

Sensory Environmental Relationships

Between Memories of the Past and
Imaginings of the Future

Dr Blaž Bajič and Dr Ana Svetel

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Series in Anthropology



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Foreword:

On Recent Turns and Revolutions in the Humanities and Social Sciences, and on their Sensory Part

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We can say we have lived for decades in times of turns in the humanities and social sciences, but the overall impression is that turning ways of knowledge do not show much progress. Following the constant flow of ever-new “turns,” can we say that we know societies – past and present, domestic and far away, seemingly simple and complex, recently established and ancient – are actually substantially better? Or do we need revolutions (Howes 2006)? Revolutions, in which sense? In its original sense, derived from the movement of celestial bodies, returning to their initial position in their orbiting around the Sun? Are we waiting for “revolutionary” Kopernik in the humanities and social sciences, denying revolutionary thinkers from the past? Or are we waiting for a revolution in a social sense, an overthrow, or a coup in present-day (pre)dominant scholarship? Following the manifold turns in recent times and fashionable utterings of continuously redressed vocabularies, isn't it time to pose the question about the emperor's new clothes?

Let me mention just some turns in social sciences and the humanities, following perhaps the initial, postmodern turn: the linguistic turn; the literary turn; the spatial or topographic turn; the cultural turn; the individualist turn; the postcolonial turn; the moral/ethical turn; the ontological turn; the corporeal turn; the hierarchical multi-turn; the mobilities turn; the affective turn; the historical turn; the neoliberal turn; the multispecies or animal turn; the performative turn; the symbolic turn; the metaphorical turn; the walking methodology turn (perhaps my private invention), or, simply put it, the whatever turn. None of them is, I guess, essentially a “paradigmatic” turn in Kuhn's sense (1962), and they are obviously not supposed to be.

In the humanities and social sciences, based on hermeneutic methodology and not on the hypothetical-deductive one, the progress is different than in “paradigmatic” sciences. It is a progress in understanding, a progress in

degrees, a progress in gradation, forming clines of knowledge. In neoliberal times, under the pressure of quantitative assessment of scholarly merits, scholars are forced to follow the same logic as writers in the sciences. Standardization in academic publishing dictates not only the development of academic discourse but also the shape of whole disciplines. Furthermore, sinking deep into the information age, the humanities and social sciences are facing another crisis: a statistical crisis. The unpredictability of human future is just one aspect of general unpredictability in a random universe (Clegg 2013). Exponentially rising computation facilities provide statistical and algebraic tools for complex social systems. Modernist dreams of social scientists becoming “true scientists” are within reach, despite the obvious and simple fact that human societies were always fighting unpredictability with rules and laws. And rituals. And magic.

Are these above-mentioned recent turns a symptom or a cure? Or are they magical acts to determine luck? Or are they perhaps cyclical rituals to impose rules into threatening disorder?

The so-called sensory turn might be a good example to consider. It is deeply embedded in the history of empiricism, which started with claims that observation is the beginning of all knowledge, theories follow observation, and congruity of observation and theoretical explanations should provide the final sense of knowledge. Nevertheless, it was only in the 1980s when human (i.e., social/cultural) sensoria became an object of specific scholarly concern in social sciences and humanities (if we ignore studies of sensual perception in psychology). Social dimensions of sensoria were obviously not important for the development of social sciences and humanities, despite the fact that improved observation of natural phenomena grounded the very development of science. Extension of sensory perception (telescopes, microscopes, thermometers, scales, colliders, etc.) released unprecedented dimensions of human apperception, but its practical everyday tuning in social environments was not an important issue for the humanities and social sciences.

What was then missing, and what initiated all these turns? It seems that, in contrast to hypothetical-deductive sciences, which certainly advance with paradigmatic turns after their inevitable crises, when facing essentially new observations, the humanities and social sciences are circling around the same issues for ages, redressing their data, interpretations and orientations.

One of the reasons for pretending that turns provide a solution by circling around the same topics is the social aspect of knowledge production. Any newcomer must critically assess the knowledge produced so far and provide a radically new twist. Although it is a mere rhetorical figure to become successful

in research and scholarly writing, it may initiate the effects of classical modernist rejections of tradition. It typically occurs in denial or sharp criticism of the founding fathers, and the ritualist radical criticism constantly calls for a new rhetorical fashion. Providing a new turn is but a career development in neoliberal academia.

Nevertheless, regarding studies of the social/cultural formation of the senses and the variety of approaches in sensory studies, there is still a lot to do. It is impossible not to recognise challenges for further developments in ethnography.

