

- **CV of the researcher**

Executive Summary

Dr. Alessandra Manzini is a postdoctoral researcher with a multidisciplinary background in political ecology, territorial planning, and the circular economy. This intersectional expertise positions her to be possibly an independent researcher in the next generation of research on SES's dynamics. She is currently a Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellow at CY Cergy Paris University, PLACES Lab (2024–2026) in Geography and territorial planning, with a dual position as a CASEs research group member at Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF) in Barcelona (six-month secondment). As an EUTOPIA SIF MSCA postdoctoral fellow, she is conducting the SPIRAL project, which builds on hypotheses developed during her PhD, amplifying the methodology rigor with quantitative approaches. The promising preliminary results of the SPIRAL project lay the foundation for a fresh understanding of sustainable management practices of Spiritual Landscape (SLs) which she proposes to explore further in GROVE's proposal. Preliminary findings have already been presented at conferences, such as the Ethnoarchaeology of Livelihood Practices (October 16–18, 2024 UPF, Barcelona, Spain) and the MDPI 4th International Electronic Conference on Forests, session on Forest Ecology and Management (September 23–24, 2024). At the latter, she presented a poster titled "*Mixed Methods to Assess Sacred Forest Management Practices in Togo, Benin, Senegal and Guinea*," which has been developed in a paper. In May 2024, she presented a paper entitled "*Guinean Sacred Forests' Social Ecosystems: Territories of Epistemic Resistance*" at the Fondazione Cini's Symposium: Materiality at the Intersection of Ecology and Religious Studies. Two more publications on mixed methodologies to assess sacred forest management practices have been submitted. Additionally, she chaired a panel at the European Conference of African Studies (ECAS) 2025 in Prague on *Ecospiritual Practices: Power Dynamics, Cultural Change, and Integrated Landscape Management in African Contexts*. At this conference, she will also present SPIRAL's research findings in African and Afro-diasporic contexts. Following the panel, the chairs compiled the authors' contributions into a volume: *Ecospiritual practices in African Contexts*, that has been submitted to Palgrave Macmillan for publication, and the publisher has invited them to submit the full manuscript by November 2025. During the fellowship she has given lectures at CYAS, EUTOPIA Sif, seminars at the Global studies master at UPF and the Heritage studies master at CYU. Two global symposia are planned as restitution events in Chiang Mai University the 5th of November and at CIFOR-ICRAF Africa in Nairobi on the 5th of February.

In 2022, she started a position as Principal Investigator for the 2BoSS project at Cleopa GmbH, focusing on circular economy and innovative new business models of post-lithium batteries. 2BoSS is an ERA-MIN-funded research project (1 million euros) that she has initiated, building the consortium and coordinating the submission alongside Prof. Andreu Cabot (IREC/ICREA), Prof. Pascale Chenevier (CEA Grenoble), and Prof. Blengini (POLITO). 2BoSS was shortlisted in the Enabling Innovation Competition at Advanced Engineering UK (November 2023), where she led the novelty's presentation. She has presented key findings of the research at conferences such as "The International Round Table on Materials Criticality (IRTC)". The paper "Adoption of Next-Generation Batteries: A Survey-Based Analysis of User and Expert Perspectives" has been published in the Mineral Economics Journal. Another publication, Batteries from Recycled Materials, is going to be submitted to the peer-reviewed journal Energy and Environmental Science as outcome of the BATS Symposium: Toward Sustainable Batteries Based on Sulfur Cathodes, held at the MATSUS24 Spring Conference (March 4–8, 2024, Barcelona), where she chaired a panel on Circular Economy. Throughout this postdoctoral experience, she has gained invaluable knowledge in scientific research and technology transfer, particularly related to LCA, Circular design of Lithium-Sulfur batteries (Li-S) and other emerging post-lithium sustainable innovations. She developed critical thinking on environmental assessment methods related to economics of Critical Raw Materials, mineral and metals extraction processes, Life Cycle Analysis (LCA), and S-LCA addressing just transition challenges. Her research interests explore State of the art in hotspot analysis and Distributed Ecological Conflicts in indigenous territories, particularly concerning multiple impacts such as biodiversity loss and threats to traditional/indigenous ecological knowledge. She remains committed to pursuing advanced research at the intersection between science, innovation, and socio-ecological systems dynamics addressing crucial interdisciplinary topics of our times. In October 2022, she earned her PhD in Regional Policies and Planning (Architecture, City, Design) from the Doctoral School at the University IUAV of Venice. After defending the PhD thesis: "Dynamics of Transition in Ecovillages of Senegal", she was honored with the Special Mention for Best Doctoral Thesis on Evaluation by the Italian Association of Evaluation (AIV) in 2023. The results were published in the Italian Evaluation Review (RIV). During and after her PhD (2018/2022), she published

