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The members of the Podcast Group at WiSER are Sarah Nuttall, Sizwe Mpofu-Walsh, Isabel Hofmeyr, Bronwyn Kotzen, Mpho Matsipa, Achille Mbembe and Tinashe Mushakavanhu.



#Batch 4*

- i. "Hydrocolonialism"Isabel Hofmeyr & Sizwe Mpofu-Walsh
- ii. Southern Oceanity: How a Penguin looks at the world Charne Lavery
- iii. Oceanic Humanities: Below the Waterline Confidence Joseph, Ryan Poinasamy, Meghan Judge & Mapule Mohulatsi

^{*}In this batch of transcripts we get a snapshot of research from the Oceanic Humanities for the Global South project at WiSER.

INTRODUCING THE WISER TRANSCRIPTS

In 2020, WiSER launched The WiSER Podcast, with great success. The series profiled the work of academics, writers and artists based at the Institute in engaging, nuanced and highly listenable ways. Born of the historic nature of the Covid-19 pandemic, The WiSER Podcast took the work of the seminar room and gave it a more fully public life. It reached listeners across the African continent and in numerous parts of the world. By the end of the year we had reached more than 10 000 people—how many seminars would that have taken!

As a result of the reception of The WiSER Podcast last year, we have decided to release a series called *The WiSER Transcripts* which makes the released podcasts available in text, for ease of reference and citation. Each several weeks, we will release a batch of 4-5 transcripts. These will arrive alongside our new series of The WiSER Podcast for 2021, which will be a thematic series based on WiSER's work and its collaborative networks and institutions across many contexts.

Thank you to everyone and enormous thanks too to all at WiSER who have contributed to The WiSER Podcast and made it such a pleasure to produce, so precious an archive and so good to listen to. Enjoy reading these short, sharp, incisive and cutting edge texts drawn from lively, committed, critical thinkers in Southern Humanities research.

Professor Sarah Nuttall, Director, WiSER



"HYDROCOLONIALISM" ISABEL HOFMEYR & SIZWE MPOFU-WALSH

SIZWE MPOFU-WALSH: Isabel Hofmeyr is Professor of African Literature at Wits and global distinguished Professor at New York University. Her latest book forthcoming from Duke University Press is *Hydrocolonialism: Coast, Custom House and Dock-side Reading.* Well, Professor Hofmeyr thanks so much for taking some time to speak about your work.

ISABEL HOFMEYR: Thanks, it's a great pleasure to be on the WiSER Podcast.

MPOFU-WALSH: So tell us a little bit about this work and summarize what it's about.

HOFMEYR: It's really about three institutions: the colonial custom house; copyright; and censorship. In a colonial context, most printed matter came from outside the colony and had to be funneled through the port city. The customs officials would check to see that it was not pirated, seditious or obscene, and they could seize any material that they considered to be suspect. They effectively became the first censors and officials setting policy and practices around copyright, and so the histories of censorship and copyright rather unexpectedly have this link to dock-side protocols. Most colonial customs houses were in port cities between land and sea, and this coastal or littoral location is very important in my story. What the book really tries to do is bring together oceanic and ecological themes with histories of copyright and censorship that we tend to think of as rather dry institutions. The book is trying to put together water and books, or water and paper, which we often think of as the opposites of each other.

MPOFU-WALSH: It's a very interesting prism through which to put those two ideas into conversation. I was wondering about the last part of the title, this 'Dock-side Reading'. Could you elaborate a little bit more on what this dock-side reading is and why it becomes so essential to the way in which you collide these ideas of water and paper.

HOFMEYR: I was interested in what happened to books as they hit the dock-side. How did these customs officials actually read or deal with these books? One of the arguments of the book is that the printed matter tended ultimately to be treated like any other form of cargo and to be subject to the logistics of cargo handling on the dock-side. These customs officials are tax collectors, and are certainly not keen readers, and so what they try and do is deal with books as though they are a form of cargo. They look at the outside signs; they look at the titles; they look at the covers; and then they might sample a little bit. In a four hundred page book they might look at one or two paragraphs, rather like an exciseman testing a consignment of alcohol.

