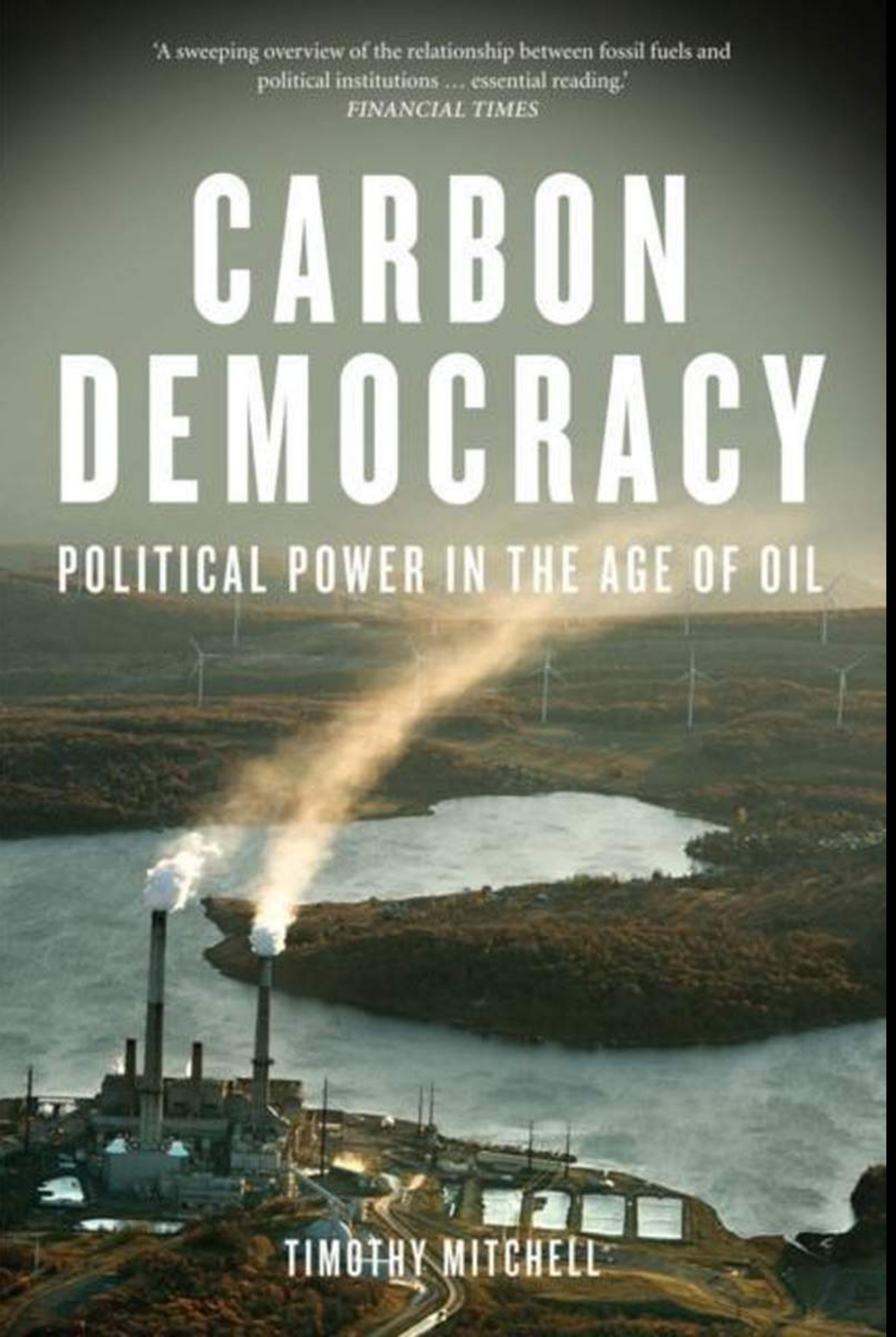
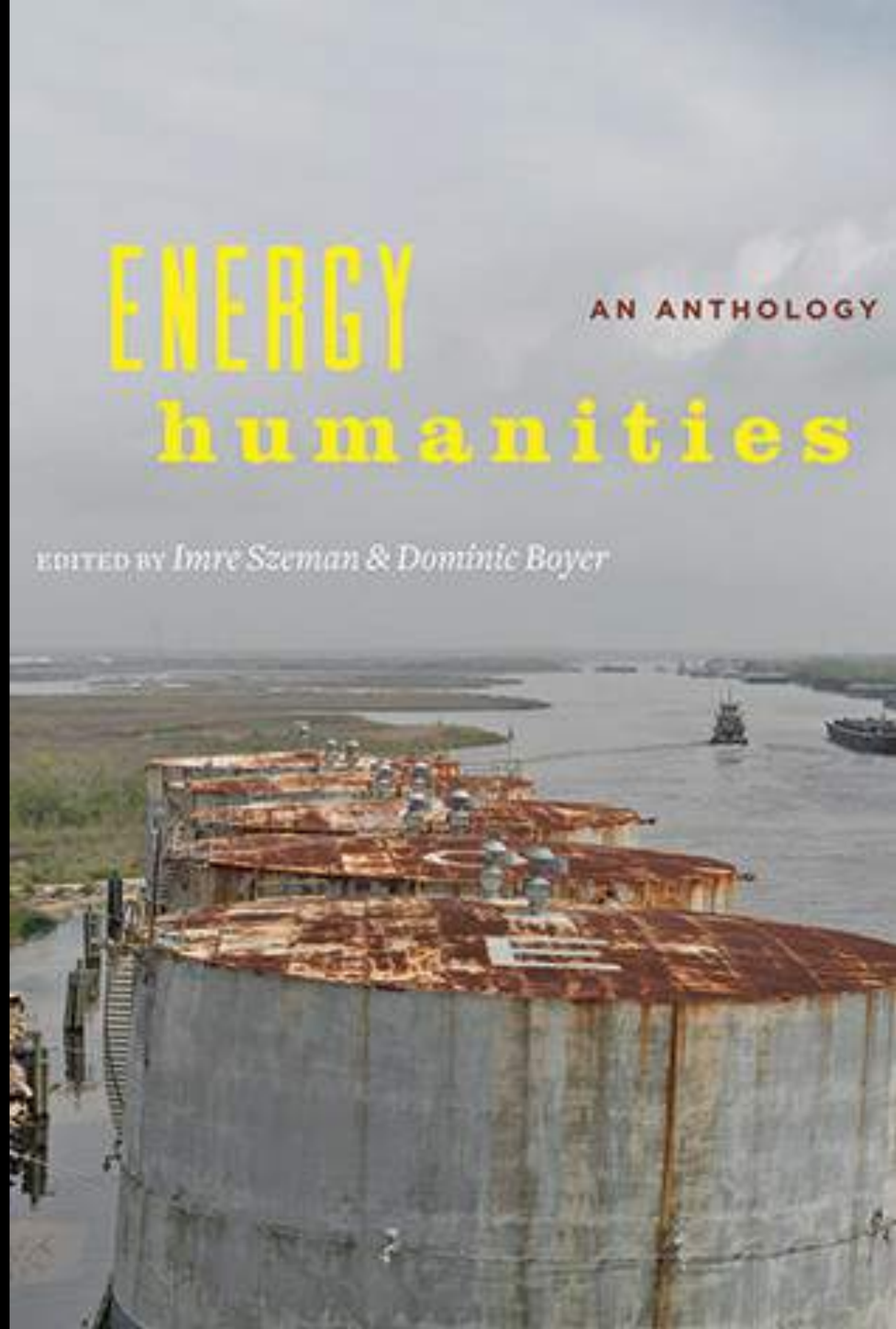