Ethnography as a method that emerged from many different sources. Ironically, it does what *theoroi* did in Ancient Greece: its aim is to observe and report about processions in other places. Theory is close a kin of ethnography, not only etymologically. One of the earliest sources of ethnographic research in modern times is “description of the people” (or the peoples), i.e., *Volksbeschreibung* and *Völkerbeschreibung*, developed in the late 1730s in far-east Russia (see Vermeulen 2015). Decades later, at the end of the eighteenth century, various scholars introduced neologisms “ethnology” and “ethnography.” These early ethnographic activities, and descriptions of the life of common people, at home and abroad, were part of the state statistics. During the Enlightenment, the rulers and their administration prepared questionnaires to collect records of manifold activities of ordinary people. Questionnaire-based and expedition-organised observations were important in the development of the ethnographic method. But only with the “revolutionary” (see Jarvie 1964) introduction of participant observation did the experiential part (or foundation) of ethnography with long-term fieldwork become the standard. If we take a participant-observant and a researcher, as “the instrument for both data collection and analysis through your own experience” (Bernard 1994, 144–145), it becomes obvious that we must calibrate the instrument. The necessary condition of its calibration is to take the researcher’s senses seriously and calibrate them with the sensualities of the people the researcher studies. In a way similar to the observed people themselves, the researcher must learn to use her senses socially.

Sensory “turn” is thus embedded into the very essence of ethnography as *praxis*. It became even more so due to the recent challenges in using well-developed human-computer interfaces. With the advent and development of digital technologies, all human perception entered new dimensions. All sensory perception, i.e., aesthetic perception, is no more emerging from unquestioned (Kantian) categories of space and time. The new categories brought twists into these basic categories much like hypertext transformed text in something more. The new social worlds exist beyond inherited sensualities

and, at the same time, provide for their partial extension. This is why the 1980s, exactly the decade of the introduction of personal computers, marks the above-mentioned “turns” towards experience, including the sensory turn.

Sensory anthropology (its early example is Stoller 1989) is an important contributor to sensory-based approaches in other branches of the humanities and social sciences (Howes and Classen 2014), integrating into a very wide field of sensory studies. After decades of their development, they still provide new perspectives in urban studies, studies of the environment, and even in studies of virtual worlds and hyper-modernity. They initiated methodological experimentation, especially in recently (re)discovered walking methods (O’Neill and Roberts 2020; Springgay and Truman 2019); they inevitably problematise relationship of *techné*, *poiesis*, *praxis* and *colere* (Bakke and Peterson 2018; Muršič 2021), and they provide for a rethinking of the intersection of urban life, memories, technologies, and trans-generational dialogue (Murray and Järviluoma 2023). As the following texts show, sensorial approaches are not a methodological magic wand. They are an integral part, though perhaps too neglected in the past, of any research of human beings and groups (up to humanity itself) in their myriad occurrences around the planet, past, present and future. They are the most fruitful for ethnographic studies in the present and they may reveal some important hidden aspects of the past or announce unexpected perspectives for the future.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

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More than a decade ago, the French urban sociologist Jean-Paul Thibaud (2011) called for research focusing on the relationships between space, time, and multisensory perception. Since then, sensory anthropology concentrating on memories of the past and on experiences of the present proliferated, while those centring on the imaginings of the future remain few and far between (cf. Pink 2021). Recognising the epistemological, methodological, empirical and social conjunctions – or, the sensory revolution, as dubbed by the anthropologist David Howes (2006) – that engendered (and are advanced) by sensory anthropology, *Sensory Environmental Relationships: Between Memories of the Past and Imaginings of the Future* stages an ethnographic encounter between changing spatialities, distinct temporalities and multiple sensory modalities. Yet at the same time endeavours to introduce new, hopefully, productive issues and questions, including those related to the future. We hope to show how our sensory environmental relationships – a notion borrowed from the Finnish soundscape and cultural studies scholar Helmi Järviluoma-Mäkelä (2017) – remain necessarily contingent, open, and disjunctive, a facet which we desire to endorse and expand. Hence, this volume stages an encounter, rather than a dialogue (cf. Žižek 2012, xix-xxii) between the diverse theoretical starting points, methods utilized, temporal perspectives, and different cultural and ecological contexts encompassing all corners of Europe.

The main questions and the thematic scope of the volume are based on the panel ‘Sensory Environmental Relationships – Between Memories of the Past and Imaginings of the Future’, which was held at the Congress of International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) in Šibenik in 2021. The panel invited papers addressing the question of how embodied and emplaced practices of sensing and moving in and through diverse environments inform the processes of remembering the past, experiencing the present, and imagining the future. It, therefore, stressed also the importance of different types of mobilities, though walking was recognised most frequently in both thematic and methodological senses. A proliferation of “ethnography on

foot” (Ingold and Vergunst 2008) and other walking-based approaches is more or less explicitly present in all the chapters and offers an overarching leitmotif, transcending temporal, spatial and methodological differences.