In relation to copyright, you see much of the same thing. With regard to copyright, they faced the problem that it's very difficult to know which law applies where; there's imperial law; there's colonial law; there was law generated out of the Berne Convention, and so they had to make things up as they went along. One of the things they did was to more or less treat copyright as something that was known as 'mark of origin'. This was something that had to appear on all cargo: "made in Germany"; "made in Australia"; "made in Canada". Because they were so uncertain of which law was applying where, they treated this 'mark of origin' as a sign of where something had been made. And particularly in the case of British copyright, it came to be seen also as a sign of respectability: somehow this book was 'white'. Copyright itself started to resemble a form of racial trademark.

MPOFU-WALSH: In terms of the way that you understood sources, and the kind of sources that you'd try to bring together to tell that story, take us through some of the choices that you've made and the sources on which you've relied.

HOFMEYR: My first step was to work out where the customs and excise archives were. I set off with some trepidation, expecting very dry and tedious reports on tariffs and taxes and those sorts of things. Instead I was astonished at what a fascinating archive it really is. It's full of actual objects—swatches of fabric; packets of seeds; labels of tinned condensed milk; and then in the documents accompanying these objects, there were endless debates on what these things actually were. Was a substance butter or margarine; are medicinal herbs the same as tea? A long-standing favourite that went on for years was: what was the difference between a small pilchard and a sardine? Through these debates, I came to realise that they effectively were a kind of dock-side ontologists decreeing what these objects actually were.

MPOFU-WALSH: It's an interesting way of putting it, and you locate this analysis in a broader frame which you have created of hydrocolonialism. That's the main title of the book. I wondered how you came about this term and if you could speak about how you see this term working and what it means to you.

HOFMEYR: The background to the term is living in the age of climate catastrophe (the age of the anthropocene as it's often known). It's such a pressing issue that one has to make one's work speak to that theme in some ways. I've worked a lot on postcolonial literature, and postcolonial literary theory has been important but it has tended mainly to be land-focused. This term then both wanted to pay respect to postcolonial theory and the kinds of work that it had done, but it also wanted to take postcolonial theory offshore. The term tries to add water and depth to postcolonial studies, which with the exception of Caribbean literature and Pacific studies, tends very much to be tied up with debates of the anti-colonial nation, which is particularly focused on land. So the concept was an attempt to doff my cap to postcolonial theory while trying to extend that field through this term.

MPOFU-WALSH: Absolutely, and just one more question on this conceptual frame which I think is so interesting: How do you think hydrating the analysis as it were, helps us understand other things that might be happening now for example, even on land? Do you think that this

idea of hydrocolonisalism might stretch even to questions away from ports, docks and water itself and tell us about politics on dry land, as it were?

HOFMEYR: Hydrate is an absolutely great term and it is one of the things that this book tries to do by drawing on an emerging set of methods about how to go below the water line. How does one think about histories under water? It is useful to think about histories on land, or histories on the surface of the water, but what are the sorts of immersive methods that we might use? To give you one example which the book explores: In South Africa, if you look at any body of water, you are always looking at postcolonial or creolized water because in that water are a set of often competing beliefs about what this water is. Most South African waterways bustle with congregations: of deities, mermaid-like figures. Certain kinds of water are often associated with ancestors. You also have engineering views of water; you have imperial views of water and so water becomes a very rich archive or site in which to think about all of these competing interests in any kind of postcolonial context.

MPOFU-WALSH: Now in terms of the work's significance for broader areas of scholarship, take us through what you think the broader significance of this work is.

HOFMEYR: The book's got quite a broad interdisciplinary reach and it speaks to a number of areas. The one is histories of censorship. There's obviously been a lot of work on censorship under apartheid. This book gives a much longer history. Also, virtually all work on censorship assumes that censors read the whole book and here's a very different kind of censorship – it's much more object-oriented reading. Copyright, very briefly, provides a very different view from what debates in copyright have established from the Euro-American context, a theme that is important to a lot of literary debate. These debates are centered on the question of the author – how do these legal mechanisms enable the concept of the author to take off? These customs officials certainly had no interest in the author since these books were coming from thousands of miles away. They are much more focused on the book itself and developed carceral attitudes towards that book which they could detain, or seize, or in some cases tear up into bits and pieces. Also the whole idea of copyright as trademark is very different from the way that we normally understand copyright. Hydrocolonialism is hopefully a framework that other literary scholars can take forward. The book also explores different ways in which you can read for water in literary texts – what are the methods you can use for that.

