: sea nomads, economic specialization, trade

Along the coasts and off the islands of Southeast Asia, there are populations who have acquired or retained a marine nomadic lifestyle and who also share a complementary, but not easily defined, relationship with sedentarity. The majority of these nomads are not landless people and they recognize themselves as belonging to a territory consisting of small islets, sandbanks or mangroves where they operate and where they bury their dead. The sea is for them a resource landscape as well as a "spiritual landscape" visited and controlled by spirits.

Ethnographic and linguistic studies and a few modern historical monographs had showed that sea nomads had been part of the economic and political landscape of Southeast Asia for millennia.

Until recently however, archaeologists took for granted that sea nomadism left no traces, that it was invisible (Sopher 1977). Only a few discussions raised the possibility that it had played a role in the past.

Through our respective and joint multi-disciplinary archaeologically and ethnographically-based projects (see: Bellina, B., Blench, R. and J.-C. Galipaud (eds) 2021, *Sea nomads of Southeast Asia: from the Past to the Present*. Singapore University Press) and research programs, several aspect of the evolution of sea-nomadism have begun to emerge. This presentation provides a rapid summary of these initial attempts to explore a long-term historical trajectory as well as regional historical developments. We will also introduce some of the current projects in Thaïlande-Myanmar and Timor and the future prospects targeted by that these projects.

What remains of the nomad? Landscapes, Transmission and Cultural Heritage (North and East Africa and the Arabian Peninsula) by Maël Crépy¹, Ninon Blond², Julie Marchand³ & Marie Bourgeois⁴.

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Nomad's Lands is a junior laboratory (axis 5 of MOM research) funded by the Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée Jean Pouilloux, Lyon, for the years 2021-2022. It brings together 9 members working on nomadic societies of East and West, from prehistory to contemporary times. The 4 members of this communication all work on Egypt.

<https://www.mom.fr/recherche-et-formation/axes-strategiques/labos-junior/nomads-lands>

Keywords: Cultural Landscapes, Heritage, Cultural Transmission, Agricultural Practices, Drylands

Due to the specific lifestyles of nomadic societies in a dry environment, habitat and everyday objects are characterised by the small number of implements, largely made up of perishable materials (plants or animals). Finding traces of nomadic occupation and practices is therefore a difficult task, especially since the remains are often scattered over large areas, on separated sites and along the routes connecting them.

Starting from this observation, we propose to analyse what remains of nomadic societies after their disappearance or sedentarization, by carrying out a bibliographical review and by applying an interdisciplinary approach to our own data from hyper-arid to semi-arid lands, in Africa and the Arabian Peninsula (Tunisia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates). Using geographic, historical and archaeological data, we will study these societies and their strategies for exploiting the environment, in particular by studying cultural landscape (pastoral, road, funerary, etc.), practices inherited from nomads within sedentary or sedentary groups, as well as cultural transmission processes from one era and / or society to another (e.g. denominations, agricultural or funeral practices).

« Tell me where your cattle comes from, I will tell you who you are and where you nomadize: animal exchanges as drive or outcome of pastoral mobility » by Chloé Violon¹, Gwendoline Lemaître², Eric Garine³, Saverio Krätli⁴, Nicolas Lescureux⁵, Charlotte Marchina⁶, Christine Raimond⁷ & Matthieu Salpeteur⁸.

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Keywords: Nomadism, Pastoralism, Exchange Networks, Mobility, Resource Access

To survive, pastoral societies depend on the reproduction of their livestock. The latter however, does not depend solely on herd growth: it is also regulated by external acquisitions, which allow an increase in size, introducing new breeds and replacing unproductive livestock. Just like mobility helps to maximize the available resources, this movement of livestock, by making it possible to cope with the environmental variability structuring the pastoral way of life, represents one of the social strategies of risk minimization. Instead of viewing animal exchange networks and human mobility as independent facets of pastoralism, we propose to reflect on how they influence each other. The forms taken by this circulation are linked to the use and knowledge of

the territory by pastoralists, but to what extent is spatial mobility also conditioned by the ways in which they move their livestock? Based on three case studies (Wodaabe breeders from Niger, Arab breeders from Chad and Tushe breeders from Georgia), we will consider the links between human mobility and the movement of animals within, between, and outside these groups. Studying nomadism through the prism of the circulation of livestock leads to conceiving it as a story of links between groups, between species and between generations.