ENERGY TRANSITION &
FIELD PHILOSOPHY


'A sweeping overview of the relationship between fossil fuels and political institutions … essential reading.'
FINANCIAL TIMES
CARBON DEMOCRACY
POLITICAL POWER IN THE AGE OF OIL
TIMOTHY MITCHELL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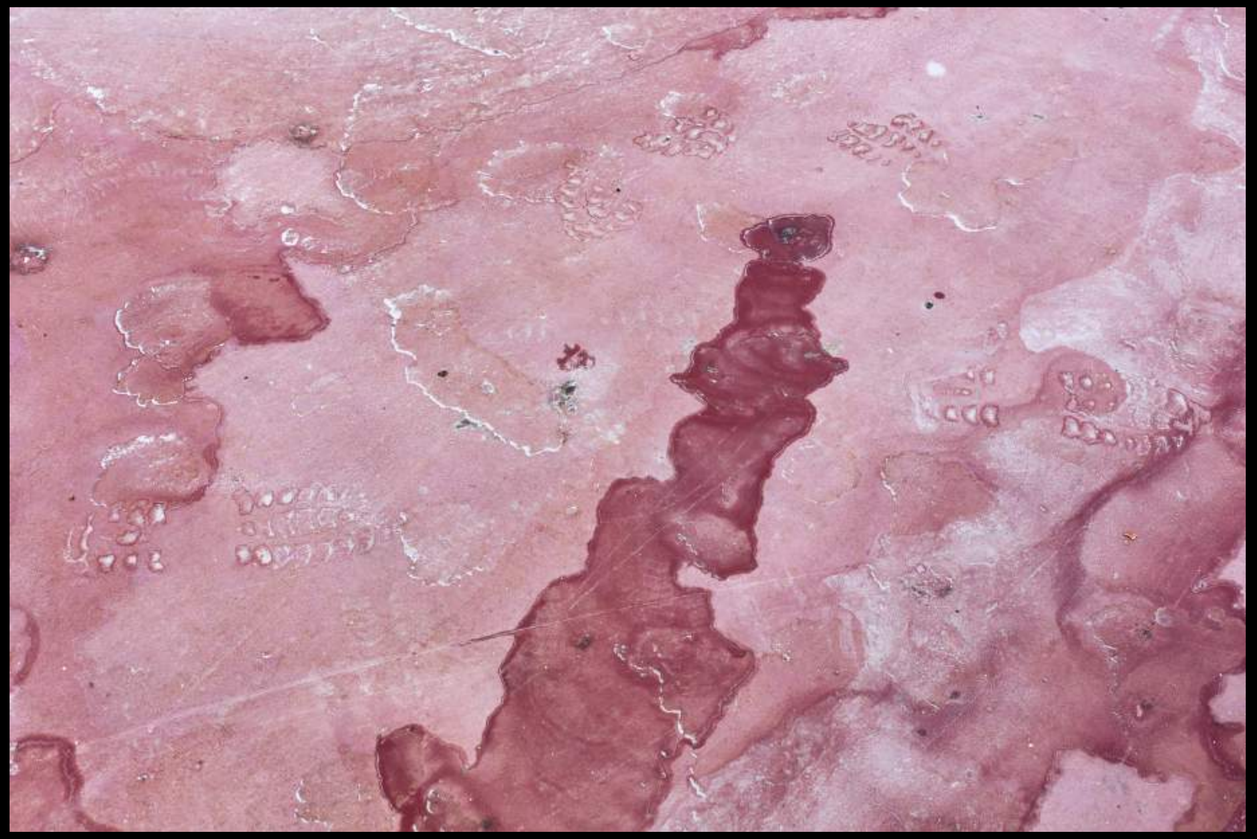
AN ANTHOLOGY
EDITED BY Imre Szeman & Dominic Boyer





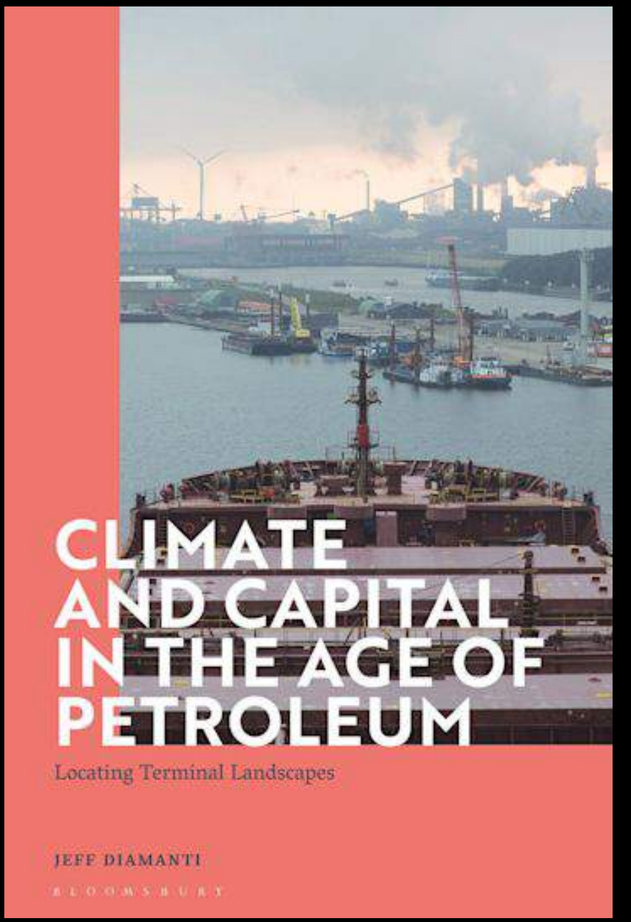
Natascha Libbert, *I Went Looking for a Ship* (2018)

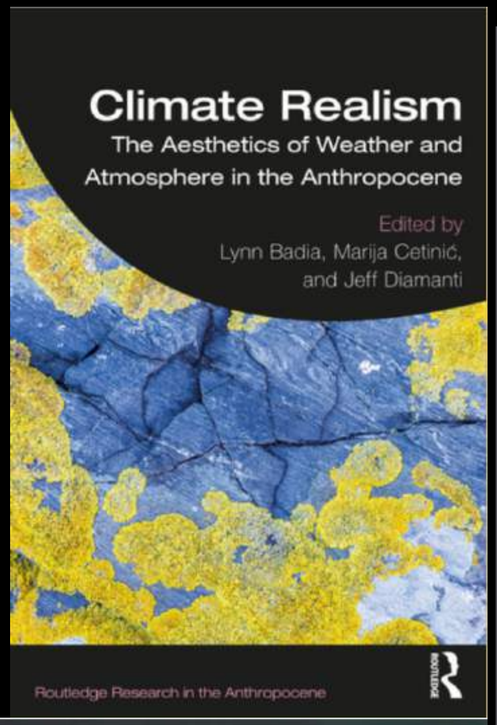


Natascha Libbert, *I Went Looking for a Ship* (2018)




I went looking for a ship
Natascha Libbert
I WENT LOOKING FOR A SHIP
The Eriskay Connection


