

International Research Seminar. Thursday, November 27

COLLECTIVE NARRATION AND COMMUNITY-BASED PRIOR LEARNING, from environmental to mental health

Morning - 09:00–13:00 - Villa Rabelais, 116 Boulevard Béranger, 37000 Tours.

Afternoon - 14h30 - 18h00. Cité Mame, 49 Boulevard Preuilly, 37000 Tours.

This seminar examines the interdependence between narrative practices and their effects on the formalization of experiential knowledge, at the scale of collectives and communities of life, practice, citizens, and patients. It has both an interdisciplinary and international dimension and brings together researchers from the fields of education, anthropology, sociology, and psychology. The case studies are located in Japan, France, Brazil, and Argentina. These diverse settings allow, through narrative research, for an understanding of experiential knowledge acquired at the collective level in the contexts of environmental and mental health.

Morning : Collective narration and community-based prior learning, from environmental to mental health in Japan. With Dai Matsumoto (Tohoku University), Masayoshi Morioka (Ritsumeikan University), Miki Noda (Ritsumeikan University), Chiara Ramponi (Tohoku University), Sophie Houdart (CNRS), Jérôme Lafitte (University of Tours), Hervé Breton (University of Tours).

Afternoon : Collective narration and community-based prior learning. Research-action from mental to environmental health. With Thomas Sigaud (Université de Tours), Caroline Giraudeau (Université de Tours), Yumi Garcia dos Santos (University Federal of Minas Gerais, Brésil), Natalia Duarte Cáceres (Vice Ministry of Water and Basic Sanitation (VASB), Bogotá, Colombia), Hervé Breton (University of Tours).

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9:00 – Hervé Breton, presentation of the seminar.

9:15 – Jérôme Lafitte, synthesis of the precedent work on the thematic and avenues for consideration.

9h30. Dai Matsumoto, University of Tohoku, Japan. Title : How Does a Life-Storytelling Community Emerge in Local Japan?

This study investigates how a life-storytelling community emerges in a Japanese local context, where residents learn from sharing personal narratives. Focusing on an NPO in Miyagi Prefecture that conducts interview-based documentation of community members' experiences, the study analyzes practices in which people record and reflect on their stories, including those related to the Great East Japan Earthquake. Through this case, the research explores the processes and structures of learning that arise from community-based storytelling.

10h00. Chiara Ramponi, University of Tohoku, Japan. Title : Medical ethics from an experiential perspective, focusing on the narrative of the complainant's lived experience.

In the context of the clinical trial on thyroid cancer following the Fukushima nuclear accident (Japan), testimonies refer to the iatrogenic aspect of both the epidemiological interpretation of thyroid cancer in Fukushima (officially considered unrelated to the accident) and the clinical approach adopted within Fukushima University Hospital. This paper focuses on the narratives produced in the context of a legal dispute, paying particular attention to their testimonial, descriptive, ethic and performative dimensions.

10h30. Sophie Houdart, CNRS, France. Title : Storytelling, walking: a trail for reconstruction after the 2011 tsunami, Japan

In his book *M/T and the Story of the Forest's Wonders*, Japanese novelist and essayist Ôe Kenzaburô lays the foundations for what closely resembles a literary theory, in which he viscerally links storytelling and the feeling of nostalgia, sticky, persistent, that they are likely to give rise to—a connection that, in turn, can contribute to the very lives of individuals and the choices they make.

The stories his grandmother told him fell within the purview of the generic figure of the storyteller, or *kataribe*, who finds an original expression in situations following a disaster. Alongside the disaster *kataribe*, volunteers or semi-professionals who are called upon to bear witness to what has been and/or to recount what has been experienced by others, it is possible to find another way of recounting experiences: like a hiking trail, the Michinoku Coastal Trail, designed to commemorate the 2011 tsunami, prolong and share some of its effects.