« *Nomadising Without Clearing Camp of Waste Forbidden* ». *Nomadising and (not) Leaving Traces in the Landscape and History of Mongolia* by Anna Dupuy

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Keywords: Mongolia, Waste, Territory, Nomadism

“Nomadising without clearing camp of waste forbidden. Waste must be removed. The violation of this rule will irritate the Master Spirits of the place and the territory will become uninhabitable” as Mongolian tradition proclaims. Thus, in Mongolia, nomadism is associated with a conception of the territory according to which it is forbidden for humans to leave traces of their passage. However, today, in the Anthropocene era, Mongolian nomadic pastoralists carry more and more non-biodegradable consumer goods that end up becoming waste. Even by perpetuating the old practices of setting them on fire, this new waste no longer disappears and today's nomads leave behind waste that is half-burnt, but still present.

I will present the way in which Mongolian nomadic pastoralists face the impossibility of leaving no trace in the territory and how they justify it to others, humans and non-humans. I will also compare how sedentary Mongols approach the figure of the nomadic pastoralist, and how this figure evolves according to the speeches of the ancestral nomad respectful of the environment, leaving no physical trace, neither in the territory nor in human history, from "Genghis Khan [who] was an environmentalist, because he left no trace, not even a statue of himself despite his power", to that of the nomad polluter marking the environment with his waste.

Petroglyphs and Pastoralism in the Bronze Age: an animated Altai? by Cecilia Conte

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Keywords: Petroglyph | Pastoralism | Bronze Age | Altai | Animism

Archaeological research in Eurasia has focused on mobile hunter-gatherer settlements, on pastoralist graves, and more recently, on genetics. However, the mountainous regions of Central Asia in particular, present a multitude of paintings and rock engravings (petroglyphs), which inform us about past nomadic societies. The Tsagaan Salaa / Baga Oigor petroglyphic site, located in the far west of Mongolia, in the Bayan Ölgii region, dates back to the Paleolithic era. This study focuses on the Bronze Age (2400-900 BCE), a period in which pastoralism emerges, followed by its even more mobile form, nomadism. Rather than arbitrarily distinguishing between domestic and wild animals, it is the interaction between goats, horses, deer and humans that is our primary focus. Thus, in the petroglyphic composition and in the entire landscape it depicts, humans and animals are considered equal agents. The study is based on an online archive (<https://mongolianaltai.uoregon.edu/index.php>), allowing us to select compositions representing

animals and humans acting together. Horseback riding and caravans, among other new human-animal relationships, co-exist with hunting. From a methodological and theoretical point of view, this study is based on an animist approach: humans, animals and spirits animate the landscape and its petroglyphs, thus interweaving sacred and everyday practices.

Session 4 : What future for nomads?

Conferences

It goes without saying: International NGOs and Nomads by Marie-Françoise Guédon

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Keywords: Nomadism, NGO, Development, International Aid, Territorial rights, Cultural rights, Hunter-gatherers/Pastoralists

These preliminary conclusions of a rapid survey of international NGO projects (as described on their websites) concerning nomadic peoples, reveal a consistent trend in the stated objectives of NGOs: with a few well-defined exceptions, NGOs assume that the elimination of geographic mobility is a preliminary step to any effective intervention on their behalf. This assumption is so ingrained that it is never discussed, questioned or justified. It is taken for granted that nomadic lifestyles are either a threat for the security of the State, or the mark of a primitive people not even fit for citizenship or residence rights, especially when dealing with hunters-gatherers. pastoralists may be viewed more favorably when they and their herds support a sizeable part of the local economy. Throughout the world and in line with the official orientations and the interest of multinational industries, NGO interventions actively target several key issues pertaining to nomadic lifestyles, issues that are however never openly or officially addressed: a) the reduction of land rights, b) the imposition on women of a new form of domesticity, and c) the downplaying of cultural and linguistic rights which go unrecognized by the cultural context of the dominant society and are erased by the school systems often used to justify re-location.