CLIMATE AND CAPITAL IN THE AGE OF PETROLEUM
Locating Terminal Landscapes
JEFF DIAMANTI
BLOOMSBURY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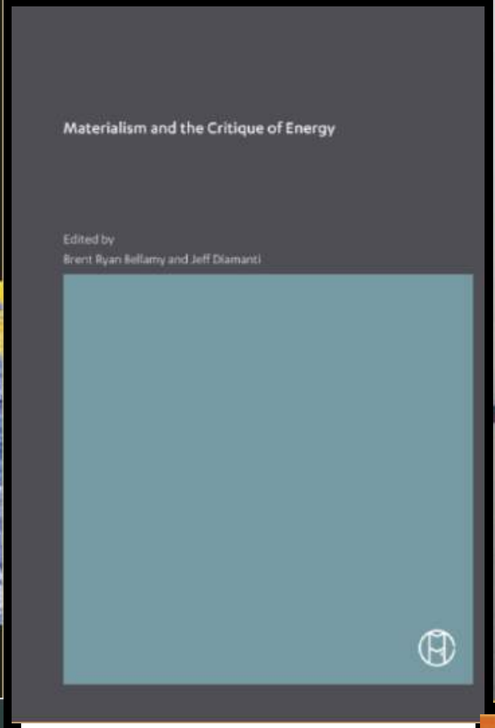
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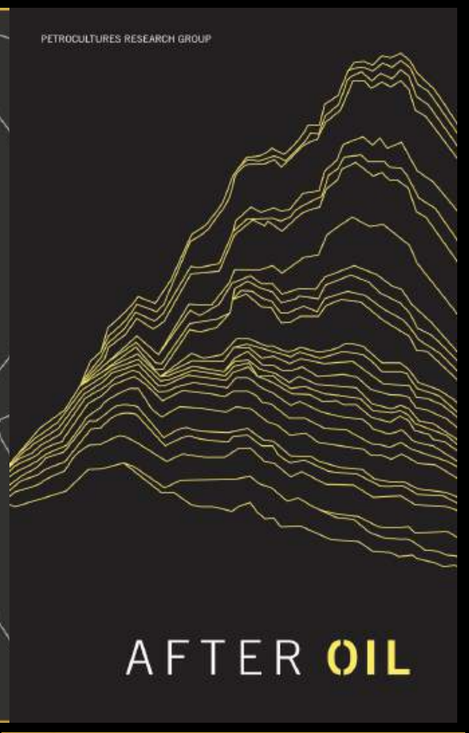
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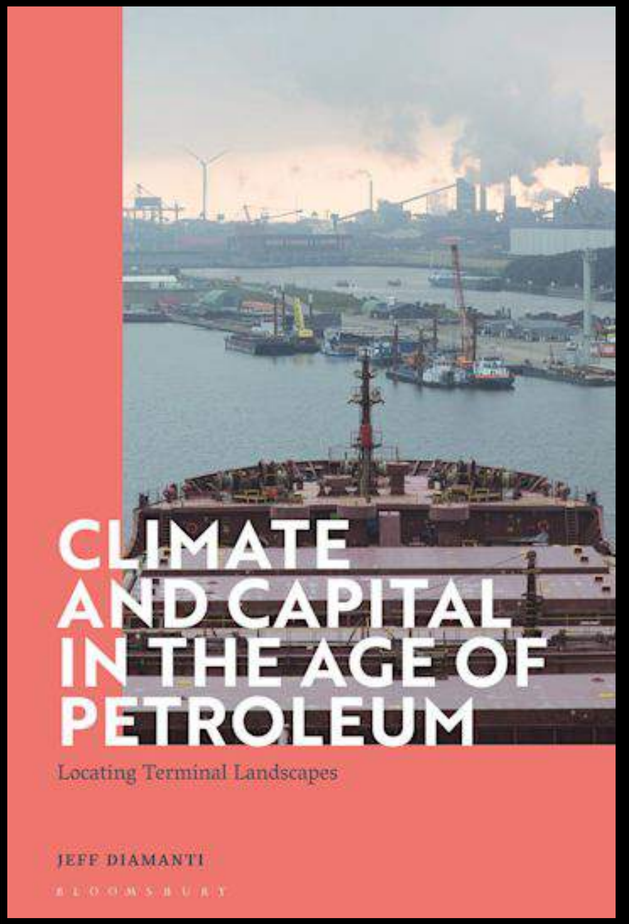
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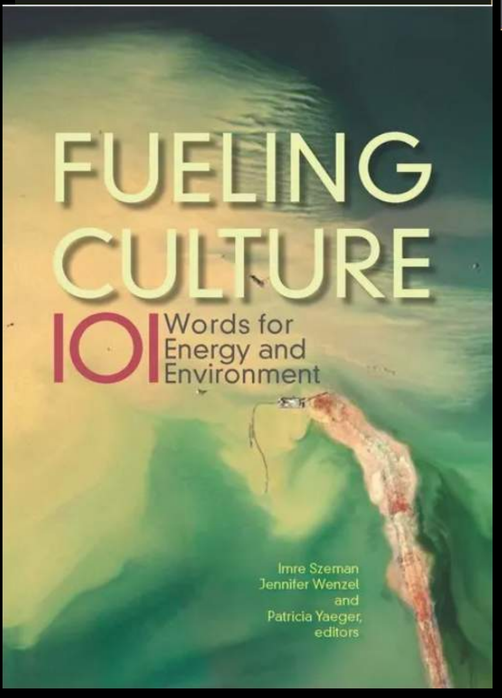
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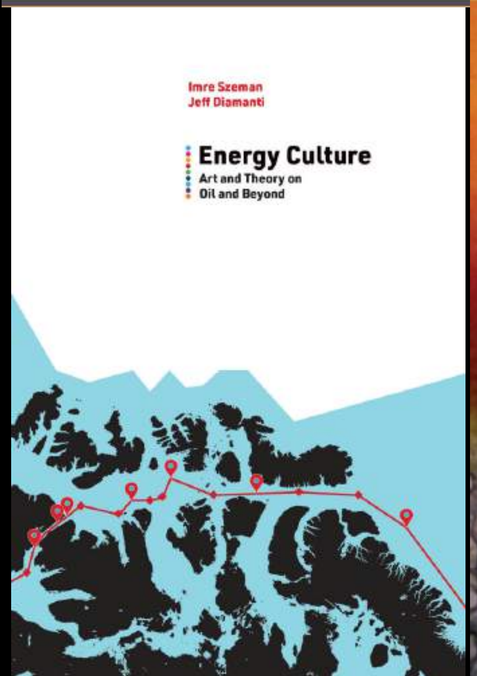
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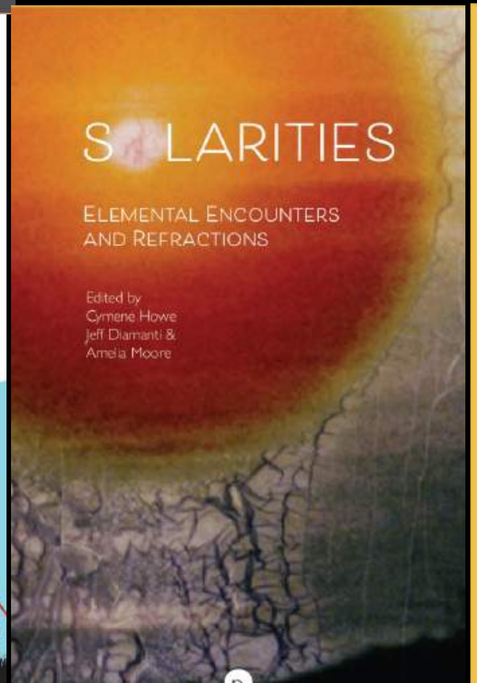
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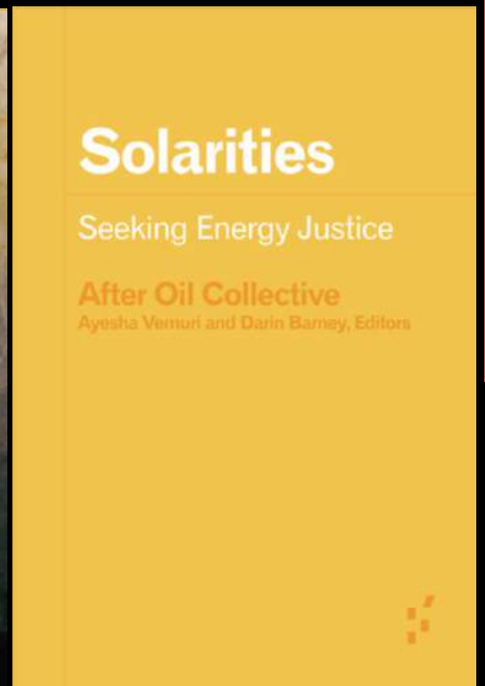
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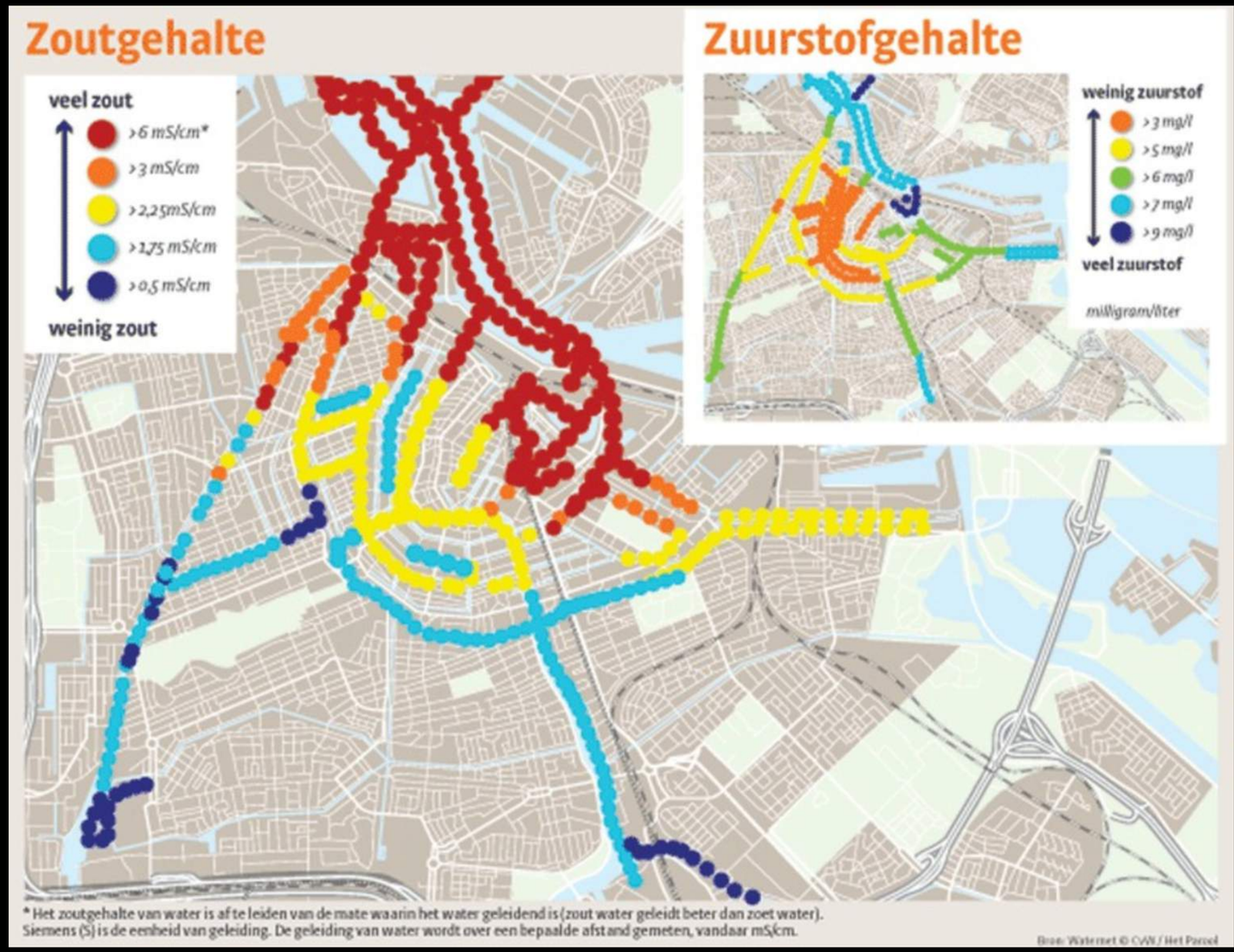
After Oil Collective
Ayesha Vemuri and Darin Barney, Editors

OPEN-PLAN FIELDWORK [...] IS NOT ABOUT CROSSING INTO "OTHER" TERRITORIES, BUT RATHER ABOUT IDENTIFYING THE SHIFTING TERRITORIES AND BORDERS THAT DEFINE A FIELD WITHIN A PLAY OF FORCES.