MPOFU-WALSH: Absolutely, I was just thinking in the field that I work in (in International Relations) for example, this concept could travel in politics, in history. I can imagine it being useful for all kinds of modes of understanding the interactions of these people at these intersectional points.

HOFMEYR: Completely, and as water wars become more and more common, it will become a very central way of thinking about International Relations.

MPOFU-WALSH: So I think just finally, I wonder if you could situate this work in your work and tell us a little bit about how this work relates to your other work. *Gandhi's Printing Press* is preeminent among those.

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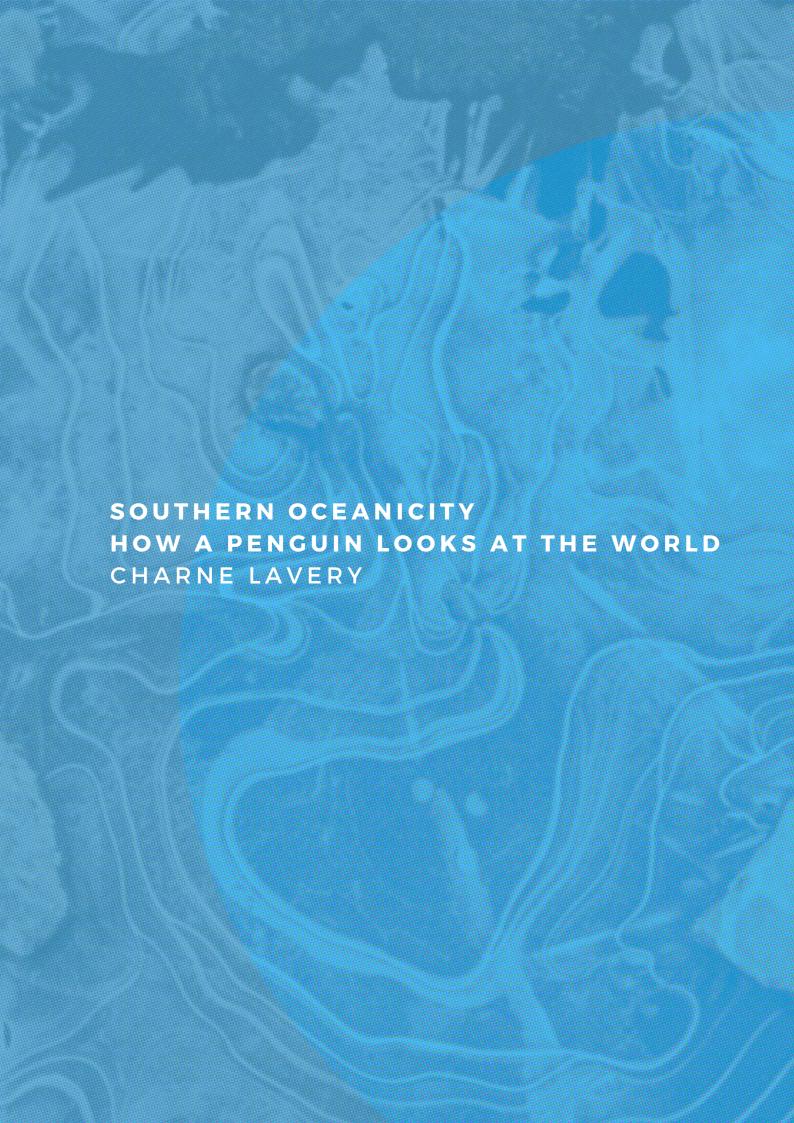
HOFMEYR: I'm very much in the generation where I'm a creature of print, and so I've been fascinated by print culture across my career. I'm particularly interested in reading, and *Gandhi's Printing Press* was a continuation of that interest. Gandhi, interestingly, was very opposed to copyright, so when I finished the book I was interested in this question. Was hisposition unusual or not? What actually was the situation with regard to colonial copyright? I went fossicking and ferreting about, and that led me then to the customs house. Also, Gandhi's Printing Press was part of work that I'd done coming out of Indian Ocean studies, which has been important over the last couple of years. That work, much like much other oceanic studies didn't really have much ocean in it. This project was an attempt to embed studies of print culture in oceanic studies that was much more material and ecological.

