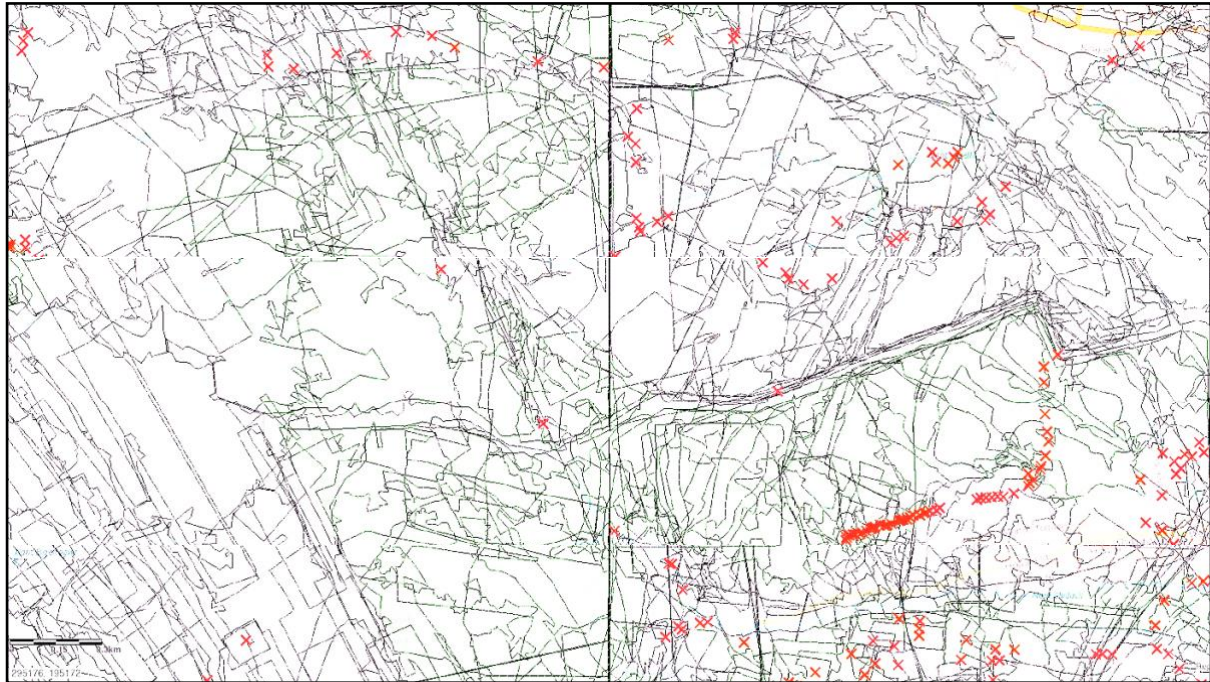


Keynote Speech for AHRA 2023 Research in Crisis: Methods and Tactics PGR Conference, hosted in Welsh School of Architecture

Source:

<https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/architecture/events/architectural-humanities-research-association-research-student-symposium-2023>

<https://ahra-architecture.org/events/research-in-crisis-tactics-and-methods>



Title: Drysfa'r Cymoedd*: The Sub-topographies of Industrial Crises of the South Wales Valleys. (*The Maze of the Valleys)

Dr Dimitra Ntzani

Abstract: The language theorist Cathy Caruth defines as traumatic our encounters, not with life-threatening events but with those that cause a break in our perception of time. She also suggests that the memory of trauma is always fleeting, leaving connections with the time and place of traumatic occurrence fragile and obscure. Caruth's definitions shape the work of contemporary geographers that argue that trauma is fundamentally unmappable. Does trauma's relationship to space change when traumatization is re-occurring and systematic?

To explore systematic traumatization's relationship to space, the presentation discusses Lauren Berlant's definition of re-occurring traumas, as *crises of ordinariness* and revisits the South Wales Valleys' coal mining heritage as traumatic and contested. Using the exceptional Aberfan 1966 disaster as a starting point, the presentation scrutinizes a more 'common' industrial crisis of the same period and explores its relationship to the industrial space by looking at its discursive and drawing records. In this journey, sketching out the spatial qualities of the colliery's maze is crucial for understanding the crisis' occurrence, belatedness, and commemoration.