

# Symposium The Interdisciplinary Study of Societal Challenges

June 18, 2018 - LUC The Hague

## Description

The symposium is intended for scholars interested in learning more about the opportunities, challenges, benefits, and practicalities of interdisciplinary teaching and research. It aims to provide a series of examples (in brief pitch format) of projects, courses and initiatives across a wide range of themes that fit within the broader framework of societal challenges, followed by an interactive session that allows for the exchange of ideas and experiences, as well as interdisciplinary networking and the exploration of potential future collaborations. Attendance (including lunch) is free. Please register via [this link](#).

## Program

The outline of the program is presented below. More information on the specific pitches can be found on the following pages.

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| <b>09.15 – 09.30</b> | <b>Opening by prof. dr. Judi Mesman</b>   |
| <b>09.30 – 10.45</b> | <b>Pitches – Part 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reclaiming the city</li><li>• Digital technologies and international crime</li><li>• Politics of the past</li><li>• Water resource management</li></ul>   |
| <b>10.45 – 11.00</b> | <b>Break</b>  |
| <b>11.00 – 12.00</b> | <b>Pitches – Part 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visualizing landscapes of extraction</li><li>• Brexit and international treaty relations</li><li>• Aftermaths of disaster in post-war Japan</li><li>• Co-teaching ‘Environmental Citizenship’</li></ul> |
| <b>12.00 – 13.00</b> | <b>Lunch</b>  |
| <b>13.00 – 14.15</b> | <b>Interactive session</b>  |
| <b>14.15 – 14.30</b> | <b>Closing remarks</b>  |

The symposium is followed by **Judi Mesman’s inaugural address** in honor of her new chair ‘The Interdisciplinary Study of Societal Challenges, which will take place in the Academy Building (Rapenburg 73, Leiden) at 16.00. Registration for the inaugural address can be done via this [link](#).

### **1. Reclaiming the city**

Daniela Vicherat-Mattar (LUC) & Ksenia Robbe (LUCAS)

The project explores the dynamics between the state-sponsored and activist projects by focusing on the role street art plays in relation both to community life of specific neighborhoods in Santiago (Chile) and Cape Town (South Africa), as well as the broader question of urban justice in both cities. The study involves visual analysis of the artistic projects, along with examination of discourse of the municipal and activist projects, and their consideration within the context of critical urban studies and scholarship on social movements.

### **2. Digital technologies and international crime**

Amy Strecker (Archeology), Hanne Cuyckens (LUC), Shannon Stewart (Stewart Analytics & Strategy), & Emma Irving (Law)

Digital technologies offer new opportunities to address the societal challenges presented by international crimes, and requires integration of insights from various fields of study. Addressing international crime with digital technologies involves documenting those crimes (as in the case of cultural heritage destruction from an archeological perspective), placing these crimes in a societal context (requiring a sociological perspective), prosecution of these crimes (from a legal perspective), and algorithm development (requiring data science expertise).

### **3. Politics of the past**

Cătălin Popa (Archeology) and Maja Vodopivec (LUC)

In this pitch, an undergraduate course on the past as a resource for legitimating political discourse is presented. The narratives of the past are powerful tools that are used to shape the present. The past plays a fundamental role in creating national identities and legitimating the existence of countries. The origin of nations is often placed deep, in some nearly mythical times. Political actors use the past to confirm or challenge the course of our society. The course addresses how the (same) past can be deployed to sustain ideas on all sides of the political spectrum, using interdisciplinary perspectives.

### **4. Water resource management**

Convened by Paul Hudson (LUC), with colleagues from LUC, Law, CML, Archeology, and CA-DS.

Integrated Water Resource Management is an interdisciplinary approach that promotes the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems. This session is a first attempt to bring together expertise in this area from across the LU to explore collaboration opportunities.

**1. Visualizing landscapes of extraction – Conversations of sustainability**

Sabine Luning (CA-DS), Mark Westmoreland (CA-DS), Merlijn van Weerd (CA-DS and CML), Thijs Bosker (LUC & CML), Paul Hudson (LUC)

This panel focuses on extraction and water management, and the use of multiple methods of visualizing landscapes and extraction practices. The Institute of Cultural Anthropology organizes Field schools in Ghana and the Philippines, which serve as interdisciplinary hubs for experimenting with research methods and collaborations, using a variety of methods and tools (e.g., aerial photography, 360° spherical video, drones) to obtain visualizations of landscape dynamics. Also see this [blog](#).

**2. Brexit and international treaty relations : Law, data, and visualization**

Joris Larik (LUC) & Shannon Stewart (LIAS)

Brexit is not only a source of political and legal upheaval in Europe but will prompt a recalibration of numerous international treaty relations. Qualitative legal expertise is needed to understand the effects of Brexit on treaties, while qualitative data science is needed to tackle the sheer scale of the problem, and to discern and patterns across different policy fields and countries, using . visual formats such as maps, charts and graphs.

**3. Aftermaths of disaster: Organizational learning and collective memory in post-war Japan**

Maja Vodopivec (LUC), Wout Broekema (ISGA), & Gabriele Landucci (ISGA)

The impact of disasters is multilevel, multi-scale, multi-directional and highly complex in which a number of social, ecological, organizational, and political factors interact, often in an unexpected way. While most disaster studies focus on the immediate disaster response, this research will take a complex systems approach in order to analyze how different social and organizational responses interact in the post-disaster recovery phase.

**4. Co-teaching ‘environmental citizenship’**

Brid Walsh (LUC), & Daniela Vicherat-Mattar (LUC)

The presenters will discuss their experience of co-teaching ‘environmental citizenship’ at LUC, in the courses *Paradoxes of Citizenship* (200 level) and *Energy, Environment and Sustainability* (300 level), from the perspective of a sociologist and environmental geographer. To illustrate our approach, we will draw upon an Irish case study used in both classes that focuses on community and local-based reactions to a large infrastructure project (offshore Corrib Gas Project) of a trans-national corporation that transformed traditional landscapes seeking progress and modernization.