MPOFU-WALSH: Well thanks so much for joining us. The work is filled with fascinating analyses and new ways of looking at old questions. I must say, I also chuckled at the notion of 'receiver of wrecks'. I think sometimes we all feel a little bit like receivers of wrecks in the academy.

HOFMEYR: Thanks so much, I really enjoyed the conversation.

MPOFU-WALSH: Thank you.

Isabel Hofmeyr is Professor of African Literature at Wits University and Global Distinguished Professor at New York University. Her latest book, forthcoming from Duke University Press, is *Hydrocolonialism: Coast, Custom House and Dock-side reading.*



SOUTHERN OCEANICITY HOW A PENGUIN LOOKS AT THE WORLD CHARNE LAVERY

In early 2017, the cartographer Frans Blok published a world map centered on the South Pole. Rather than the world map we all know, the Mercator projection which centers on Europe, this one places Antarctica at the center, surrounded by the vast expanse of the Southern Ocean. All map projections distort whatever lies at their edges (this is called the "Law of the Conservation of Trouble"), which in most familiar maps is usually the Pacific and the poles. The Mercator projection was intended for European viewers and places Europe "nicely in the middle," magnifying and clarifying the Northern Hemisphere. But what about a world map that places instead the South at the center, which would mean Antarctica in the middle? If every map reveals most about whoever made it, this map might be, as Blok the cartographer suggested, "how a penguin looks at the world" (Blok 2017).

In this podcast, I first use this analogy of a penguin's world map to introduce the question of political and imaginative cartography, overlaying the Southern Ocean and the Global South in a time of climate change. In my work I turn to the literary to address the imaginative impasses that that produces, and I'll share as an example a (very) short story about a southern voyage and its implications for reimaging the globe and planet. You'll hear the story, from "Letters Home" read by its author, Kanishk Tharoor. Finally, I return to the penguins at the end.

Interestingly, if you center a world map on the North Pole it looks quite normal. There is very little visible distortion, because there simply is not that much land in the Southern Hemisphere to distort (Blok 2017). A map centered on the South Pole, however, stretches to absurd proportions the lands of the north. In positions of centrality, instead, are the countries of southern Africa, South America and Australasia, which retain their recognizable shapes. This map of the world is also overwhelmingly blue. As Meg Samuelson has pointed out, there's twenty percent more sea in the Southern Hemisphere than the Northern, making it what she calls the "blue southern hemisphere." Another way of thinking about this is via the term oceanicity—a term I have borrowed from meteorology, indicating the degree to which places are overall subject to the influence of the sea (Antonello 2017, 296). As the opposite of continentality, oceanicity is usually used to describe the climate of a seaside city. Expanding the definition to the planetary points to an overlooked difference between the Northern and Southern Hemisphere, a higher oceanicity that gains in importance the more we learn about the extent to which the Southern Ocean and Antarctic ice are critical for regulating global climate (Riffenburgh 2006, 467).

The penguins' map of the world, then, is one which simultaneously centres the geographical Southern Hemisphere and the global South: the poorer countries of the world. Can something similar be done in conceptual and imaginative rather than only cartographical terms? What I'm looking for is a way of bringing together questions that pertain to the Global South—from the still-decolonizing countries of the world, centering social, racial and economic justice—while also registering the interrelationship between changing global climates and the currents of the Southern Ocean—from the Southern Hemisphere, centering environmental justice.

The Southern Ocean is unique among the other great oceans. Waves grow as they travel, and in every other ocean, a wave will eventually hit a continent, limiting its size. But winds and currents in the Southern Ocean can circulate endlessly, with no land barriers to stop them. Waves can, in theory, "lap" themselves, drawing on an infinitely circulating fetch; all of the records for largest wave have been recorded in the Southern Ocean (Antonello 2017, 296). The Arctic Ocean, in comparison, is tiny—as well as shallow and calm. Ice in the Arctic only ever gets to about four metres thick, while Antarctic ice can be four kilometres thick. The Southern Ocean exemplifies the characteristics we ascribe to oceans in general: vast, turbulent, drifting.