seven articles related to her doctoral research in peer-reviewed journals and presented a working paper at the LDPI Conference in Bogotá (March 2024). She has participated as a speaker in eight conferences between 2022 and 2024 disseminating results related to her PhD work. Currently, she is working on her first book entitled: *Ecovillages: African livelihood practices of sustainability*, with a tentative submission at Springer Nature.

During her PhD, she served as an associate researcher at Cleopa GmbH, working part-time on international research projects related to the energy transition in Europe, including EPC4SES (ERANET) and D2EPC (H2020). Her tasks during this period included: project management, writing of technical reports, communication and dissemination activities including publishing scientific articles, presenting research findings at conferences such as EUSEW Energy Talk (October 2021) and CLIMA2022 (Rotterdam).

Her research has been supported by various competitive grants and fellowships, underscoring the relevance and innovation of her work. Notably, in 2022, she received a fellowship from the Ecole Doctorale des Ateliers de la Pensée in Dakar, where she refined her research methodologies for studying ecological transitions in African contexts, discussing research findings with distinguished scholars such as Felwine Sarr and Achille Mbembe. That same year, she received a grant from Dr. Elena Baglioni (Seedcorn Grant), Queen Mary Business School to assist with the literature review and application writing for her project, *An Archaeology of Reproductive Subsumption*, which was awarded the Political Economy Fellowship for 2023–2025 by the Independent Social Research Foundation.

From 2020 to 2021 she participated in the editorial board of the *Equilibri Journal* (Il Mulino) coordinating the Africa Focus inputs. Since 2022, she's been contributing as an author at *Equilibri Magazine*, writing digital articles about different topics: African paradigms, climate change and global environmental challenges. In 2024 a series of articles were published as a chapter *Prospettive Africane Emergenti*, in the book: *La società dell'educazione*. This role allows her to communicate complex scientific ideas to a broader audience.

In addition to her research, she has been actively involved in teaching and mentoring students, graduate and peer researchers through lectures and seminars. Some of her lectures and seminars include:

- *Science in Action* talk: Rethinking Forest governance through Indigeneity, custodianship and cosmoecologies at CIFOR-ICRAF, 17 September 2025
- Seminar 2025: Gender cultural changes at the intersection with ecology and religious beliefs in pre-colonial West Africa, *Grau en Global Studies*, UPF, Barcelona Spain.
- Science, Innovation and Political Ecology Intersection: evaluating Mining Extraction in Indigenous Territories of the West African Coast – Guest Lecture at CY Advanced Studies 2025, Paris.
- Seminar for EUTOPIA SIF Series (Post-Doctoral Research Network): Mixed Methods to Assess Sacred Forest Management Practices, November 7, 2024.
- Lecture at M.Sc. '*Economics for Ecological Transition*', Prof. Stefania Tonin, 2022 IUAV, Venice Italy.
- Seminar for PhD Students on '*Decolonial Urbanism: From Eurocentric Critique to Decolonizing Planning Practices*', Coordinators: Antonio di Campli, Camillo Boano, 2021, DIST | POLITO.