Can we still be mobile in the African forest in the 21st century? by Serge Bahuchet

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Conference accompanied by an extract of: "***Baka Pygmies, the Great Shift***", film by Laurent Maget (2013)

Keywords: Baka Pygmies, Central Africa, Cameroon, Gabon, Mobility, Forced Sedentarization

For more than a century, the so-called "Pygmies", hunter-gatherers for thousands of years, have been facing more and more obstacles to their maintaining a way of life based on economic, ecological and social mobility. We will briefly present the characteristics of these groups, then expose the policies that have succeeded one another in order to sedentarize them, and then show the current consequences on the life of the "Pygmies" of the policies of valorization, development, exploitation or even conservation of the forest. In conclusion: no, we *must* not be mobile anymore in the 21st century!

Communications (short format)

Adaptation and Resilience Mechanisms in nomadic societies of The People's Republic of China, by Aurore Dumont

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Keywords: China, Mongolia, Tungusic People, Change, Adaptation.

China is considered to be a country with an agricultural tradition however, nomadic societies have exploited the peripheral regions of the country for centuries. This presentation focuses on the Mongolian and Tungusic minorities living in the Inner Mongolian region and how they adapt their know-how and nomadic experience to the contemporary Chinese world.

The Tungusic people and Mongols are traditionally engaged in two types of nomadic pastoralism: some combine reindeer herding and hunting in forest areas while others practice Mongolian "five muzzle" herding (horse, cattle, sheep, goats and camels) in the steppe environment. Chinese policies over recent decades have upset the way of life of these peoples who have implemented various mechanisms of resilience. What are these mechanisms of resilience in the face of a fluctuating socio-economic, political and environmental environment? What are the organizational rationales of these new nomadic and sedentary practices? Based on ethnographic data collected between 2008 and 2019, this research questions the future of the populations of Inner Mongolia from the analysis of their different adaptation strategies. We will focus, among other things, on new nomadization trajectories, motorized mobility between nomadic and sedentary spaces and the alternative use of fixed and mobile homes.

Nomadic territories at the gates of the city: the yurt district of Doloo Budaal in Ulaanbaatar. The ethnography of a sedentarization by Samuel Labbé

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Keywords: Nomadism, Mongolia, Sedentarization, Participant Ethnography, Digital Tools.

We will discuss here one of the possible horizons of nomadism, that of sedentarization. It will be up to us to understand and define this sedentarization through the use of ethnography and the participant observation of the migration of a man, Munkh, and his family, arrived at the gates of Ulaanbaatar in a Ger District, a yurt district. In this spatial change, nomadic codes are

transformed. Neither entirely gone nor totally present, it is up to these children of the steppes to co-construct their nomadism at the gates of urban life.

The first threat is not the sedentarization of nomads, but the risk, for us, of ignoring and, ultimately, not seeing, the nomadization of sedentary practices. Firstly in fact, going back to the history of this sedentarization will allow us to see how it is a solution that produces a symbolic compensation for nomadic status. We will then observe that the economy between the domestic space and the space of nomadism integrates a new space of socialization which gives this family a place of choice. Finally, we will understand that in this space, the digital tool fully plays its role of re-informing the world and that, ultimately, leaving the city has protected the nomadic way of life by making it more complex.

Navigating Uncertain Topologies: Contemporary Nomadism in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania by Christian Vium

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Keywords: Nomadism, Uncertainty, Navigation, Mauritania

This presentation builds upon two decades of recurrent ethnographic fieldwork in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania. Since independence, the demographic composition of the country has undergone massive transformation, as former nomadic pastoralists became sedentary in vast numbers due to the convergence of socio-political and economic change coupled with recurring periods of excessive drought. In recent years, the so-called international war on terror, the collapse of Libya, and the proliferation of armed groups in the region has further affected nomadic livelihoods. My research explores the fragile nomadic-sedentary continuum through ethnographic analyses of livelihoods among nomadic pastoralists of the *Hamonat* faction living in the areas surrounding Oualata in the Hodh Ech Chargui province, as well as recently sedentarized nomads in the capital of Nouakchott.