Moreover, the Southern Ocean is characterized not only by physical but semiotic drift. Historian Alessandro Antonello notes that the Southern Ocean has been "variously named the 'Antarctic seas,' the 'Antarctic ocean,' the 'southern seas,' the 'southern oceans,' 'The Icy Sea,' or as the southerly extent of the Atlantic, Indian or Pacific Oceans" (2017, 296). It was in fact only officially christened by the International Hydrographic Organization twenty years ago. Oceanographic data is drawn overwhelmingly from the Northern Hemisphere (Riffenburgh 2006, 467). Leading oceanic anthropologist Stefan Helmreich has proposed that oceanography also needs a 'theory from the south' like that proposed by the Comaroffs. Amid their and other urgent calls for 'theory from the south', and 'thinking from the south', or in this case 'oceanography from the south,' what I've been exploring is the potential for literary and imaginative 'thinking from the Southern Ocean.'

How then to begin to imagine a position in the Southern Ocean but also metaphorically from the South? It is of course, for all the reasons I've described, a very difficult place to think about, or to think from. In response to this conundrum, in my research I turn to literary and cultural texts for their imaginatively elastic approaches to the otherwise unthinkable. Although largely unnarrated, points of contact with the Southern Ocean do appear in works of fiction. I've explored the ways in which perspectives from drifting ships in southern seas are imagined in both Euro-canonical Southern Ocean literature, by Coleridge, Conrad, and Melville, and also in narratives from and about the Global South, by authors like Yvette Christiansë, Lauren Beukes, Mohale Mashigo, and Kanishk Tharoor.

To give you some sense of the literature, I've asked Kanishk Tharoor to read from his collection *Swimmer among the Stars*. The collection was reviewed by writer and climate change thinker Amitav Ghosh, as the rare kind of writing that is finding a way to incorporate the improbable probabilities of climate change into the limits of realist narration and therefore into a kind of political and public imagination (Ghosh 2015). This is part 8 of the story "Letters Home":

In the upper regions of a Medieval European map, one of those beautiful Italian planispheres drawn from Arab traditions of cosmography with the South at the top and North at the bottom, lies an enormous Indian caravelle. You could miss the detail and think it is only another European ship, another plucky footsoldier in the white man's conquest of the sea. The inscription tells another story.

The ship is an Indian junk built with four masts, housing sixty cabins worth of merchants. Though large it was so ingeniously designed that it needed only one tiller. Its navigators didn't require compasses because they had in their ranks a full time astrologer who would steady himself on the deck with his astrolabe and shout out directions from the stars.

This Indian vessel in 1420 sailed to the Southern tip of Africa, called Diab by the monkish cartographer. From there they journeyed two thousand miles West, finding only water and wind, not even ice or penguins or the dribble of little islands of the South Atlantic. The Indians decided to turn back; the astrologer had lost his bearings. In this way Indians missed the best chance they had to discover Indians.

Paul Gilroy, author of the influential *The Black Atlantic* (1993), which led theorizing about oceans in relation to race, argues in more recent work that invocations of climate change and the Anthropocene risk falling into much older habits of anti-humanist thought. These have long been critiqued by the black radical tradition that, required by slave-driven capitalism, addressed the boundaries between human and nonhuman, strenuously resisting the construction of black humanity as object or property. Gilroy has proposed adopting a "sea-level" perspective, in order to address this tendency in Anthropocene thought to forget racialised histories. To develop a proper "planetary humanism", requires what he calls a "lowly watery orientation," that might yield an *offshore* humanism" (Gilroy 2018, 14, 8, 16, emphasis in original).

Tharoor's story references the famous medieval Mappa Mundi of the cartographer-monk Fra Mauro that places the south at the top and the north at the bottom. It's a map referenced in several postcolonial stories of the sea, like Abdulrazak Gurnah's 'Mid Morning Moon' and more obliquely in Ghosh's most recent novel Gun Island. Like the penguin projection, this kind of upside-down, south-centered map of the world highlights suppressed Southern perspectives—and not only in orientation but inclusion, of the Indian caravel that travels via the southern tip of Africa. Through its focus on the caravel's exploratory voyage South, the story places this tilted world in conversation with the oceanicity of the Southern Hemisphere. The Indian explorers of course, in the ironic ending, miss both the ice and the indigenous Yaghan peoples of Tierra del Fuego, but they discover the Southern Ocean instead (Tharoor 2017, 163).