WORLD OF MATTER



parallax, 2018, Vol. 24, No. 4, 383–391, *Field Philosophy and Other Experiments*
https://doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2018.1546715

Routledge
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Introduction: Field Philosophy and Other Experiments

Brett Buchanan, Michelle Bastian and Matthew Chrulew

> *you will know nothing through concepts unless you have first created them – that is, constructed them in an intuition specific to them: a field, a plane, and a ground that must not be confused with them but that shelters their seeds and the personae who cultivate them*[1]
>
> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*

With the rise of the environmental humanities, new methodological practices have emerged: both from the interdisciplinary conversations it has encouraged, and from the need to find ways of addressing questions that have traditionally been seen as outside the scope of the humanities. The particularly pronounced movement towards experimenting with fieldwork has thus been driven by humanities scholars' interest in addressing concerns that cross disciplinary concepts, theories, narratives, and practices. In breaking with traditional methodologies, and demonstrating that the compositions of their studies are always an entanglement of meanings, actors, and interests, humanities scholars are practicing a commitment to contextually-situated knowledge through field research. By exploring relations within and between human communities, nonhuman animals, plants, fungi, forests, microbes, minerals, spirits, and scientific practices, for instance, the environmental humanities have expanded the sphere of whose voices matter in the production of knowledge. The methodologies that are employed in the field draw from traditional disciplines – disciplines that include art, philosophy, literature, science and technology studies, indigenous studies, environmental studies, gender studies, anthropology and more – but they are also reshaping how environmental problems are being defined, analyzed, and acted on, just as much as they are expanding and transforming traditional disciplinary frameworks to match their creative methodological practices.[2]

Field philosophy has emerged as an approach that significantly overlaps with and contributes to the environmental humanities, but also as a parallel development within the discipline of philosophy itself. This special issue offers a collection of essays that reflect on the importance of fieldwork for philosophy, including the need to re-think the concept of the 'field' itself, and to experiment with what field practices might emerge within philosophy. In general, the discipline has yet to recognize practices of fieldwork as philosophically valuable, or indeed to provide much reflection on what it might mean to think of fieldwork as an intellectual and empirical practice of philosophy. There have been exceptions to this exclusion, however, such as a number of

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World of Matter

KRISTA GENEVIÈVE LYNES AND WORLD OF MATTER

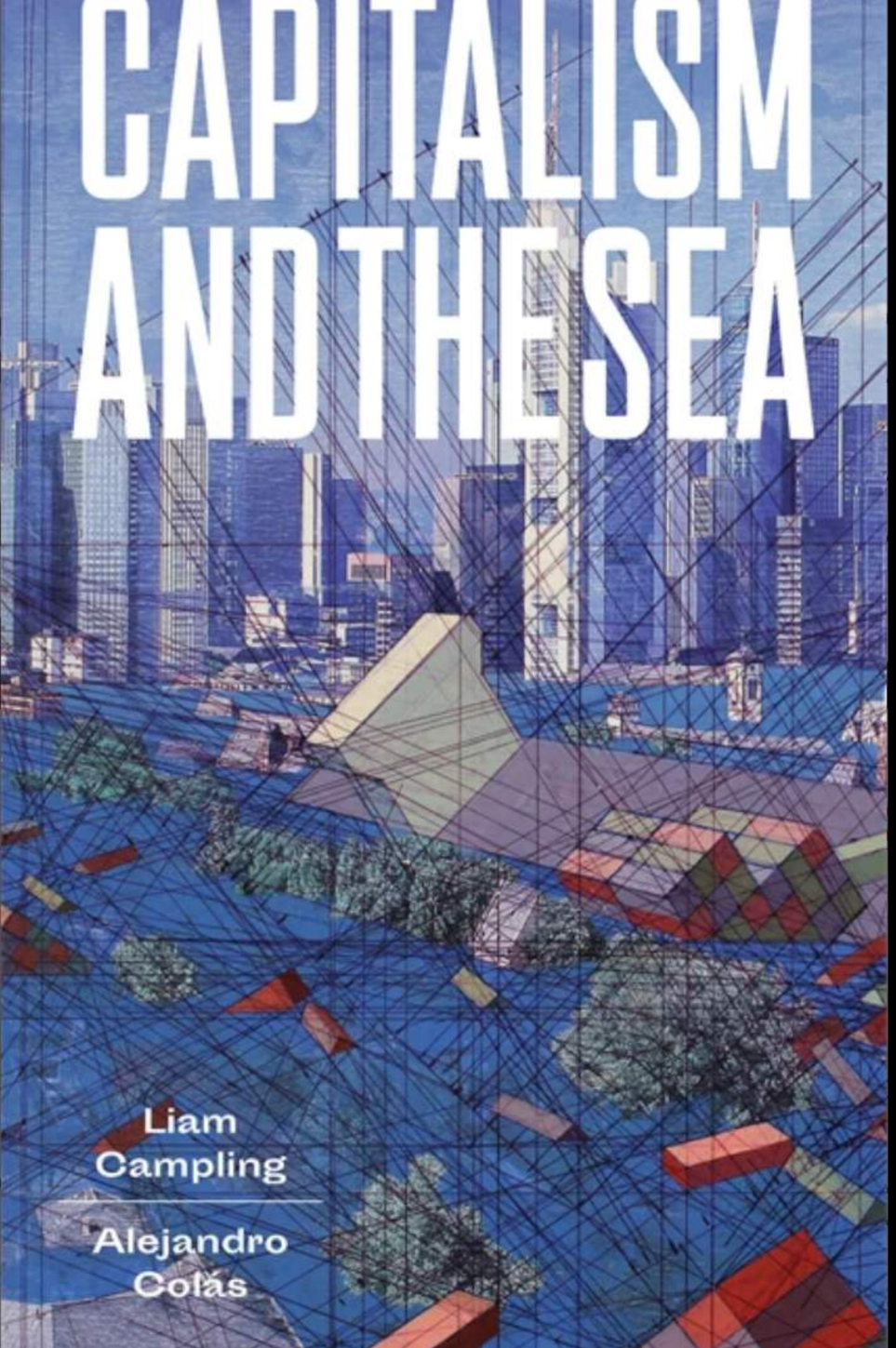
Introduction: Planetary Aesthetics[1]

KRISTA GENEVIÈVE LYNES

'The 'planet' is here, as always perhaps, a catachresis for inscribing collective responsibility as right. Its alterity, determining experience, is mysterious and discontinuous – an experience of the impossible.'[2]

The world has been forcefully sculpted in the last several centuries by the twin projects of colonialism and capitalism. The very movement of human activity under modernity has rested on the modelling of a standing reserve of nature, a category whose flexibility has variously expanded and contracted to include both humans and non-human others as targets for exploitation and extractive energy. Carbon industries, forestry, mining, agri-business, construction, mega-farming and mega-fishing participate in worlding the world as mere matter, asserting deep and unforgiving property rights in dispersed territories around the globe. This expropriation of land and dispossession is not a remote imperial history, but an ongoing and everyday process,[3] one in which complex and multi-layered relations in a broad ecological and social context are transformed into a flattened playing field where micro-and macro-histories are collapsed.

In this context, where the globe is increasingly calculable and rendered as a resource, the World of Matter project has created a series of open platforms for



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Special issue introduction

Society and Space

Environment and Planning D: Society and Space
2018, Vol. 36(4) 617–629
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Introduction: Turbulent Circulation: Building a Critical Engagement with Logistics

Charmaine Chua
Oberlin College, USA

Martin Danyluk
University of British Columbia, Canada

Deborah Cowen
University of Toronto, Canada

Laleh Khalili
SOAS, University of London, UK

Abstract

Since the mid-20th century, logistics has evolved into a wide-ranging science of circulation involved in planning and managing flows of innumerable kinds. In this introductory essay, we take stock of the ascendancy and proliferation of logistics, proposing a critical engagement with the field. We argue that logistics is not limited to the management of supply chains, military or corporate. Rather, it is better understood as a calculative logic and spatial practice of circulation that is at the fore of the reorganization of capitalism and war. Viewed from this perspective, the rise of logistics has transformed not only the physical movement of materials but also the very rationality by which space is organized. It has remade economic and military space according to a universalizing logic of abstract flow, exacerbating existing patterns of uneven geographical development. Drawing on the articles that make up this themed issue, we propose that a critical approach to logistics is characterized by three core commitments: (1) a rejection of the field's self-depiction as an apolitical science of management, along with a commitment to highlighting the relations of power and acts of violence that underpin it; (2) an interest in exposing the flaws, irrationalities, and vulnerabilities of logistical regimes; and (3) an orientation toward contestation and struggle within logistical networks.