Between 2019 and 2023, she taught Technology and Arts at the secondary school level, focusing on developing students' critical thinking skills and understanding of sustainability and design. She also took two maternity leave breaks during her research career: 08/11/2017–08/11/2018 and 01/07/2020–20/12/2020.

In 2014, she obtained a Master of Science in Planning and Policies for Cities, Environment, and Landscapes from the University IUAV of Venice.

Some key research contributions between 2010 and 2017 include:

Fellow Research Assistant of Prof. Filesi (Botanics and landscape ecology), Department of Design in Complex Environments, University IUAV of Venice (2014–2016) assisting the phytosociological study of littoral ecosystems, creating cartographic datasets, monitoring activities, supporting the request for expansion

of a site of Community Importance (SIC) in the Venice Lagoon, leading to the publication: Filesi, L. et al, (2017) Pregio naturalistico del settore costiero antistante l'ex Ospedale al Mare (isola di Lido – Venezia) in Lavori - Società Veneziana di Scienze Naturali - vol. 42: 61 – 88

Researcher at the Department of Industrial Engineering, University of Padua (2014): Mapping intergenerational transmission of competences within traditional Arts & Crafts sector in Veneto. Conducting surveys and interviews, analysis of issues related to traditional knowledge loss.

Visiting Research Fellow at the Department of Urban Design, HafenCity University Hamburg, Germany (2013): She has conducted qualitative research for her master's thesis on the IBA's integrated urban regeneration programme for Wilhelmsburg. A critical analysis of the governance of socio-ecological transition.

Researcher and Assistant Project Manager at Planning and Climate Change IUAV/Strategic Planning Department, Veneto Region (2012): Researched Urban Heat Island mitigation strategies for the Venice-Padua metropolitan area.

Beyond academia, as a freelancer, she has been deeply involved in community-based action-research initiatives (2015–2020) on former military urban heritage landscapes, collaborating with multiple actors including European Council, Faro Venezia, EIUC, Survival International, etc. She ideated and curated FORTinFEST, a festival promoting diversity inclusion through cross-cultural performative arts with migrants' communities in the metropolis of Venice, while she was leading the participatory process for the bottom-up urban regeneration project of the former military site, Batteria Ca'Bianca, near Venice.

Her academic journey began with a bachelor's in human Rights and Cultures from the University of Bologna (2007), followed by a master's in international relations (2010). These studies laid the foundation for her future work in governance, policy analysis, and international cooperation.

Personal Information and Professional Profile

Surname: Manzini

First Name: Alessandra

Date of Birth: 03/02/1984

Nationality: Italian

Address: 1 Rue Descartes, Neuville sur Oise

Country of Residence: France

Email Address: alesmanzini@gmail.com; Alessandra.manzini@cyu.fr **Mobile Phone:** +39 347 0986606; +33 06 02835258 **ORCID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5679-7827>

LANGUAGES AND OTHER SKILLS

- **Native Language(s):** Italian
- **Other Languages:**
 - **English:** Fluent (C1)
 - **French:** Professional (B2)
 - **Spanish:** Professional (B2)
 - **German:** Basic

EDUCATION

- **08/11/2017 – 27/10/2022:** PhD, Doctorate School IUAV of Venice, Italy. Discipline: Architecture, city and design (Public Policies and territorial Planning, ICAR 20-21).
- **01/09/2011 – 24/04/2014:** M.Sc., University IUAV of Venice, Italy. Discipline: Planning and Policies for cities, environment, and landscapes (ICAR 20-21, LM48).
- **10/11/2007 – 20/10/2010:** M.A., ALMA MATER STUDIORUM University of Bologna, Italy. Discipline: International Relations (Faculty of Political Science, SP60).
- **01/09/2003 – 20/11/2007:** B.A., ALMA MATER STUDIORUM University of Bologna, Italy. Discipline: Human Rights and Cultures (Faculty of Political Science).