Of course the other thing they miss is the chance to see penguins. In this story of human globalization, which at one level surfaces a suppressed South-South vision of lateral connectedness, there is a further layer of vertical marginality or hiddenness. It's worth

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noting that the apparent emptiness, in human terms, of the Southern Ocean is in fact inversely proportional to its exploitation, as histories of whaling demonstrate (Antonello 2017, 315). Whales were hunted almost to extinction, as were seals before them, and penguins before that. Penguins have actually thrived in the last century, because whaling took out most of the competition for their primary food source, krill. But now, penguin chicks are starting to freeze on their nests, because their feathers aren't waterproof yet when they're young, and dry Antarctic snow is turning to drenching rain as global temperatures rise. Plastic is being found in the deepest trenches, including of the Antarctic seas, and attempts to map the seafloor for science are already being put to use facilitating deepsea mining, set to begin in 2021.

Are there ways of convening a planetary and offshore humanism that can encompass also the penguin's perspective—not so much the penguin itself, as a perspective which reaches from land to ice, across multiple species, and not only across the sea surface but to its plundered depths? In another short story, by Ursula Guin from the middle of last century, we see a speculative glimpse of a penguin's view. The story is written as an entry in the science fictional Journal of the Association of Therolinguistics – which attaches the prefix 'thero' for 'wild beast' to indicate animal languages. In the case of penguin language:

The extreme difficulty of reading Penguin has been very much lessened by the use of the underwater motion picture camera. ... by constant repetition and patient study, many elements of this most elegant and lively literature may be grasped.

The author refers to "the poetry of the short-necked, flipper-winger water-writers", a kinetic literature that includes a work called "Under the Iceberg". Lauren Beukes has also gone under the ice in her story "Her Seal Skin Coat", following deep diving Weddell seals, and Mohale Mashigo has written of being eye-level with whales in a submarine future on the southern Cape coastline. Yvette Christianse more obliquely in her poetry invokes a "language of water/ of grains of salt blown up from the ocean", an elemental language which resists "squabbles between possession/and longing" and instead 'occupies the lower/ranges of confidence—forgoing what Gilroy might call "high altitude theorizing" in favour of "sea-level theory", one that embraces both species-humility and, as I'm arguing here, the lowly, watery hemisphere.

Following these writers and thinkers, and motivated by swiftly rising seas, we might find ways to assume a different critical position - southern, oceanic and even submarine - tilting to a planetary perspective from below.

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OCEANIC HUMANITIES: BELOW THE WATERLINE³ CONFIDENCE JOSEPH, RYAN POINASAMY, MEGHAN JUDGE & MAPULE MOHULATSI

What do mermaids, abalone, snoek recipes, and a lonesome sailor boradcast have in common? They're all research projects emerging from the Oceanic Humanities for the Global South project based in Johannesburg. Established in 2018, the project encourages research in the oceanic humanities, a field which puts humanistic inquiry in conversation with marine sciences, literary and cultural criticism, together with ecological insight. The project is a collaborative exercise in placing different kinds of knowledge in proximity about art, oceans and the South. The project comprises a network of researchers based in South Africa, Mozambique, India, Jamaica, and Barbados, as well as a local cohort of graduate researchers from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Mauritius. Let's hear now from some of the project's doctoral researchers as they introduce themselves and their project.

CONFIDENCE JOSEPH: Hi, my name is Confidence Joseph. I'm from Bulawayo in Zimbabwe. I'm based at WiSER and the African Literature Department.

RYAN POINASAMY: Hi, my name is Ryan Poinasamy. I joined Oceanic Humanities last year (2019) and just completed work on a research report where I was thinking with, and about abalone, the commercial extinction the species face in South Africa, and what multispecies environmental justice would look like for all those involved.

MEGHAN JUDGE: Hi, I'm Meghan Judge from Johannesburg, South Africa. I'm based at WiSER and I'm registered in the School of Arts.

MAPULE MOHULATSI: My name is Mapule Mohulatsi, based at WiSER. I am a PhD student in the African Literature Department at the University of the Witwatersrand.