While the first chapter aims to rethink some conceptual coordinates and explore them theoretically, the contributions that follow ‘translate’ these thoughts into a more spatiotemporally specific and ethnographic manner. In other words, the following chapters take the theoretical points developed in the first one as “opportunities and hindrances” and recalibrate them in accordance with their own thematic, conceptual, and intellectual scope. Both geographically (covering different parts of Europe, from the English seaside to the neighbourhoods of New Belgrade, from the Utterslev marsh at the outskirts of Copenhagen to the Mythical Park in southern Slovenia) and historically (touching, for example, the modernization of Ljubljana in the early twentieth century, the near-pasts of the pandemic, and the environmental futures of other-than-human beings) diverse, the chapters offer rich, thematically varied and ethnographically sound directions. As one aim of this volume is to show that the relations between senses, temporalities and environments are by no means predetermined and that any schematizations might lead to unnecessary limitations, we acknowledge that the contributions offer many more entry-points – many affordances, so to say – than the ones outlined here and, even more importantly, resonate with each other in a myriad of ways, which we invite the readers to explore. In the following pages, we, therefore, present the chapters constituting this volume without, however, proposing a unifying epistemic and interpretative framework.

In the first chapter, *Affordances for/of the Future: Relating/Reconfiguring Environments, Temporalities, and People*, Blaž Bajič and Ana Svetel theoretically explore the main questions of the volume. What defines human-environment relationships? How to conceptually tackle sensorial experiences? What kind of temporalities emerge from memories, practices, and visions? Where do these questions collide? In order to address these, two points are particularly emphasised: the sensory anthropology’s dealings with language, on the one hand, and the future with its multiple faces of agency, on the other. Here, the idea of affordances can serve as an entry point to address the relations between the environment, senses, and time in human lives. “If we approach the sensory-environmental relationships through the conceptual lens of the affordances,” Bajič and Svetel (*this volume*) argue, “we can acknowledge the finitude and the potentials of the ‘world,’ recognize the attachment to language and at the same time avoid the deterministic ‘sensory captivation’ (and vice

versa).” Thus, the idea of futural affordances enables us to conceive how people might (or not) envision the future when relating to the(ir) environment.

In the chapter *Grieving with Utterslev Marsh: Commoning and More-than-human Temporalities*, Linda Lapiņa offers a nuanced multi-layered exploration of the entanglements between different personal and environmental losses, through which she rethinks the notions of time and temporalities, geographical distances, intimate relations with her close-ones, and more-than-human presences. By bringing together her ethnographic and autoethnographic accounts from Denmark and Latvia, memory work, poetry, dance and visual materials, as well as the reflections on the pandemic (im)mobilities, she shows how the sensory engagements with(in) the surroundings can serve as a way of approaching grief, re-membering, responsivity and reciprocity. Not only do grief-work and more-than-human ecologies, elaborated by Lapiņa, oppose the idea of time as exclusively linear but also hold “the potential to re-assess liveliness” (Lapiņa *this volume*).

Much like Lina Lapina’s chapter, the contribution by Helmi Järviluoma, Inkeri Aula, Eeva Pärjälä, Sonja Pöllänen, Milla Tiainen, and Juhana Venäläinen zeros in on the mutually constitutive relationships between artistic creativity and the(ir) living environment while locating their exploration in urban landscapes of Brighton and Turku. Moreover, the chapter titled *The City as Art and Artists in the City: Intra-actions of Art and the Environment on Sensobiographic Walks* highlights a sensobiographic and generational dimension of the process, showing the intra-activity of artists’ and cities’ lives. Järviluoma, Aula, Pärjälä, Pöllänen, Tiainen, and Venäläinen can do so thanks to their experiments with sensobiographic walking conducted with people of different age groups. Importantly, however, by utilizing sensobiographic walks, they do not aim to provide an account of an artist’s career but create a situation where “[s]ensations and memories intertwined with personal experience are communicated, evoked, verbalised, and co-produced intra-actively” (Järviluoma et al. *this volume*). Perhaps most importantly, following Deleuze and Guattari, they show that beyond the flashy, “major” artification (and, one could wager, gentrification), a “minor” artification is taking place, an artification of “coincidental and hidden or selectively shared aesthetic experiences” (Järviluoma et al. *this volume*) that gives urban lives their flavour and texture.

Against the backdrop of the historical contextualisation of the modernisation processes in the first half of the twentieth century Ljubljana, that is to say, continuing on the idea of sensory and urban transformations, Sandi Abram’s chapter *Modernisation of the Senses: Sensory Transformations of Ljubljana in the Early Twentieth Century* offers, *inter alia*, vivid sensory memories of

Franščiška, one of his research participants. Her sensobiographical narrative not only sheds light on the interplay between the personal (childhood) remembering and the societal, infrastructural, and political changes in the pre-Second World War Ljubljana but also represents “a window into the transformations in the urban sensorium” (Abram *this volume*). The modernization processes, described by Abram, were closely interlinked with the hygienization and aestheticization, including the new ideas on cleanliness, which led to the regulation of urban smellscape. The novelty of the chapter lies in the fact that all these wider currents, brought forth by the historical and historiographical sources, including newspaper reports from that time, are furthered and “personalised” by the intimate memories and sensory experiences of Franščiška.

