



Lecture Series in Social Anthropology

Spring
Semester
2026

Tuesday, 12 May 2026 | 4.15 p.m. | Room AND-4-06

Environmental Violence in Palestine: Weathering, Pollution, and Ungovernabilities of Elemental Settler Colonialism

Prof. Dr. Mikko Joronen (Tampere University)

This talk elaborates on environmental violence in Palestine by rethinking pollution as a settler colonial mode of appropriating space. It traverses through ways in which colonial violence operates not only through territorial seizure, but through what is called the malevolent ‘weathering’: material forms that bind air to surfaces—stench, smoke, noise, ash, dust, fronts, darkness, and more—thereby converting atmosphere into a medium of dispossession. The talk develops this argument in four steps. First, it conceptualises weathering as a peculiar aerial technology and as a transformative conditioning of atmospheric violence. Second, it examines two elemental modalities of weathering colonial pollution: (skunk) water and the pyrocolonial dispossession. With regard to water, the talk focuses on the weaponisation of smell via “skunk water” and the olfactory atmospheres of moving matter it generates. Skunk water is shown to work by weathering air with a stench that sticks to bodies, objects, and spaces—forming lingering durations that travel, reactivate, and intensify through meteorological variability (rain, heat, humidity, wind) and everyday mobilities. With regard to fire, the talk develops the concept of a pyrocolonial pharmakon to describe how fire functions as a transformative tool and condition of elemental appropriation: weathering air while consuming landscapes, entangling “hard” and “soft” pollution, as much as enabling volumetric clearances that facilitate settler building, planting, and inhabitation. Third, the talk attends to material and embodied irreducibilities and ungovernabilities to colonial weathering—inclinations, escapes, frictions and inoperationalisations—thereby developing a more contested account of pollution as a colonial appropriation of space. Through these steps the talk argues, fourth, that pollution should be approached as a mode of space-(un)making that weathers—appropriates, occupies, holds and transforms—spaces, while also exceeding and unsettling settler mobilisations by opening sites of friction, evasion and escape at the colonial frontiers of Palestine..

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Entrance free of charge.

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