JOSEPH: It has been argued that to a certain extent African literature has long been concerned with stories of the nation, of belonging, claiming of certain spaces both legally and illegally, projects of fighting back and claiming humanity and dignity. The common thread in most of these works is the privilege of not only the human subject, be they coloniser the colonised, but of land as the space of contestation. What happens when we reorient away from the land and all those narratives and allow for a turn towards watery spaces? This question hints at what oceanic humanities entails and the type of conversations it allows. By decentering land and allowing for a water return, we allow not only for new readings of old narratives, but a new way of viewing the world. Growing up in Bulawayo in Zimbabwe, my encounters with water bodies were limited. On the rare occasions that water bodies such as oceans were mentioned, they came out as part of some religious account tied to the fabled powers of holy water or linked to myths about spirits.

In particular, my grandmother often extolled the powers of seawater. And it was not uncommon in our house to find bottles of ocean water, reverently stashed away. These stashed bottles seemed to represent an extra layer of protection for the family. She also believed in water gods who could either bless or smite, depending on how one related with them. It is these stories that have fed my fascination with water spirits and that inspired my current work, which is on the representation of water spirits in Southern African literature. Rather than focusing on rural experiences and manifestations, my focus is on the literary gods, and how they're employed in different cultural projects. That is in novels, short stories, poems, songs, and in film. I explore how these metaphysical creatures upset the concept of time and space and instead offer perceptions of the world, outside of the familiar. Oceanic Humanities may call us to descend, rather than transcend, to unwire ourselves from terrestrial and human misperceptions, as we recognize a multitude of critical modes of being and knowing. I also ask, what happens when we take seriously other ways of knowing water, which cannot be proven within scientific discourse as we know it? When we privilege ways of knowing that are based more on intuition, and cultural attitudes. The main attributes and roles of these water gods in literature are as fluid as water itself, and it is this fluidity that enables water spirits to serve different purposes, depending on the author and the context.

POINASAMY: In thinking about abalone poaching, I was challenged by one question: Is the preservation of one species more important than any other? This question is posed by Shuhood Abader, an ex-abalone diver, who in his autobiography, co-written with the journalist Kimon de Greef, reflects on his life in what they call the underworld of abalone poaching. I was fascinated by his story, and that of his colleagues, because it provided a literal representation of the submarine, and drew me to thinking about the ways in which the ocean animates the livelihoods of many individuals, in this case, functioning as a source of income, among other things. More than just a recreational activity, diving has had a long history on the continent and abroad. So the report attempted to synthesize seemingly disparate literature from Abader's autobiography to aqua- farming websites, and a documentary on the history of mandrax in South Africa. I was thinking about the ways that abalone are not only exploited in terms of consumption commodity, but also the way scientific experiments have sought to extract and model technology of the shell structure of abalone. Multidisciplinary in its conception, oceanic humanities allows enough scope to engage with these human and non-human aspects of the ocean as we continue to think and rethink our relationship to water in this new age.

JUDGE: Many of the experiences I had whilst catching the winds across the oceans from the Cape to Mayotte on a small vessel have pulled inside me in private wet spaces. Something happened out there, parts of myself began to mix with the particles, gases, forces and pressures of the deep ocean. I have often found it difficult to speak into any of this, much of it felt like it had been pushed down into deep holes inside of myself. But over time, I've come to find ways of accessing these weathered imprints, feeling into them through the processes of making art. Often to access the holes, I found that I needed some material form of the ocean to explore with, such as salt. My most recent creative exploration, however, focuses on radio shipping networks, and the blurred line that these land based ways of knowing have when they reach far out to sea. In my Lonesome Sailor Shipping Report, I'm exploring a series of

broadcasts that don't stem from the usual locations. Instead, they broadcast from the site of the lonesome sailor, who has just slipped out of these land based signals long enough to have tuned into something else. Overall, this body of work explores concepts of the container that allows for encounters of difference, in this case between the human and the ocean. Recently, there's been a welling up of human-ocean focus in the art world. For example, there's been some thought into the watery climates and atmospheres that humans live within, as well as the human atmospheres and climates within which the ocean now lives. In both instances, there is a focus on power within these dynamics. But what if we are drawn to the site of amphibious potential, the site where human and ocean coexist with a modern human surface, so bound up in the Anthropocene, open to opens towards that which should others? Oceanic Humanities thinking allows for this kind of questioning to occur by drawing our attention to what is happening materially in the world around us. We are able to transmogrify with salt to infiltrate with water to rage to avoid the amphibious potentials of this, I found thickening time to stay longer with our own mutations. And it is here that we can begin to collaborate with the earth forces in meaningful and playful ways.