The chapter *Temporalities of the Mythical Park: Reassessing the Past for the Future* by Katja Hrobat Virloget and Saša Poljak Istenič thoroughly deals with the question of (intangible) heritage, which is approached through the lenses of both anthropology and folklore studies. The latter has traditionally considered collective practices, skills and knowledge as embedded in a particular environmental or spatial setting, for example, through the concept of place-lore. But not only is the heritage (and heritagization processes) “placed,” it is also inevitably linked to the future, albeit it might seem contradictory at first. Through the case-study of the Mythical Park Rodik in Southern Slovenia, they ethnographically display Judith Okely’s (2001) differentiation between seeing and looking. The chapter does not, however, present the Mythical Park as a *fait accompli*. Rather, it focuses on the process of its creation and can also serve as an analysis of how research on embedded folklore narratives may develop into more applicative directions. The very fact that the locals were actively involved in the process of creating the park “gave rise to the self-reflection of their (different) future(s)” (Poljak Istenič and Hrobat Virloget *this volume*).

Combining a historical overview and ethnographic examples, the chapter *Environmental Relationships in Transhumant Pastoralism in Bohinj, North-Western Slovenian Alps* by Jaka Repič shows how structural and experiential levels of the environmental relations can be analytically differentiated but affect and co-create one another. One of the crucial contributions of the chapter is, therefore, the elaboration of the notion that “environmental knowledge, skills, or habituated practices serve to constitute affordances for the development of new practices, thus providing possibilities for imagining futures and coping with the changing world” (Repič *this volume*). Furthermore, the author argues that environmental relationships (including those between

humans and non-humans) are constantly in the making. These various actors, as illustrated by the ethnographic accounts, while moving along, create the meshwork of places, roads, pastures, and paths, which together form the alpine environment, its representations, and its imaginations.

Bethan Prosser's chapter *Lockdown Listening: Moving and Sensing the Urban Seaside Environment through Pandemic Times* draws on walking methods to elaborate the "lockdown listening" method or, in other terms, a socio-sonic-mobile method (Prosser *this volume*). Through this tripartite methodological approach, combining walking and listening and social theory, Prosser researched how the residents of the English urban coastal environment "hear" different, intertwined temporalities, how these "sound sparks" entwine with existing narratives and, by placing the research within the pandemic era, explored the ways it co-shaped the relations between sense, time and place. Following Burdsey's (2016) concept of coastal liquidity, Prosser shows how the non-linear experiences of time by the residents were felt when referring to individual and collective pasts, presents, and futures. Furthermore, three types of sounds, namely the returning, absent, and imagined sounds, identified through the analysis, closely correspond with the messy presents, contested pasts and uncertain futures.

While the majority of the chapters explore the multiplicity of the senses in her chapter *Burning Tires, Sauerkraut and Dung: The (Classist) Boundaries of an Olfactory Landscape* Sara Nikolić shows how focusing on the sense of smell can unravel the processes of Othering and multiple social positionalities of the residents of Blok 45 in New Belgrade. Building from two successive methodological steps, olfactory mapping and smell walks, the author shows that "olfactory constructions play a significant role in how collective identities are tacitly (re)produced" (Nikolić *this volume*). Specifically, three culturally conditioned olfactory categories, the external others, the internal others, and the double others, are further discussed and contextualized, showing that the olfactory landscapes can function as a fruitful entry point for understanding not only individual tastes and preferences but also class- and race-based attitudes that tend to reproduce the past through the present into the future.

Now, while all the other chapters rethink moving as a constituent of environmental relations (cf. Ingold and Vergunst 2008) or methodologically employ walking and other mobile research techniques, the contribution by Veronika Zavratnik approaches the themes of movement, its environmental and sensorial aspects by focusing on an item of "mundane technology" (Michael 2000) ostensibly too trivial to normally warrant attention, namely footwear. The chapter *Worn-out and Wanted: Footwear and its Temporalities*

leads the reader “through narratives about footwear that revolve around the footwear as a part of the material culture that is central to our bodily engagements with the world and through which we experience the world, both physically and representationally” (Zavratnik *this volume*). Combining the conceptualizations of the material culture scholars, especially Daniel Miller, and her long-term ethnographic research on shoes, she shows that not only can the materiality of the footwear be the entry point to understanding social relations, individual temporalities, and identities, but also that the footwear shapes the relations between the body and the environment and influences how people sense the surroundings.

As all the chapters are grounded in ethnographic work and, therefore, strongly resonate with their particular times and places; the texts show the methodological inventiveness and, we claim, the experimental vitality of contemporary anthropological research approaches. We may speculate that the reason for the multiplicity of the methodological orientations found in this short volume is related to the thematic direction towards such elusive concepts as future(s) and senses. The need not only to constantly rethink the temporal, environmental and sensual dispositions theoretically, as shown in the first chapter, but also to continuously “retune” them ethnographically, as the following chapters confirm, might seem an obvious condition for anthropological validity, but perhaps needs to be nevertheless acknowledged. We believe that the ensuing contributions indeed achieve this.

