

L² Lifelines

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Evento online

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Saharan Center for Military Experiments, Reggane, Algerian Sahara, December 1960 © Jean-Michel Pinaut /SCA/ECPAD

LECTURE: SAMIA HENNI

Architecture of Ecocide: France's toxic waste in the Sahara

LIFELINES is a
DIST funded
research project led
by Prof. Camillo
Boano and Prof.
Cristina Bianchetti

Abstract: From 1960 to 1966, the French colonial authorities tested and detonated its first nuclear bombs in the Sahara, spreading radioactive fallout across Africa and the Mediterranean and causing irreversible contaminations among humans, natural and built environments. This talk examines the architecture and infrastructure that enabled France's nuclear weapons and investigates their toxic afterlives.

Bio: Samia Henni is an architectural historian, the Albert Hirschman Chair (2021-22) at the Institute for Advanced Study in Marseille, and an Assistant Professor of History of Architecture and Urbanism at the Department of Architecture, Cornell University. She is the author of the multi-award-winning *Architecture of Counterrevolution: The French Army in Northern Algeria* (gta Verlag, 2017, EN; Editions B42, 2019, FR), the editor of *War Zones, gta papers* no. 2 (gta Verlag, 2018), and the maker of exhibitions, such as *Housing Pharmacology / Right to Housing* (Manifesta 13, Marseille, 2020) and *Discreet Violence: Architecture and the French War in Algeria* (Zurich, Rotterdam, Berlin, Johannesburg, Paris, Prague, Ithaca, Philadelphia, 2017-19). She received her Ph.D. in the history and theory of architecture (with distinction, ETH Medal) from ETH Zurich and taught at Princeton University, ETH Zurich, and Geneva University of Art and Design. Her teaching and research interests include the history and theory of the built, destroyed, and imagined environment in relation to colonialization, displacement, gender, resources extraction, nuclear weapons, and wars. Her current book project examines how the French military authorities toxified and transformed the Saharan territories and environments in the aftermath Second World War.

<https://samiahenni.com/index.html>



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