



XXXVth Eurethno Workshop (Council of Europe)

5th conference of the SIEF Francophone Working Group

16th conference of the SIEF Ritual Year Working Group

Campus Carlone, Nice, France

24-27 October 2026 – Université Côte d'Azur – LAPCOS UPR 7278

RI-NA-RI-CA

Ritualiser la nature, Ritualiser le « care »

Ritualizing Nature, Ritualizing Care

Scientific statement

The challenges of this conference consist of linking current debates concerning the relativization of the notion of "nature" (Descola, Abram, Tsing, Kohn), on the one hand, and those postulating the growing need for a thought of "care" (Gilligan, Mol, Kleinman, Nussbaum), on the other hand.

In a context of widespread crisis (economic and political, ecological and climatic), it is no longer sufficient to criticize the ethnocentrism attached to Western conceptions of "nature." These critiques are positive insofar as they have led to the rehabilitation of other visions of the world, in particular the "perspectivist" point of view (Viveiro de Castro), indigenous ontologies and epistemologies. They

also allow us to become more aware of the stranglehold that humans have over the planet, by insisting on the need to respect the diversity of living things and by fighting against extractivism and cultural appropriation. Finally, they nourish a "decolonial" thought that has become crucial in a globalized world. But a critical discourse that is content to deplore the advent of the "Anthropocene" (Crutzen) or the "Capitalocene" (Haraway) does not necessarily allow us to find effective solutions to the problems that contemporary societies repeatedly encounter.

It seems to us that a potentially fruitful way to address the difficult question of "solutions" is to cross or, at least, work towards a rapprochement between approaches to nature in the humanities and social sciences and the questioning of care and the ethics of care. To achieve this, we call for studies focused on the processes of ritualization, both collective and individual, of care and nature. How does progress in the thought of "care" require paying particular attention to "nature" and its manifestations? For example, what is at stake in the practices of naturopathy, sylvotherapy or in spiritual retreats "in nature"? What does the increasingly widespread desire to "reconnect with nature" mean, to include animals and plants, even everyday objects, in a reflection on humanity? What are the new forms of ritualization (Houseman, Boyer, Humphrey & Laidlaw) that are developing, and what do they produce at the level of groups and individual trajectories? How does the person manage, through these ritualized practices, to establish privileged relationships with their environment? How does the ritualization of "care" in daily gestures and habits, in encounters with care professionals, in its institutionalization, allow the development of new conceptions of ecology?

How, conversely, do advances in ecological thinking and our relationship with nature imply a renewed thinking about "care"? How does attention to the complexity of life intertwine with attention to oneself and to others? How can we apply this new sensitivity to nature in fields such as urban planning or design? How are human relationships with green spaces and diverse forms of life evolving as a result? How does the ritualization of our relationship with nature allow us to revitalize our relationship with ourselves and with those who constitute our "ecological niche," our social environment?

From a practical point of view, we draw on the different approaches and methods of the human and social sciences (pragmatic and cognitive approaches, micro-interactionists, but also cultural and social, contextual and configurational approaches), to provide answers to these questions and to envisage a common research agenda. We welcome proposals for communications exploring the place of natural elements (animals, plants) in the rituals of traditional societies, as well as studies on contemporary ritualization processes that involve a thought of "care" and/or nature. Among other possible themes, we would like to explore the reactions and militant desires provoked by ecological and environmental crises, post-traumatic rituals linked to climate disasters, ecopoetic approaches that accompany the mourning of natural spaces and fears linked to the Anthropocene, as well as any reflection on the relationships between ritualization of care and ritualization of nature.

Strategic aims of the conference

This conference is organized by the LAPCOS UPR 7278 research unit and the department of ethnology-anthropology of the Côte d'Azur University, together with the FER-Eurethno network (Council of Europe), the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF) and the French Society for Ethnology (SEF). Its aim is the international development of the research carried out there, in particular within Axis 1 "Territories and environments: multi-faceted approaches to living" and Axis 2 "Health: from well-being to aging well". This research concerns, among other things, the processes of loss and the management of post-traumatic situations (Jeanjean & Cler, Vinot), political

ecology (Mégret, Long), the relationships between collective rites and the environment (Fournier, Hameau), the history of territorial representations (Pisano), the psychology and anthropology of emotions and health (Karcher, Halloy, Corveleyn). The conference will strengthen the national and international outreach of Nice research teams through privileged partnerships with the SEF (French Ethnology Society), the SIEF (International Society of Ethnology and Folklore) and the FER-Eurethno Network (Council of Europe). A privileged place will be given to doctoral students, who are equal members of the conference's Organizing Committee.

At the Université Côte d'Azur level, the aim will be to strengthen the thematic coherence observed between the research carried out at LAPCOS on territorial and environmental issues, the EUR ODYSSEE "Society & Environment" program concerning major contemporary socio-environmental challenges, the activities of Axis 4 of the MSHS Southeast "Territories: Construction, Uses, Powers," and the institution's Strategic Plan concerning sustainable development. The conference will provide a basis for dialogue to encourage future research activities in conjunction with other laboratories at the University.

The conference dates have been specifically chosen to coincide with the AFEA (French Association of Ethnology and Anthropology) Congress, which will take place in Marseille on October 28-30, 2026. This context will allow international participants to minimize their carbon footprint if they wish to participate in both events.

Conference Program (see detailed program attached)

Saturday, October 24, 2026: Welcome at 9:00 a.m. and plenary lectures at the Carlone Campus (9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.). Free afternoon in Nice.

Sunday, October 25, 2026: Train excursion to Puget-Théniers (partnership with the Roudoule Ecomusée).

Monday, October 26 and Tuesday, October 27, 2026: Parallel sessions at the Carlone Campus. Roundtable discussions (PhD students and invited researchers) and closing conference on the afternoon of Tuesday, October 27, 2026.

Registration

Registration includes participation in the conference and lunches on Monday, October 26th and Tuesday, October 27th. Regular rate: €100. Reduced rate: €60 (unemployed, self-employed, and people in precarious situations upon presentation of proof).

Participation in the conference is free for students and staff of the Université Côte d'Azur.

The excursion on Sunday, October 25th is an additional cost. Single rate: €90.

Travel and accommodation expenses are the responsibility of the participants.

For any request please write at colloquelapcos2026@gmail.com

Organizing Committee

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Websites

Groupe Francophone de la SIEF : <https://www.siefhome.org/wg/franco/>

Ritual Year Working Group : <https://www.siefhome.org/wg/ry/>

SIEF : <https://www.siefhome.org/>

FER-Eurethno: <http://www.eurethno.altervista.org/>

Société d'Ethnologie Française : <https://sef.hypotheses.org/>

LAPCOS : <https://lapcos.univ-cotedazur.fr/>