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Recently, he co-edited the *Senses of Cities: Anthropology, Art, Sensory Transformations* (with Rajko Muršič and Sandi Abram; University of Ljubljana Press, 2022), *Views of the Three Valleys* (with Ana Svetel and Veronika Zavratnik; University of Ljubljana Press, 2021), and *Close-ups: Youth, the Future and Imagining Development in Solčavsko* (with Ana Svetel and Veronika Zavratnik; University of Ljubljana Press, 2022)

In 2021, Bajič was awarded the Emerging Scholar Award for outstanding early-career researchers by OnSustainability Research Network. He is also the current president of the Slovenian Ethnological and Anthropological Association KULA.

Ana Svetel is a teaching assistant and a researcher at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, where, in 2023, she received her PhD. In the dissertation, based on ethnographic fieldwork in Northeast Iceland, she focused on weather, seasonality, light and darkness in social dimensions of the Icelandic landscape. Her areas of interest include anthropological studies of landscape, environment, and language, with a regional specialization in the Slovenian Alps and Northern Europe.

Since 2021 she has participated in the following projects: HAPPY – Qualitative research methodology in Higher education teaching APPROACHES for sustainability and well-being in Bhutan, Anthropological study of rural-urban and urban-rural migrations in Central Europe – The case of Slovenia and Hungary, and DigiFREN – Digital Aestheticization of Fragile Environment. She is also an assistant of the Learning Community Epistemology of everyday life within the EUTOPIA network.

Recently, she co-edited two volumes, *Views of the Three Valleys* (with Blaž Bajič and Veronika Zavratnik; University of Ljubljana Press, 2021) and *Close-ups: Youth, the Future and Imagining Development in Solčavsko* (with Blaž Bajič and Veronika Zavratnik; University of Ljubljana Press, 2022). She is the editor-in-chief of the *Bulletin of the Slovene Ethnological Society Library series* and serves as an editorial board member of the journal *Svetovi/Worlds*. In 2022, Svetel was awarded the Emerging Scholar Award for outstanding early-career researchers by OnSustainability Research Network. She is the co-chair of the Young Scholars Working Group at the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF).

Authors

Rajko Muršič is a Professor of ethnology and cultural anthropology at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology. His research focuses on the anthropology of popular music, theories of culture, epistemology, urban anthropology, methodology of anthropological research, sensory studies, digital ethnography, the use of algorithms, etc. His regional interests comprise Slovenia, Central and South-Eastern Europe (fieldwork in Slovenia, Poland, North Macedonia, Germany, and Japan).

He published eight monographs (all in Slovene) and co-edited eleven collections (six in English). He served as a member of the Executive Committee of the IUAES and a president of the Slovenian Ethnological and Anthropological Association Kula. He was the initial editor of the monograph series *Zupanič's Collection*.

As the principal researcher, he completed two national research projects. Recently, he was engaged as an expert researcher in the ERC project *Sensotra* (Sensory Transformations and Transgenerational Environmental Relationships in Europe, 1950-2020) at the University of Eastern Finland (2016-2021), and he is active in the project *B-Air* (Art Infinity Radio - Creating Sound Art for Babies, Toddlers and Vulnerable Groups) led by Radio Slovenia (2020-2023). He is as

well the leader of the partner's team in the Erasmus+ project Happy (Qualitative Research in Higher Education Teaching Approaches for Sustainability and Well-being in Bhutan), led by the Free University in Amsterdam. Since 2022, he has participated in two projects financed by the Chanse Programme: Reimagining Public Values in Algorithmic Futures and Digital Aestheticization in/of Fragile Environments.

His recent works include *Glasbeni pojmovnik za mlade* (Music Glossary for the Youth), 2017; *Sounds of Attraction: Yugoslav and Post-Yugoslav Popular Music* (co-editor Miha Kozorog), 2017; *Občutki mest: antropologija, umetnost, čutne transformacije* (Feelings of Cities: Anthropology, Art, Sensory Transformations; co-editors Sandi Abram and Blaž Bajič), 2022.

Linda Lapiņa (pronouns she/they/it) works as an Associate Professor of Cultural Encounters at Roskilde University, Denmark. Linda is also a dancer and a psychologist. They grew up in Rīga, Latvia, and have been living in Copenhagen, Denmark, since 2004. Their work at the university is dedicated to making space for more bodies and forms of knowing, including arts-based, sensuous, affective, and more-than-human knowledges; and to contributing to generous and nourishing academic communities. Linda has published on a variety of topics, including racialisation, differentiated whiteness, and shifting migrant positions in the context of mobility between Eastern and Western Europe; Danishness and Danish exceptionalism; urban change and gentrification; temporalities and affectivity in urban space; and more-than-human memory. In addition to fieldwork and interviews, they work with autoethnography, arts-based, and affective methodologies. They are co-heading the research group *Interkult* and the departmental network in Environmental Humanities at the Department of Communication and Arts at Roskilde University. They have also been a visiting artist/researcher with the performance collective *Sisters Hope* (since 2021). Linda's recent research interests include urban-rural food encounters and alternative food systems; and affective dimensions of climate disaster.