In this paper, I will present two cases that illustrate how the people among whom I work navigate different kinds of existential uncertainty. The first case speaks to the ongoing destabilization of the border areas between the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and Mali in the wake of the collapse of Libya, and how nomadic pastoralists anticipate the future. The second case is set in the periphery of Nouakchott and explores how recently sedentarized nomads conceive of their new urban lives.

Beyond Sedentarization, the endogenous mechanisms of resilience and consolidation of a semi-nomadic identity among the Bagyéli - Bakola pygmies in Southern Cameroon's Ocean Department by Patrick Romuald (visioconference)

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Keywords: Pygmy, Bagyéli-Bakola, Consolidation, Semi-nomadic, Cameroon

The Bagyéli and Bakola pygmies that we have chosen to study form a group estimated at around 3,700 people, and occupy an area of nearly 12,000 km² in the southern part of the coastal region of Cameroon. Today's Bagyéli-Bakola society is undergoing a profound

transformation. Back in 1968, the Cameroonian government launched the "operation thousand feet" included in the second five-year plan to accelerate the sedentarization of the pygmies. This policy led to the adoption of the practice of agriculture by some Bagyéli-Bakola and the introduction of currency into their economy. The Bagyéli communities we observed live in sedentary camps adjacent to the Bantu villages which bear the same name. They are therefore sedentary pygmies, due to the intensive deforestation suffered by the Ocean Department, which carries several structuring projects (Kribi deep-water Port, Chad-Cameroon pipeline, etc.). All these projects greatly contribute to the reduction of the traditional living spaces of the Bagyéli. The Bagyéli-Bakola are now going through a deep social and cultural crisis, but also an economic crisis which results in a situation of great poverty and marginalization. Their semi-nomadic culture seems doomed to disappear very soon according to many observers. However, many endogenous mechanisms of resilience are emerging among these population in order to maintain their semi-nomadic identity. The rainy season for example is always the main period or season of migration and corresponds to the great period of hunting and gathering of non-timber forest products (NTFPs). The Bagyéli and Bakola hunters, generally in groups, leave their families to go camping in the forest, sometimes more than 30 km away. The dry season, which is not very productive for the pygmies (scarcity of meat and NTFPs), is on the other hand favourable for fishing. To this end, travel is directed towards areas of high concentrations of fish species (watercourses) in the forest. Unlike hunting, fishing is an activity that mobilizes the whole community or family (men, women and the young). In these pygmy camps, certain cultural or spiritual activities favour experiences in the forest, thus helping to maintain these migratory movements within the camp. The main objective of this communication is to demonstrate that beyond the sedentarization which is a reality among the Bagyéli-Bakola pygmies, these populations still maintain habits of nomadism. In order to reach this objective, we rely on exhaustive documentary research and field interviews in the Pygmy camps of Bibambwi, Bivouba, Elogbatindi, Mbebe, Mpalla, Déhané and Bongueng, all located in the Ocean department of Southern Cameroon.

Odology: a conception of contemporary nomadism linked to the notion of the threshold. The Travelling Community case study by Gaëlla Loiseau

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Keywords: Blockages, Pathways, Travelling Community, Odology, Denomination.

The nomadism of Gypsy populations was vastly institutionalized by state policies, which resulted in waiver measures allowing the exercise of a mobile housing lifestyle by those designated today as "travellers". To escape any romantic approach to a supposedly "unattached" nomadism, we will describe the structural processes that shape the possibility of this way of life in France today. We have identified the blockages, the pathways and the knots as three stages allowing us to reconfigure a materialist approach to nomadism that we call "odology". Elaborated from the Greek double root of *odos*, meaning on the one hand "the way" and on the other "the threshold"; this meaning allows us to point out the importance of the layover in the perpetuation of nomadism, in particular all that it involves in terms of connections (to water, electricity, etc.) and overflows (conflicts, squats, etc.). Among the constraints weighing on these lifestyles, we will discuss the policy of suspending access to land, which is very present in France. Finally, we will question the evolution of the self-designation of "itinerant citizens" while considering the emergence of new non-racialized nomads.