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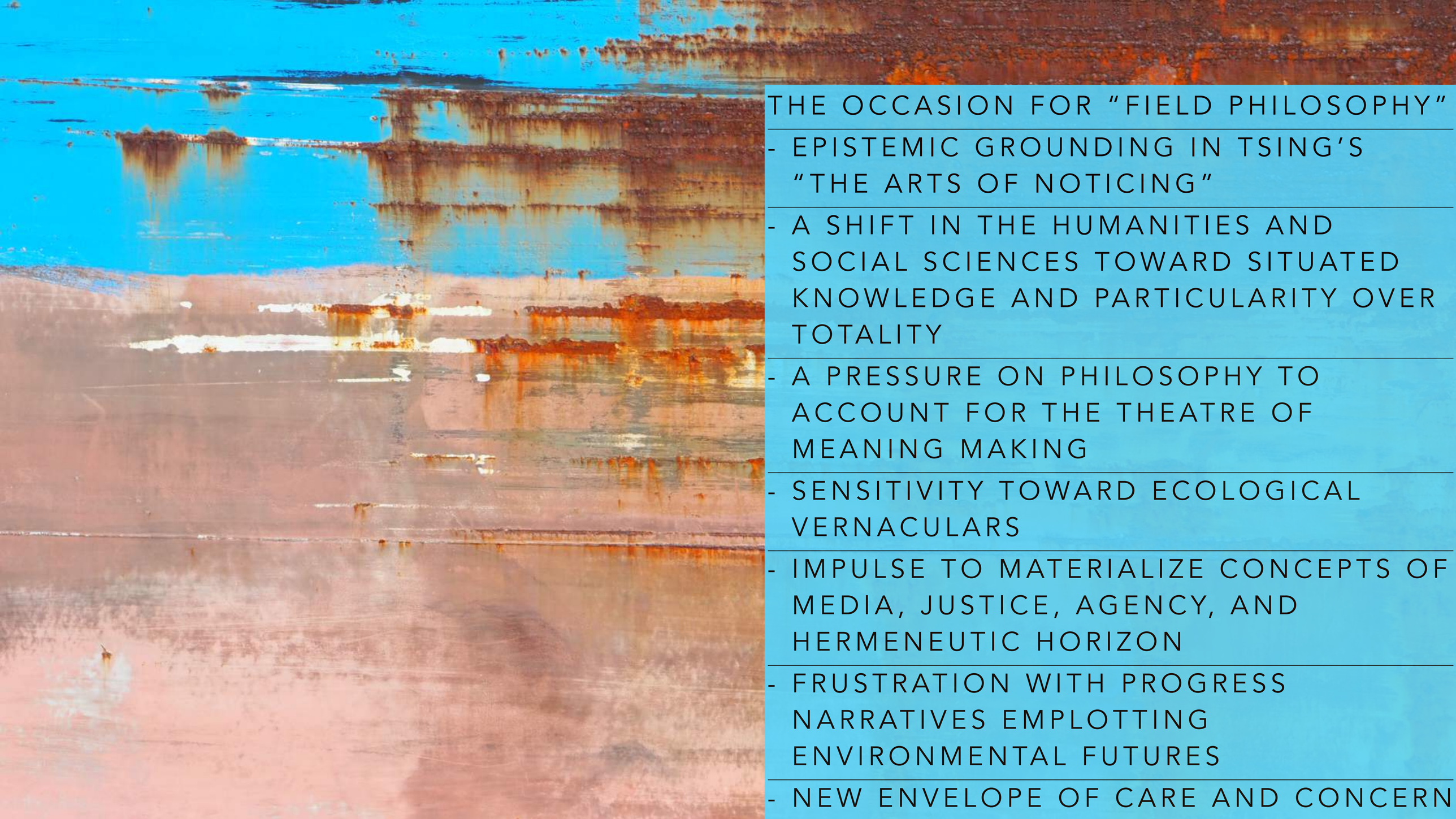
1. THE FIELD IS A COMPOSITION OF CURRENTS AND CULTURES



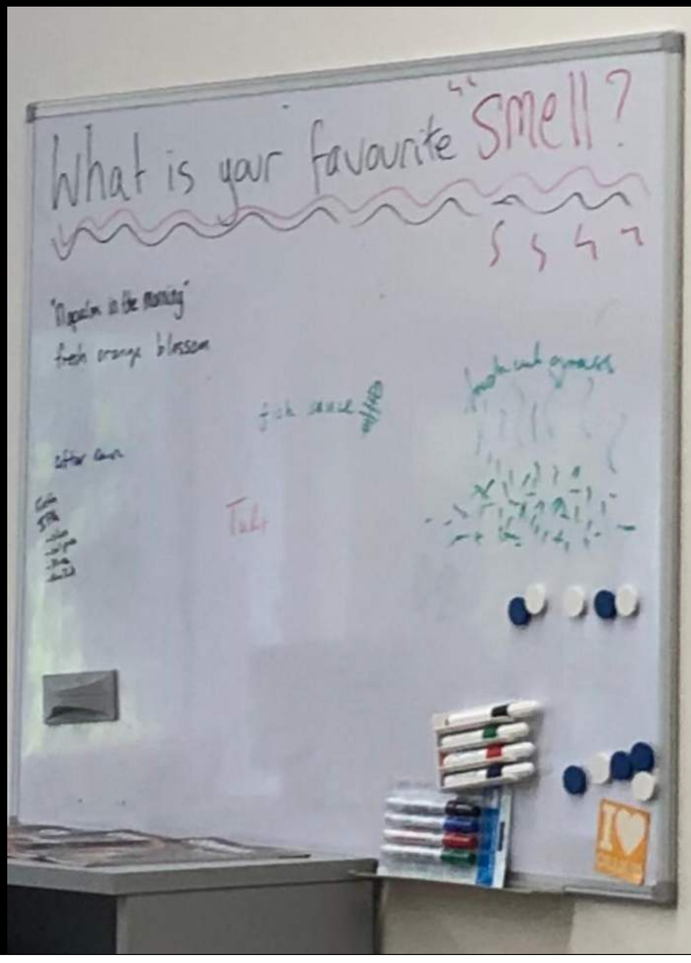




THE OCCASION FOR "FIELD PHILOSOPHY"

- EPISTEMIC GROUNDING IN TSING'S "THE ARTS OF NOTICING"
- A SHIFT IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES TOWARD SITUATED KNOWLEDGE AND PARTICULARITY OVER TOTALITY
- A PRESSURE ON PHILOSOPHY TO ACCOUNT FOR THE THEATRE OF MEANING MAKING
- SENSITIVITY TOWARD ECOLOGICAL VERNACULARS
- IMPULSE TO MATERIALIZE CONCEPTS OF MEDIA, JUSTICE, AGENCY, AND HERMENEUTIC HORIZON
- FRUSTRATION WITH PROGRESS NARRATIVES EMPLOTTING ENVIRONMENTAL FUTURES
- NEW ENVELOPE OF CARE AND CONCERN





- the lab already feels like a field

  -> souvenirs & anecdotes

  The most interesting objects I tend to encounter on the desk of a scientist, next to stack of paper and a mug of cold coffee. While labs are full of exciting scientific equipment, scientists tend to decorate their rather boring office spaces with curiosity finds from their research trips. These objects – be they a century-old coal piece found on the bottom of the Atlantic, a radioactive stone unearthed when dredging for sand (it fell of the truck), or a lego modell of the subsurface of the Netherlands – help us move beyond abstraction and place the human factor back into science. While the sterile environment of the research facility conveys a committement to rigidity, truth, and universal knowledge these artifacts embody the contingencies at play in material practice. When I aks the (mostly male) scientists to tell me about their souvenirs I often learn more about their work than when listening to their properly formulated explanations about methodology, tools or purpose.

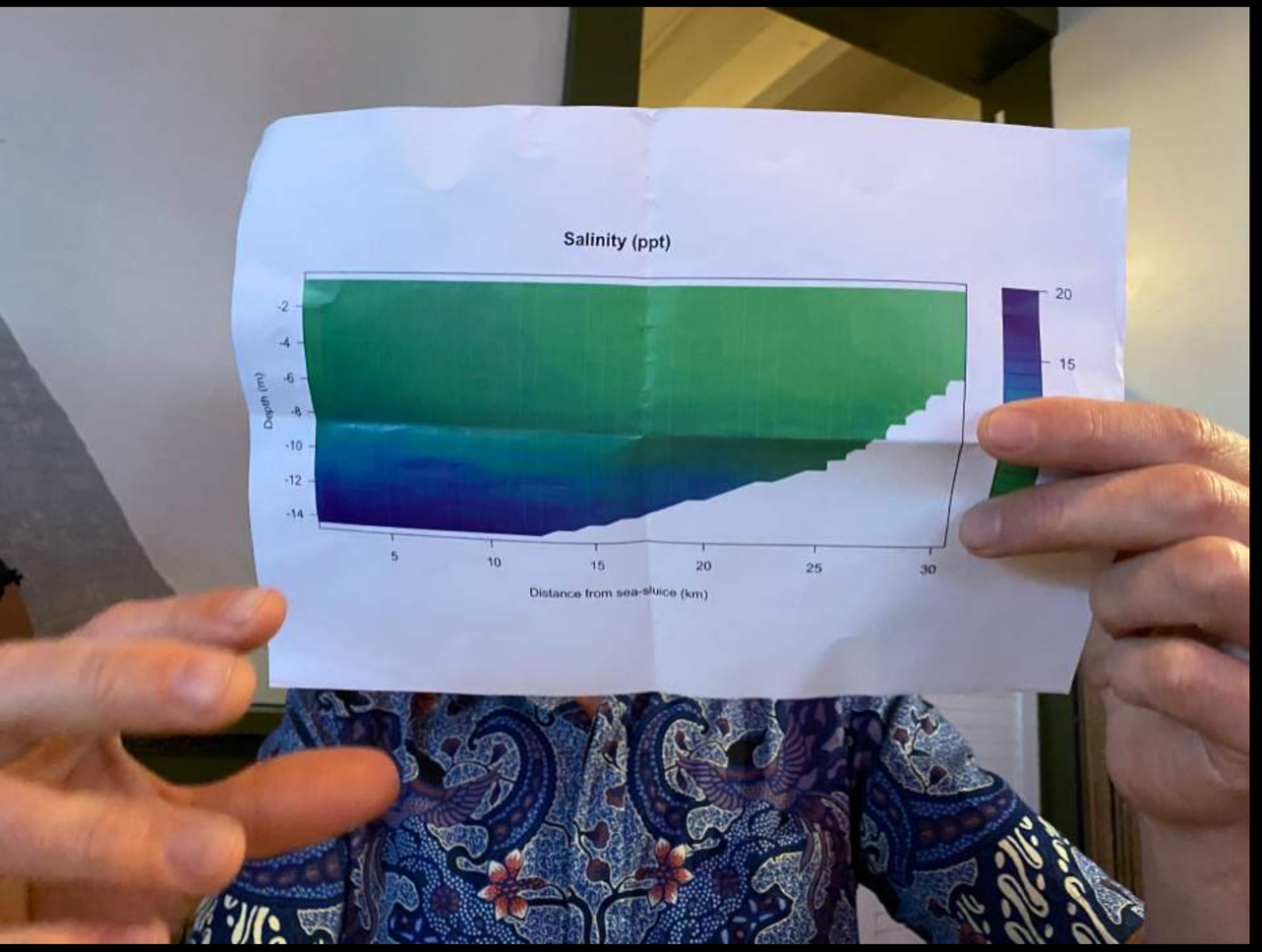
  ...