Helmi Järviluoma is a Finnish sound, music, and cultural scholar and writer. She is Professor Emerita of Cultural Studies at the University of Eastern Finland. As a sensory and soundscape ethnographer, Järviluoma has developed the mobile method of sensobiographic walking. Her research and art span the fields of sensory remembering, qualitative methodology (especially regarding gender), environmental, cultural studies, sound art, and fiction writing. In

2016, she received an Advanced Grant from the European Research Council (ERC-2015-AdG 694893 SENSOTRA) in order to study Sensory Transformations and Transgenerational Environmental Relationships between the years 1950–2020 in three European cities. Among her 180 publications, co-authored *Gender and Qualitative Methods* (2003/2010) and *Acoustic Environments in Change* (2009) continue to draw attention. She has written and directed six radio features for the Finnish Broadcasting Company. In 2019, the Finnish Union of University Professors selected Helmi Järviluoma as professor of the year 2019, and she was awarded the decoration of Knight First Class of the Order of the White Rose in Finland. In 2018, the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters invited her as a member.

Inkeri Aula is a post-doctoral researcher in the Visual Communication Design research group (AVCD) in the School of Arts, Design, and Architecture at Aalto University, Finland. Currently, her research focuses on creativity, particularly on the effect of creative environmental relationships on well-being in later life, and on combining sensory and narrative methods for the fields of art and design with older adults. Previously, she has researched how the sensing of the environment has changed in European cities in ERC AdG-funded project SENSOTRA (2017-2021). Her doctoral thesis investigated Afro-Brazilian ‘worlding’ in the trans-local fight-dance-art of capoeira (University of Eastern Finland, 2020), based on multi-sited ethnography in Brazil and in Finland.

Artist collaborations and research creation are part of Aula’s practice. In the artist group Aula, Niskanen & Salo, she has participated in the creation of site-responsive and immersive new media art installations that have been displayed in different countries, mainly in the USA and Finland. She collaborated with comics artist Sanna Hukkanen in the creation of a graphic book about Finno-Ugric mythical stories about trees and forests, *Metsänpeitto*, which received the North Karelia Art Prize in 2018, and has since been translated into three more languages.

Aula has published diverse research articles in the fields of anthropology and cultural studies in English, Finnish, and Portuguese. She is a member of several scientific societies, including a vice member board of the Finnish Anthropological Society. Her versatile research interests include environmental relationships, relational onto-epistemologies, cultural imaginaries, forest myths, anthropology of the senses and multisensory ethnography, artist collaborations, and research creation.

Sonja Pöllänen (MSSC) is a sensory anthropologist writing her PhD on affect theory, likenessing, and people's sensorial relationship with digital technology. Her PhD is based on fieldwork done for an ERC adv. grant (GA 694893) project SENSOTRA. The project aimed to produce new understandings of the changes in people's sensory environmental relationships in three European cities during a particular period in history, 1950–2020. Currently, Sonja works as a digital ecosystems and communications manager at Nokia.

Eeva Pärjälä is a grant researcher and doctoral student in the Social and Cultural Encounters doctoral program at the University of Eastern Finland. She is currently working as a grant researcher both at the University of Eastern Finland and at the University of Turku, combining working on her PhD research with data analysis and visualization in the New Economies of Artistic Labour – from Entrepreneurship to Sustainable Collectives project (funded by the Kone Foundation 2020–2024). She started her PhD research as a Junior Researcher at SENSOTRA - Sensory Transformations and Transgenerational Environmental Relationships in Europe, 1950–2020 project (ERC-2015-AdG 694893; 2017–2021). Her research focuses on transgenerational place attachment combining sensory anthropology, human geography, and urban studies.

Milla Tiainen is a Senior Lecturer in Musicology at the University of Turku, Finland, and Associate Professor (title of Docent) of Musicology at the University of Helsinki. She has published nearly 70 scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals and edited books in the areas of musical performance studies, cultural studies of music and sound, interdisciplinary voice studies, sensory studies, and new materialist and posthumanist research approaches to the study of arts and gender. She has co-edited special issues on these topics for such journals as *Body & Society* (2014), *Cultural Studies Review* (2015), and *The Polish Journal of Aesthetics* (2020). She is also co-editor, among other volumes, of *Musical Encounters with Deleuze and Guattari* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), *Mattering Voices* (Routledge, forthcoming in 2024), and *New Materialism and Intersectionality* (Routledge, forthcoming in 2024). Tiainen has worked as a researcher in a number of funded projects, including SENSOTRA (the University of Eastern Finland, ERC-funded, 2016–21, <https://uefconnect.uef.fi/en/group/sensotra/>) and *Localizing Feminist New Materialisms* (the University of Turku, Academy of Finland-funded, 2017–21). She was also one of the four main applicants and a working group leader of the Europe-wide research network, *New Materialism: Networking European*

Scholarship on 'How Matter Comes to Matter' (EU-funded COST Action IS1307, 2014–18). Tiainen is currently co-lead, with art historian Dr. Katve-Kaisa Kontturi, of the interdisciplinary project New Economies of Artistic Labor (funded by the Kone Foundation, 2020-24). She is also the Chair of the Finnish Musicological Society which received the annual science award of the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies in 2023, given in recognition of the society's long-term work in advancing music scholarship and its contributions to Finnish culture.