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- **01/09/2024 – Ongoing:** Marie Skłodowska-Curie EUTOPIA SIF Postdoctoral Fellow, CY Paris University. Seconded to CASEs Group, UPF, Barcelona (6 months).
- **01/10/2020 – 31/07/2024:** Research & Innovation Project Manager (part-time), Cleopa GmbH, Germany. From 2022 to 2024: Principal Investigator for the 2BoSS project.
- **01/02/2024 – 31/08/2024:** Proposal Writer and Innovation Consultant, R2M Solutions.
- **15/12/2022 – 30/11/2023** and **01/01/2020 – 30/06/2020:** Author, Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei, Milan.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- **29/01/2019 – 27/06/2019:** Secondary School Professor, Technology.
- **20/10/2020 – 31/08/2021:** Secondary School Professor, Technology.
- **06/09/2021 – 31/08/2023:** Secondary School Professor, Arts & Imagine.

CAREER BREAKS

- **08/11/2017 – 01/09/2018:** Maternity Leave.
- **01/07/2020 – 20/12/2020:** Maternity Leave.

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

- Manzini, A. (2025). Cosmoecology as a Relational Onto-Epistemology: A Review towards new conceptualisation for transdisciplinary research lines. *Progress in Human Geography*. (under peer review)
- Manzini, A., et al. (2025). Sulfur Cathodes: From Hype to Real Breakthrough Power. *Communications Materials*. (Under peer review)
- Manzini, A., Haenssger, M., Auclair E. (2025). Rethinking One Health through Social Sciences: Local Knowledge, Ecological Heritage, and Environmental Justice Towards an Integrated, Situated, and Participatory Approach to Human–Animal–Ecosystem Interactions. *Développement Durable et Territoires Special issue*. (Under peer Review)

- Manzini, A., et al. (2025). Mixed methods to assess Sacred Forest management practices Guinea, Togo, Senegal and Benin case studies. *Environmental Science and Policy*. (Submitted for peer review)
- Manzini, A., et al. (2025). Adoption of next-generation batteries: a survey-based analysis of user and expert perspectives. *Mineral Economics*. DOI: 10.1007/s13563-025-00492-z
- Manzini, A., & Madamidola, O. (2023). Shifting Imaginaries amidst the apocalyptic present: African Eco-fiction and cosmologies of connection. *Im@go. A Journal of the Social Imaginary*, XI(22), 247–272. DOI: 10.7413/2281813819581
- Kontopoulos, C., Vrakopoulos, K., **Manzini, A.**, et al. (2023). Design and implementation of a novel open-source web-GIS application for a harmonized EPC documentation across Europe. *Proceedings of SPIE*, 12786, 127860G. DOI: 10.1117/12.2682961
- Manzini, A. (2023). Dinamiche di transizione in eco-villaggi del Senegal: un disegno di ricerca valutativa. *Rassegna italiana di valutazione*, 26(83-84), 2022. DOI: 10.3280/RIV2022-083008
- Manzini, A. (2022). Book review of Maura Benegiamo, *La Terra dentro il capitale*. *Sociologia Urbana e Rurale*, 128. <http://digital.casalini.it/10.3280/SUR2022-128014>
- Manzini, A. (2021). Il ruolo femminile nelle pratiche di resistenza contadina dei territori Diola Kasa. *Ruralities - Contesti*, 2. DOI: 10.13128/contest-13042
- Manzini, A. (2020). L'ecovillaggio in prospettiva africana. *Equilibri*, 1. DOI: 10.1406/97558
- Manzini, A. (2020). Un modello endogeno di agricoltura sostenibile, Intervista a Bacary Badji. *Equilibri*, 1. DOI: 10.1406/97559
- Files, L., et al. (2017). Pregio naturalistico del settore costiero antistante l'ex Ospedale al Mare (isola di Lido – Venezia). *Lavori - Società Veneziana di Scienze Naturali*, 42, 61–88. *Role: Botanic survey assistant, cartographer, and data monitoring*.