Arrhytmic moments do not simply rupture or destructure the organisation of these systems of relation, but extend the 'metrics of the line' (Harney). Rather than conceiving of arrhtymia as a disfunction what if arrythmia is configured as a point of internal generation or alternative (repro)ductivity. It works within the structures and systems of movement/relation but extends and unsettles the presumed movement of logistical forms. If logistics is in part defined by patterns of repetition, of frequencies and reitertive functions, then how might the detection of/interference of arrythmia within logistical systems point to the possible production of alternative states. Rather than maintaining the particular linearities of the supplychain/line, arrythmia requires us to attend to processes of 'making and remaking the line' that exist within seemingly closed and seamless systems (Harney). This making and remaking can be in relation to various technologies logistical infrastructure and the machinery of marine capital but also importantly includes those circadian cycles, planetary bodies and sedimental states that logistics seeks to 'smooth' at all costs. Where does arrythmia occur within the line of logistical capitalism: it is the sand dunes that shift along tidal flats a and move and impede the maintaienence or access to ports/harbours. the arrythmia of wave patterns - both in terms of waves crashing against the hull of a ship, the shore, but also the wave forms of communication forms.

Turbulence
When do you notice (sense) it?
Turbulence happening on different scales: air/wind/atmopsheric turbulence made visible by light and moisture (clouds), turbulence there taking place on scales that are not perceptible in the same ways. From a distance, the clouds above Texel look fixed in place, look like they are moving together, unilateral, when at the level of the body of water, at the molecular level, turbulence intensifies to extremes, holding, tighterning the body together. Droplets that are suspended between holding and dissipating.
Holding together, holding each other

Drifting disrupted, accepting distruption and interference: the way you can't quite drift away because others care tethers and grounds you
The way plants are used to structure the dunes, to attempt and fail at holding them together, delayi

Rhythm as a mode of study — hydrophone recordings maybe allow an exit from an athropocentric analysis, is there a way to perceive sound outside of all of this.sonic milieu


Salinity (ppt)
Depth (m)
-2
-4
-6
-8
-10
-12
-14
5
10
15
20
25
30
Distance from sea-sluice (km)
20
15

Selective Withdrawal: construction of the salt dam

With the arrival of Zeesluis IJmuiden, more salt will enter the North Sea Canal from the sea per lock. Too much salt in the canal is not good for the environment, agriculture and horticulture and the quality of our drinking water. To prevent the salt content in the North Sea Canal from increasing too much, Rijkswaterstaat is therefore building a salt dam in the Binnenspui Canal on the lock complex, with a large opening at the bottom. Rijkswaterstaat explains how this works in an animation.

Watch animation



SELECTIVE ABSTRACTION

Liam Campling and Alejandro Colás's *Capitalism and the Sea* underscores the port as a critical site of transition between offshore and onshore logistics networks, 'transferring commodities and generating value across different maritime-dependent sectors of the world economy' (2021, 1). At IJmuiden, the unfettered circulation of value is underwritten by the blockage of estuarine circulation and the erasure of multiple ecoclines that otherwise emerge in brackish waters. While the mixing of petroleum products at terminals along the North Sea Canal appears as 'value-added' in the supply of crude oil and gas, the circulation of maritime capital and transhipment of bulk resources through the Zeesluis is structurally reliant on the disruption of this hydrologic exchange.

In order to manage water levels and keep the flow of saltwater at bay, 50,000 litres of estuarine water are already pumped from the IJ estuary back into the North Sea every second. Evidently, opening the Zeesluis IJmuiden to allow the passage of liquid and dry bulk into the port lays an impossible burden on the pumping systems of the sea lock. Instead, as the captain reported over the ship's tannoy system, the circulation of capital through the Zeesluis is dependent on the engineering of *Selectieve Onttrekking*. Translated as both *selective abstraction* and *extraction*, the term refers to the desalination of water between









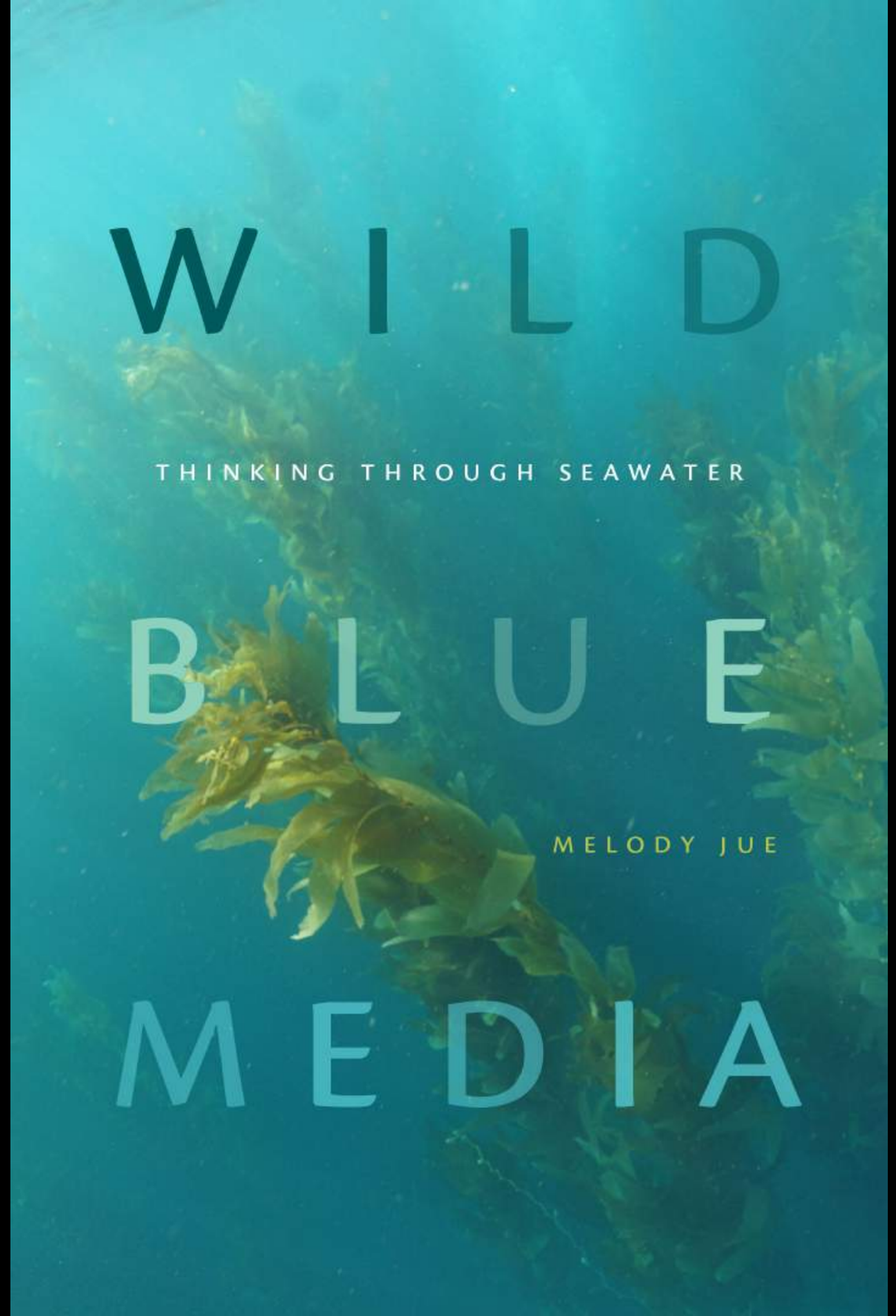




DE SLUFTER, TEXEL

BY OFFERING ENTIRELY DIFFERENT CONDITIONS THAN LAND—INCREASED PRESSURE, THREE-DIMENSIONAL MOVEMENT, LIGHT REFRACTION AND MAGNIFICATION, AND THE INABILITY TO TELL THE DIRECTION OF SOUNDS, TO NAME A FEW—THE OCEAN IS A MATERIAL AND IMAGINATIVE SPACE FOR THE CONDITIONS OF PERCEPTION THAT WE HAVE TAKEN FOR GRANTED. **MILIEU-SPECIFIC ANALYSIS ACKNOWLEDGES THAT SPECIFIC THOUGHT FORMS EMERGE IN RELATION TO DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS, AND THAT THESE ENVIRONMENTS ARE SIGNIFICANT FOR HOW WE FORM QUESTIONS ABOUT THE WORLD, AND HOW WE IMAGINE COMMUNICATION WITHIN IT.**