Juhana Venäläinen is an Associate Professor of Cultural Studies at the University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu, where he received his PhD in 2015. His research areas include commons theory, sensory studies, cultural economy, transformations of work, discourses of economic change, and everyday economic moralities. Currently, Venäläinen leads a research project on "Post-ownership as an interpretation and experience of economic change" (2022–2025, funded by the Kone Foundation) as well as a work package and the research team at the University of Eastern Finland in the research consortium "DigiFREN" (Digital Aestheticization of Fragile Environment, 2022–2025, funded by CHANSE ERA-NET co-fund programme, grant agreement 101004509). He has also recently participated in the ERC AdG project "SENSOTRA" (Sensory Transformations and Transgenerational Environmental Relationships in Europe, 1950–2020) with a special focus on developing the notion of the sensory commons and on devising the methodology of sensobiographic walks together with Helmi Järviluoma. Venäläinen has published and edited volumes and special issues about employment precarity, the experience economy, and financial cultures. His research articles have received awards such as "Academic Pen of the Year 2016" for the Best Finnish Article in social sciences in 2013–2015, together with Tero Toivanen) and "Best Article of the Year" (in *Oikeus* journal, 2011). Venäläinen holds the title of Docent (Adjunct Professor) in Cultural Studies of Work and the economy at the University of Jyväskylä.

Sandi Abram holds a PhD in Social and Cultural Anthropology from the University of Eastern Finland. Between 2017 and 2021, he participated as a Doctoral Researcher in the ERC-funded project SENSOTRA - Sensory Transformations and Transgenerational Environmental Relationships in Europe and currently works as a Post-doctoral Researcher at the Peace Institute, Ljubljana, and at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Ljubljana. In 2022 he co-edited (with Blaž Bajič and Rajko Muršič) the book *Senses of Cities: Anthropology, Art, Sensory*

Transformations (University of Ljubljana Press). His main research interests are aestheticization, sensory and urban studies, non-institutional creative practices, multimodal and collaborative ethnography.

Katja Hrobat Virloget is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Primorska, Slovenia, where she is currently Vice-Dean for Research and Head of the Department of Anthropology and Cultural Studies.

Her research interests include, on one side, migration and population movements, anthropology of memory, and, on the other side, intangible heritage, narrative tradition, mythical landscapes, and interdisciplinary research.

She has written a book *V tišini spomina / In the Silence of Memory*, on the so-called “Istrian exodus” after World War II with its divided memories and contested heritages. For its version in Slovenian, the latter translated to English in *Silences and Divided Memories. The Exodus and its Legacy in Post-War Istrian Society* by Berghahn books (2023), she received a nomination for the Excellence in Research Award 2022 by the Slovenian Research Agency and the Murko Award – the national ethnological prize (2021). In her second research area of intangible heritage, she successfully applied her research knowledge in the creation of *The Mythical Park of Rodik*. For the idea and realization of *The Mythical Park*, she received the Prometheus of Science for Excellence in Communication (2020) from Slovenian Science Foundation. *The Mythical Park* was awarded by Slovenian Museum Association (2021) for the innovative presentation of a narrative tradition in the landscape and as the second-best thematic route in Slovenia by the Tourist Association of Slovenia (2021). For her scientific work, she has received the Award for scientific excellence from the University of Primorska (2021) and the Bartol Award for Scientific Excellence at the Faculty of Humanities UP (2020).

Saša Poljak Istenič is a Research Associate at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ZRC SAZU), Ljubljana, and an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Tourism, University of Maribor, Slovenia. She received her PhD in ethnology at the University of Ljubljana in 2012. She led a post-doctoral project *Surviving, Living, Thriving: Creativity as a Way of Life*, funded by the Slovenian Research Agency (Z6-6841; 2014-2016), and a bilateral research project *Urban Futures: Imagining and Activating Possibilities in Unsettled Times*, co-funded by the Slovenian Research Agency and Croatian Science Foundation (J6-2578, IPS-2020-01-7010; 2020-2023). She also participated in several nationally funded research projects and international

applied research on urban life, creativity, sustainability, social inclusion, and heritage. Her areas of interest derive from urban anthropology, anthropology of space and place, and anthropology of futures.

She published a monograph *Tradicija v sodobnosti / Tradition in a contemporary world* (Založba ZRC, 2013) and co-authored a book *Družbeni učinki urbanega kmetijstva / Social Impact of Urban Agriculture* (with Jani Kozina, Mateja Šmid Hribar, Jernej Tiran and Nela Halilović; Založba ZRC, 2019). She is a co-editor of *Glasnik Slovenskega etnološkega društva / Bulletin of the Slovene Ethnological Society* and was a guest editor of several thematic issues of Slovenian and Croatian journals, most recently of the issue on urban futures in *Traditiones* (2022).