11h00. Miki Noda, University of Ritsumeikan. Title : Personal Voices and Silences in Mental Health Recovery: Opening Collective Narratives through Clinical Listening

This presentation explores how personal narratives open toward collective narratives, understood as a polyphonic resonance rather than a single, unified voice. Drawing on qualitative inquiry with workers who took mental health sick leave and experienced different paths of recovery, it examines how personal voices and silences open—or fail to open—toward collective narratives, while also questioning what “recovery” means and how it is narrated. These collective narratives in turn become reference points for reshaping individual stories. Finally, clinical listening is discussed as a perspective to reconsider how collective narratives are heard and lived.

11h30. Masayoshi Morioka, University of Ritsumeikan. Title : Emergence and Dynamics of Collectives in Mental Health. Life Story as a Collaborative Construction of Living Reality

Autoformation is defined as ‘the dynamic process of constructing the self’, and the life story is the method that concretizes this process of autoformation (Pineau, 1983). Life stories are structured around events and transactions. Transactions denote actions that create relationships between two individuals, or between individuals and organizations. Through transactions, events transform into relationships between existence and environment. The self is then formed upon the foundation of transactions with others and society. I shall examine this dynamism using a clinical interview example involving a woman with severe trauma.

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14:30 PM – 15:30 PM. GEM and the Use of Digital Technology in Mental Health

Chair: Thomas Sigaud, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and Director of Usetech'Lab.

This session will explore the role of digital tools in the development and support of mental health collectives. We will examine how digital platforms facilitate collaboration, knowledge sharing, and peer support among individuals and professionals. The discussion will highlight ethical considerations and innovative methodologies for fostering inclusive and effective mental health communities. Case studies and practical examples will illustrate both the opportunities and challenges presented by digitalization in this field. The session aims to provide insights for researchers, practitioners, and stakeholders interested in the intersection of technology and mental health.

15:30 PM – 16:30 PM. Supporting the creation of a Parents' Association for users of an educational institute

Caroline Giraudeau, Principal Investigator (PI) of the ANR SAPS Acapulco Project.

The ACAPULCO project aims to support the co-construction of a support system for family carers of users of a special needs institute, in order to offer them a space adapted to their needs. Based on the dialogue method, and by encouraging the broad participation of family carers and professionals, it will identify the needs and priorities of these families. By developing a better understanding of the benefits of membership of an association for family carers, this study will provide valuable knowledge for improving support practices and public policies in favour of carers and the people they support.

16:30 PM – 17:00 PM. Pause. Synthesis and perspective of cooperation.

17:00 PM – 18:00 PM. Online meeting. Narration and collective knowledge. With Yumi Garcia dos Santos

Webconference: Presentation of two research and political approaches based on community prior learning in environmental crises and pollution struggles in Brazil and Argentina.

17:00 – 17:30 PM. Artistic practices and forms of resistance of artisans in critical territories: the case of the Jequitinhonha Valley in Brazil

Yumi Garcia dos Santos (Université fédérale du Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, Brazil).

Our presentation is part of ongoing research on the socio-environmental effects of lithium extraction in the Jequitinhonha Valley, located in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. The region is at the heart of the lithium rush within the global context of the energy transition. At the same time, the territory is known for its artisans and artists who embody local popular culture. Their lives remain modest and are often marked by material hardships linked to the practice of their craft. Based on their narratives, we highlight their formation through artistic practice in everyday life, as well as their forms of resistance to functionalization and the push toward entrepreneurship.

17:30 – 18:00 PM. Bridging Theory and Policy: Insights from Colombia's Experience "Institutionalizing" Community Water Management

Natalia Duarte Cáceres, PhD, Ministry of Housing, City and Territory – Vice Ministry of Water and Basic Sanitation (VASB), Bogotá, Colombia.

Transformations in Colombia's water and sanitation sector show a shift toward community-based governance. Once marginalized, community water organizations are now recognized as key actors in service delivery. Based on participatory research and experience at the Viceministry of Water and Sanitation, this study examines how national policies and projects with gender and peacebuilding perspectives integrate local knowledge into institutions. Emphasizing co-produced knowledge rooted in territory and practice, these initiatives raise questions of inclusion, co-optation, and communities' role as co-creators. Colombia illustrates how grassroots management drives democratic and sustainable water governance.