MOHULATSI: For me, the project at large works through how traditions of black thought have often operated at the limits of the human, in response to histories of racism and antiblackness in which black people have not always been accorded for their humanity. predominant space and place from which to re-explore notions of being. This re-exploration involves seeing blackness as not separate from ecological spaces and histories like the ocean, and offering a writing that engages with the more diverse ways the aquatic environment itself could be read and written. In fact, the sea has many ways of shifting from setting or backdrop to foreground as a key character. Reading the black aesthetic alongside the deep ocean has made me aware that there are other interesting characters the deep ocean presents to usaround the standard trope of food as a black diasporic sign or as a symbol of creolisation. Rather, I read the trope against the current so to speak, and think of a fish diaspora. I do this by looking into the life and times of snoek and codfish-their lives below and above the waterline. I argue that these species emerge as protagonists in both a biological as well as a social history of the Western Cape, the Caribbean, and the American South. In Soweto, where I'm from, the snoek and vetkoek joints operate from 06H00 in the morning until 10H00 latest. You cannot be seen sauntering the streets with vetkoek and snoek beyond that specific time. Also, it's just always best to get there early because the best snoek, big cuts with the right amount of bone does not last long into the morning. Dipped in atchar, a Hindi word for pickle, the snoek is salty and cut into small pieces sold at one Rand a piece. Recipes featuring snoek and cod are popular amongst slave communities, as both these species were used to feed slave populations, and have now entered the cultural food memory of South Africa, particularly the Western Cape, as well as the Caribbean and the American South. The question at hand, however, is whether these diets have any impact on the biological lives of these species; whether we can trace the afterlives of slavery, empire and capitalism through the recipe. Recipes and cookbooks present us with populations and species that slip in and out of markets. They translate worlds, intimately creolising inventiveness with pleasure, but also species death with the end of the world. Cookbooks and recipes are carriers of cultures

OCEANIC HUMANITIES: BELOW THE WATERLINE CONFIDENCE JOSEPH, RYAN POINASAMY, MEGHAN JUDGE & MAPULE MOHULATSI

histories and memories, often overlooked in ecological studies, especially post-colonial ecological studies. Cookbooks and recipes may be useful, especially if we seek to understand unexplored or rather unreachable realms, like the deep ocean, or even women's lives.

These four excerpts from Joseph, Poinasamy, Judge and Mohulatsi furnish a rich sense of how Oceanic Humanities Research addresses key questions facing Africa and the Global South. By going below the waterline, we relativise land-based perspectives and terra-centric nationalisms. We enter the world of ancestors in popular religion, finding a spiritually creolised submarine. We think about resource extraction from the ocean alongside multispecies injustice and grapple with how art can approach the scale of the ocean and rising sea levels and rethink slave histories from the sea floor. Oceanic humanities for the Global South encompasses the human and non-human, the surface and the depth, prompting new approaches to the aesthetic of water and producing decolonial histories of the sea.

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FACING A YEAR OF CANCELLED WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS. THE WITS INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH (WISER) TURNED TO PODCASTING. THE MAGIC OF THIS PODCAST IS HOW IT FACILITATES THE SHARING OF ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES OF THE IVORY TOWER. ITS FORMAT IS SIMPLE WITH ONLY ONE OR TWO GUESTS PER EPISODE KEEPING EACH SHORT AND FOCUSED. THIS ALLOWS FOR DENSE ACADEMIC TOPICS TO REMAIN DIGESTIBLE. WITH SOME OF SOUTH AFRICA'S FINEST MINDS TALKING ON TOPICS RANGING FROM **HYDROCOLONIALISM** TO MELANCHOLY. YOU'RE ABLE TO DIP IN AND OUT OF DIGITAL LECTURE HALLS AT YOUR OWN PACE.

DAILY MAVERICK