As part of the AgriGo4Cities project team, she won the Diploma of Excellence for the Black Sea – Danubian Social & Economic Innovator (the European Commission – DG MARE, Romania) in 2019. She is also a member of the Executive Board of the Slovene Ethnological Society, the Expert Council of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum, and the Expert Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage at the Ministry of Culture.

Jaka Repič is an Associate Professor of cultural and social anthropology at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. He completed his PhD thesis in 2006 with a study of transnational migrations between Argentina and Europe, with a special focus on the Slovenian diaspora in Argentina and returned mobilities. He teaches courses on the methodology of ethnology and cultural anthropology, current debates in social and cultural anthropology, urban anthropology, and ethnology of Australia and Oceania.

He was a visiting professor at Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona (2019-20) and Universidad de Buenos Aires (2010-11, 2015, 2017, 2023). He is currently the leader of a research programme, Ethnological Research of cultural knowledge, practices and Forms of Socialities (2022-2027).

Jaka Repič's research interests include diaspora studies, social memories, urbanisation and spatial studies, and anthropology of art. He has published two books in Slovenian ("Tracing Roots": Transnational Migration between Argentina and Europe and Urbanization and Constitution of Ethnic Communities in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea). His recent publications include an edited volume *Moving Places: Relations, Return, and Belonging* (co-edited with Nataša Gregorič Bon, Berghahn books, 2016), and a special issue on Art and Migration in the journal *Two Homelands*. In the past years, he has

also focused on the environmental changes and spatial practices in the Slovenian Alps.

Bethan Mathias Prosser is a researcher and listening practitioner, spanning roles across higher education and the community/voluntary sectors. Bethan lectures in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Brighton, where she was awarded her PhD in 2022. Developing a form of participatory listening research, her PhD used listening methods to investigate residential experiences of urban seaside gentrification and displacement injustices on the UK south coast. She has recently been awarded an Economic and Social Research Council Post-Doctoral Fellowship by the South Coast Doctoral Training Partnership. Through this Award, she will continue to bring academic and practice-based listening approaches together to creatively understand and engage residents in issues of social justice and place. During her PhD, she also worked as a Research Assistant on the SENSOTRA - Sensory Transformations and Transgenerational Environmental Relationships in Europe, 1950-2020 project (ERC-2015-AdG 694893; 2017-2021). Alongside research, Bethan works with a community music social enterprise and eco-musicology collective, developing interactive listening walks, sound foraging, and music-making activities.

Sara Nikolić is an anthropologist and activist who, through her research practice based on critical, visual and sensory ethnography, explores housing cultures and practices after the "give-away" privatization of the public housing stock in Yugoslavia. She is a doctoral student at the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. Nikolić has been a research assistant at the Institute of Philosophy and Social Theory (IFDT) in Belgrade since 2018. At the IFDT, she is taking part in the work of the Laboratory for Active Citizenship and Democratic Innovations (ActiveLab) and Laboratory for Theory, Creation and Politics of Space (PerspectLab), through which she has been a part of research teams that conduct interdisciplinary qualitative research on new social movements, cultures of rejection (Volkswagen Foundation: 94765), trust in governance (H2020: 870572) and residential satisfaction. Since 2021 she has been an editorial board member and host of the IFDT Podcast *Zvuk misli*. In 2019 she has been awarded the IJURR Foundation scholarship to attend the RC21 Doctoral School in Comparative Urban Studies in Delhi, thanks to whom most of her inspiration for applying a sensory approach to housing research originates. In 2020 and 2021, she was awarded the Young Leaders Fellowship for PhD research on housing cultures

transformation by the SYLFF Foundation. She presented the findings from the work that is part of this collection in 2023 at the Uncommon Senses IV conference at Concordia University in Montreal.

Veronika Zavrtnik is a teaching assistant and researcher at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, where she is currently completing her PhD on footwear in everyday life. Since 2021, she also works as a researcher at the Institute for Innovation and Development of the University of Ljubljana (IRI UL). Previously, she worked at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Laboratory for Telecommunication.

Her broader research interests include material culture, digitalization, environment, sustainability, and applied anthropology. She is currently involved in several projects related to digitalization (DSI Digital Social Impact (KA226-050D8E8E; 2021-2023); DigiFREN (CHANSE-657; 2022-2025)), energy (INFINITE building renovation (GA 958397; 2020-2025)) and innovative teaching approaches (Active8-Planet (621436-EPP-1-2020-1- SI -EPPKA2- KA).

Recently, she co-edited *Handicrafts in Slovenia: Contemporary Challenges and Perspectives* (with Mateja Habinc; University of Ljubljana Press, 2022), *Views of the Three Valleys* (with Blaž Bajič and Ana Svetel; University of Ljubljana Press, 2021), and *Close-ups: Youth, the Future and Imagining Development in Solčavsko* (with Ana Svetel and Blaž Bajič; University of Ljubljana Press, 2022). She is the managing editor of *Svetovi/ Worlds: Journal for Ethnology, Anthropology, and Folkloristics*, published by the University of Ljubljana Press. In 2020, she was awarded the Emerging Scholar Award for outstanding young scholars in the field of sustainability by the OnSustainability Research Network.