Books and Book Chapters

- Manzini, A., Uimonen, P., & Djoudi, H. (Eds.). (2026). *Socio-ecosystem dynamics along the inner African frontier from Madagascar to Senegal: Ecospiritual practices in African contexts*. Palgrave Macmillan. (Under peer review)
- Sambou, C., & **Manzini, A.** (2026). Gnei-Gnei: Diola Kassa Cosmoecological principle for Sacred Forest Conservation ecospiritual practices. In Manzini, A., et al. (Eds.), *Ecospiritual practices in African contexts*. Palgrave Macmillan. (Under Peer Review)
- Manzini, A. (2026). Ethnoarchaeology beyond dualism. In *Looking at things differently*. LEIZA. (Under peer Review)
- Manzini, A. (2024). Prospettive Africane emergenti. In P. Alferj & N. Zanardi (Eds.), *Almanacco Equilibri. La società dell'educazione*. Equilibri Magazine.
- Manzini, A. (2022). Teatro-forum come pratica di commoning della transizione ecologica in eco-villaggi del Senegal. *Atti del convegno: La ricerca che cambia*. Officine Bembo.
- Manzini, A. (2022). *Dynamics of transition in ecovillages of Senegal*. Doctorate School, XXXIV cycle, University IUAV of Venice. (Doctoral Thesis)

Working Papers

- Manzini, A., Descroix, L., & Sadio, L. (2024). Peasant resistances value for global sustainability: three failed coastal grabs of metal mining projects in West Africa. *The Land Deal Politics Initiative (LDPI) Working Paper*. www.iss.nl/ldpi

Datasets

- Manzini, A., et al. (2025). Tree Canopy Cover Loss and Gain and land Use Change Geo Statistics. *Zenodo*. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15442724. (Ready for publication, linked to a *Land Use Policy* submission)
- Manzini, A., Martinez, L., & Harriavaara, P. (2025). Survey results: Adoption of next-generation batteries: a survey-based analysis of user and expert perspectives [Data set]. *Zenodo*. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14853932>.

Digital Articles and Blogs

- Manzini, A. (2025, February 19). No ka misti, let's avoid the destructive mining of the Varela coastline. *EJatlas*. <https://ejatlas.org/conflict/no-ka-misti-let-s-avoid-the-destructive-mining-of-the-varela-coastline>
- Manzini, A. (2023). Reinventare l'immaginario relazionale per un'economia del vivente. *Equilibri Magazine*.
- Manzini, A. (2023). La crisi ecologica è una frattura tra l'essere umano e il Cosmo. *Equilibri Magazine*.
- Manzini, A. (2023). Mbembe: pensiero planetario e politiche del respiro. *Equilibri Magazine*.
- Manzini, A. (2023). Ateliers de la Pensée laboratorio di cultura per sfide planetarie. *Equilibri Magazine*.

Conferences, Panels, and Presentations

- Pietrobon, E., **Manzini, A.**, & Patassini, D. (2026, September). *Mapping African approaches to urban planning: a critical overall effort*. Panelist at SGAS-VAD conference, Panel 5: Planetary Health, urbanization and natural resources.
- Rauchecker, M., Scheidel, A., Kuhn, D., & **Manzini, A.** (2026, June). *From alliances and coalitions to exclusions in environmental struggles?* Panelist at Pollen2026: Diverse Origins, Multiple Futures: The Stories of Political Ecology, Barcelona.
- Manzini, A. (2025, November). *Forêts et sociétés : dialogues interdisciplinaires*. Speaker in Paris, France.
- Manzini, A. (2025, October). *Sacred groves as living ecosystems of epistemic resistance in Diola territories of Lower Casamance and Guinea Bissau*. Speaker at PLAAS Conference Land, Life and Society, University of the Western Cape in Cape Town, South Africa.
- Manzini, A., Djoudi, H., & Unimonen, P. (2025, June). *Ecospiritual practices: power dynamics, cultural change, and integrated landscape management in African contexts*. Panel chairs at ECAS 2025, Prague.