MELODY JUE, *WILD BLUE MEDIA*





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Folds
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Scent
Zeealsem
Zeekraal

Saline acoustics
Tidalectics
Time-tuning
Synchronicity
Arrhythmia
Infrarhythm
Arrhythmia, again
Polyrhythm

WAYWARD, SEDITIOUS, OFTEN BRACKISH

The following thirty entries consist of critical orientations drawn into focus during a week of collaborative fieldwork in, and across, the brackish waters that connect the Port of Amsterdam to the North Sea. From its conception on the docks of this port, the object you hold in your hands has been intended to occupy the space between a critical glossary in the spirit of Raymond Williams's 1976 *Keywords*, a wayward pocket field guide, and a seditious bill of lading detailing all that escapes nomination in the receipt of cargo. The entries gathered below stretch beyond the logistical, colonial, and lexical confines of the docket, the field guide, or the gloss. Grounded in a milieu-specific diction, this docket reflects two shared commitments of the collective convened to study the critical infrastructure and ecology of this field. First, that the field itself already consists of orientations, and that any conceptualization of those orientations requires an immersive sensitivity only partially captured in this taxonomy or inventory of terms, materials, and sensory encounters. Second, that no single genre available for holding the milieu to record or representation is fully adequate to the responsibilities of research once the field does its work on those drawn to it.

How can we begin to account for the contours, cartographies, and ecologies that orient us toward this site? At the mouth of the IJ estuary connecting Amsterdam and its industrial port to

BRACKISH

Brackish water is saltier than fresh water, but not as salty as seawater. It may result from mixing seawater with fresh water, as in estuaries, but also certain human activities can produce brackish water, in particular certain civil engineering projects such as dikes and the flooding of coastal marshland. Because brackish water is hostile to the growth of most terrestrial plant species, without appropriate management it is damaging to the environment.

European Environmental Agency:

> [of water] slightly salty,
> as in river estuaries.
> [of fish or other organisms]
> living in or requiring
> brackish water.

Brak [Middle Dutch]: 'worthless,' a word also used in commercial trade which also made its way into Dutch and Early Modern English. [Proto-Germanic]: 'undergrowth,' from root 'bhreg' 'to break' or 'that which impedes motion.'

Brakheid [Dutch]: The transitional state between drunk and sober, after the day of heavy drinking.

Beyond Impasse: Towards Carbon Neutral Transshipment at the Port of Amsterdam

Chloé Balducchi
Jan Hauptmann
Lynn Baggen
Sara Grambs

Janina Herzog-Hawelka
Clara McDonnell
Augusto Heras
Frank de Morrée
Yang Chen

Miriam Matthiessen
Jeff Diamanti
Fred Carter

3. Argument:

Currently there is no policy or regulatory mechanism in place to regulate, mitigate, or prevent the transshipment of FF through PoA (scope 3). Worse, there is no clear indication of which actor or stakeholder might initiate a transition action, creating a "first mover dilemma." As the sole shareholder in the PoA, the Gemeente Amsterdam has the capacity and elected responsibility to address this impasse.

3a. "First mover" dilemma

Stakeholders are waiting for one another to be the first mover in the energy transition. Each stakeholder keeps passing the responsibility to take action to someone else. Hesitations from port stakeholders to regulate fossil fuel flows strongly rely on the so-called "waterbed effect", which is a phenomenon that a measure taken in one place might simply move the undesirable situation to a neighboring area. As soon as the PoA decides that companies are not allowed to transship certain fossil fuels anymore while demand remains, it is likely that these companies will move to another port such as Rotterdam or Antwerp or decide for an exit agreement. The fear of the port stakeholders is therefore that by being too severe on regulations against fossil fuel and forbidding certain production patterns, companies will move to another port, increasing the competition between the PoA and its neighbors, and preserving the status-quo on fossil fuel flows dependency. Fossil fuel companies have heavily invested in infrastructure and exploration for fossil fuels. This capital investment gives them incentive to continue to extract and produce



Programme

At the edge of Petroleumhaven, on the banks of the IJ River, is a logistical field bearing the future ecologies of Western Europe. Rising seas and expanded flow bring salt and capital into contact. Drawing together artistic and critical practices, *Maritime Frictions* presents a grounded and briny encounter with an infrastructure central to the global trade of raw materials, ongoing environmental injustice, dispossession, and financial violence. At the same time, the terminal landscape of Amsterdam's port promises to ground the coming energy transition. Which futures are being plotted here and which need to be abolished?

Follow artist **Lance Laoyan** along the Ruigoord waterways for the deep-listening session *Hidden from View*, tapping into the industrial worlds and fluid histories of the Afrikahaven site. **Charmaine Chua**'s lecture then traces her research into the counter-revolutions of contemporary supply chains, mapping the upheaval and unrest encountered along the trans-pacific passage of labour and resources between Southeast Asia and the US. After dinner with the Ruigoord community, the performance lecture *Roadstead, Sea Lock, Deepwater Port* by **Liquid Time (Jacob Bolton and Miriam Matthiessen)** plots the oceanic rhythms of IJmuiden's sea locks, charting the temporality of capital through Dutch colonial afterlives and maritime policy. Drifting from The Hague's 'Zandmotor' sand engine, **Michaela Büsse**'s film *Building with Nature* (2022) swirls satellite imagery of the peninsula with 6 years of artistic renderings from the site. Following the screening, an audio-visual performance by **Velma Spell** intermingles archival storytelling with the tumult of the North Sea and a DJ set by **snufkin** closes the night in brackish debauchery.

J.diamanti@uva.nl



2. MILIEU-SPECIFIC INFLECTION OF “THE FIELD” ASKS FOR “IMMERSEMENT” AND “ORIENTATION”

- WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS OF ITS ECOLOGY?
- WHAT KIND OF MEDIA HOLDS ITS ENTITIES AND OBJECTS?
- WHO IS SUBJECT TO ITS MILIEU?
- WHY HAS THE FIELD TAKEN THIS SHAPE NOW?
- WHAT ARE ITS CURRENTS?
- FOR WHICH CULTURES IS IT COHERENT AND LEGIBLE?

COLLABORATIVELY CARING FOR “EPISTEMOLOGICAL AUTONOMY AND EMBODIED KNOWLEDGE AS NECESSARY TO PUSHING AWAY FORM A PARADIGM OF MERE RESISTANCE...”

MACARENA GÓMEZ-BARRIS, *THE EXTRACTIVE ZONE*

Rhythm as a mode of study — hydrophone recordings maybe allow an exit from an athropocentric analysis, is there a way to perceive sound outside of all of this.sonic milieu
, the movement of nonhuman creatures/substances?
Rhythm as scale: small refrains (the trickle of spring/brook) working in correspondence with cosmic refrains (Deleuze & Guattari on The Refrain)
Entering water sonically flips how you think about the space, industrialisation really happens underneath the surface. Megaports are often invisibilised through distance, entering water allows you even to hear them from really far away, it begins to close that distance.

Tidalectics, against linearity, a return of time.
cyclicality of oceanic rhythms.

From Barbasian poet Kamau Brathwaite, another way to think about dialectics and temporalities, back and forth moment. He talks about in image of a woman sweeping. Rather than a dialectical thing that has this idea of a progression its about return.

Water molecules are quite localised.

Estuarine circulation vs capital circulation... yes! where does one impede the other? yes, and when can we see them enfolding or co-existing?

Tuning into the field, "going with the flow" (of the group, the field..)

How do you make cuts when recording? How does listening to the field prompt you to make those cuts differently?
Does the sea listen — and how?

10hz — 100km wave oscillation? (depending on the wavespeed) Salt water higher pressure; with equipment we have sound is clearer in freshwater
low frequencies as echoes of something else — displacement?

3. WHAT ARE THE ETHICAL DEMANDS FOLDED INTO “THE ETHNOGRAPHIC MOMENT” ?



addressed to another audience. Far from being a derivative or residual activity, as one might think of a report or of reportage, ethnographic writing creates a second field. The relationship between the two fields can thus be described as 'complex' in that each is an order of engagement which partly inhabits or touches upon but does not encompass the other. Indeed, either may seem to spin off on its own trajectory. Each point of engagement is thus a replacement or a reordering of elements located in a separate field of activity and observation altogether. And the sense of loss or incompleteness which accompanies this, the realisation that neither can ever match up to the other, is common anthropological experience. So it becomes a kind of premonition perhaps

call the *ethnographic moment*. The ethnographic moment is a relation in the same way as a linguistic sign can be thought of as a relation (joining signifier and signified). We could say that the ethnographic moment works as an example of a relation which joins the understood (what is analysed at the moment of observation) to the need to understand (what is observed at the moment of analysis). The relationship between what is already apprehended and what seems to demand apprehension is of course infinitely regressive, that is, slips across any manner of scale (minimally, observation and analysis each contains within itself the relation between them both). Any ethnographic moment, which is a moment of knowledge or insight, denotes a relation between immersement and movement.[1]

MARILYN STRATHERN, "THE ETHNOGRAPHIC MOMENT 1," 2 & 6

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WHAT WOULD AN ARGUMENT *AGAINST* FIELD PHILOSOPHY LOOK LIKE?

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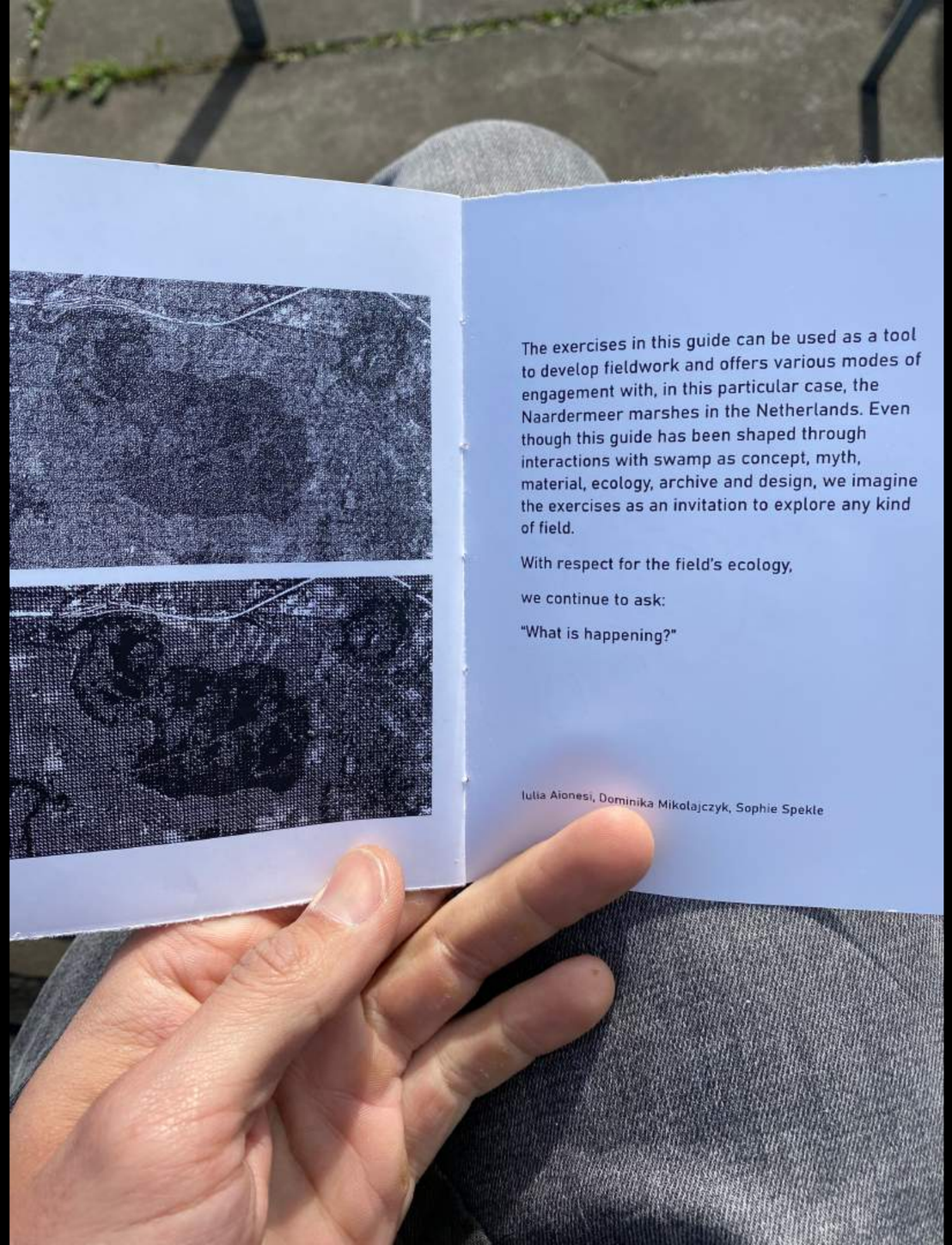
WHAT WOULD AN EPISTEMIC CULTURE GROUNDED IN THE FIELDING OF PHILOSOPHY CONSIST OF?



The exercises in this guide can be used as a tool to develop fieldwork and offers various modes of engagement with, in this particular case, the Naardermeer marshes in the Netherlands. Even though this guide has been shaped through interactions with swamp as concept, myth, material, ecology, archive and design, we imagine the exercises as an invitation to explore any kind of field.

With respect for the field's ecology,

we continue to ask:

"What is happening?"

Iulia Aionesi, Dominika Mikolajczyk, Sophie Spekle









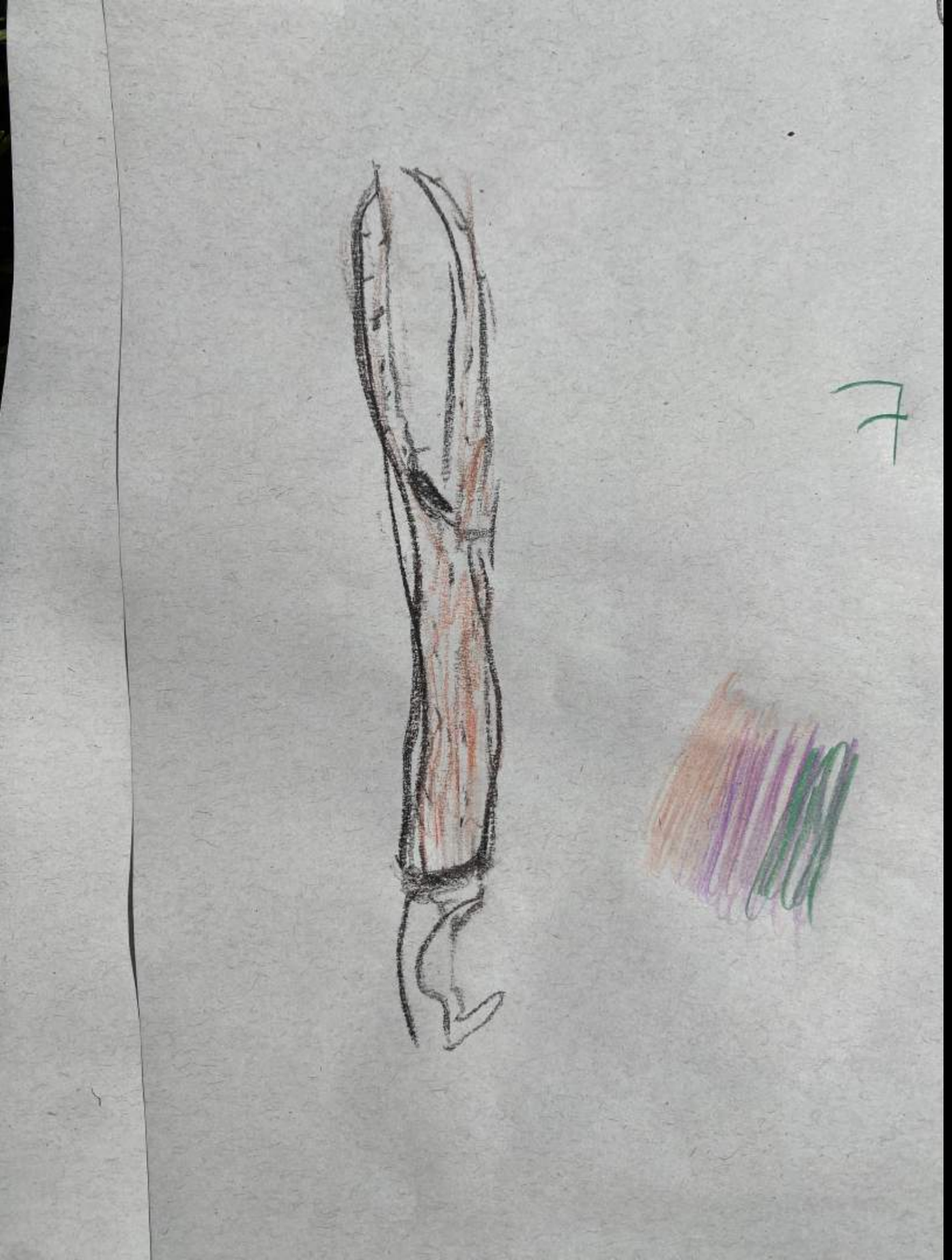








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