- Manzini, A., Djoudi, H., Hertzog, A., & Biagetti, S. (2025, June). *SPIRAL Project's in African and Afro-Diasporic Contexts*. Speaker at ECAS 2025, Prague.
- Manzini, A. (2025, March). *New Materialism in Cross-cultural Ethno-Archaeology: a reframing of Matter and Agency applied to spiritual landscapes*. Speaker at LEIZA, Looking at things differently.
- Manzini, A., et al. (2024, September). *Mixed methods to assess Sacred Forest management practices in Guinean Forest of West Africa biodiversity hotspot*. Presented at the 4th International Electronic Conference on Forests session Forest Ecology and Management.
- Manzini, A. (2024, October). *Traditional ecological knowledge in Guinean Sacred Forest management practices*. Presented at the Ethnoarchaeology of livelihood practices conference, UPF, Barcelona, Spain.
- Manzini, A. (2024, June). *Decolonial African feminist perspectives in the Afrofuturist movement*. Speaker at the 12ème Colloque International des Études Mandé, Bamako, Mali.
- Manzini, A. (2024, May). *Guinean Sacred forests' social ecosystems: territories of epistemic resistance*. Presented at "Materiality at the Intersection of Ecology and Religious Studies" at the Giorgio Cini Foundation.
- Cabot, A., Chenevier, P., & **Manzini, A.** (2024, March). *Circular Economy*. Panel chair at BATS Symposium, MATSUS24 Spring Conference, Barcelona.

Seminars and Lectures

- **Seminar Organizer:** Seminar at CIFOR-ICRAF Nairobi, Kenya: *Indigeneity as a process of knowing and living forests in African contexts: towards a regional heritage sensitive climate policy analysis*. (February 2026)
- **Seminar Organizer:** Seminar at Chiang Mai University: *State-of-the-art on Heritage conservation policies of Sacred Forests and Spiritual Landscapes in the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot and Southeast Asia's Terrestrial Ecoregions*. (November 2025)
- **Guest Lecture:** *Gender cultural changes at the intersection with ecology and religious beliefs in pre-colonial West Africa*. (2025) Grau en Global Studies, UPF, Barcelona, Spain.
- **Guest Lecture:** *Science, Innovation and Political Ecology Intersection: evaluating Mining Extraction in Indigenous Territories of the West African Coast*. (2025) CY Advanced Studies, Paris.
- **Seminar:** *Mixed Methods to Assess Sacred Forest Management Practices*. (November 2024) EUTOPIA SIF Post-Doctoral Research Network.

Awards, grants & fellowships

SPIRAL EUTOPIA SIF Marie Curie Post doctoral fellowship (2024/2026) Horizon 2020
2BOSS project, 304.000euro Cleopa GmbH, founded by ERA-MIN network and German Ministry of Research
Special Mention Best Doctoral Thesis on Evaluation from Italian Association of Evaluation (AIV), 2023
Shortlisted Enabling Innovation Competition at Advanced Engineering UK, (November 2023)
Seedcorn grant, Queen's Mary Business School, London (May-July, 2022)
Grant and selected for Ecole Doctorale des Ateliers de la Pensée, Dakar (February-March 2022)
Ca'B Living Lab, Shortlisted by Welfare che Impresa, Fondazione Accenture, (July 2021)
FORTinFEST Selected by Open call Creative Time Summit 2015, Venice
Shortlisted MemoAtlante Associazione Poveglia x tutti, cheFare cultura e innovazione, Jul 2015
Social Fund Grant, University of Padua, Department of industrial engineering (Oct-Dec, 2014)
Erasmus Placement Grant, Department of Urban Design and Planning, Hamburg (Germany) (Jan-May2013)
Leonardo Grant, Environmental Protection Department, London Borough of Lewisham, London (UK) 2011