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Knowing to care and caring to know

Negotiating modes of care and knowledge in peatland restoration in Denmark

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2025

**Finnish Anthropological Society
Suomen Antropologinen Seura
Biennial Conference**

COMPARISONS

50th Anniversary of SAS/FAS



**16–18 June 2025
University of Helsinki**

 fas.helsinki.fi

 comparisons-25-conference@helsinki.fi

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WELCOME

to the 2025 SAS/FAS Conference!

The program of the 50th Anniversary biennial conference of the Finnish Anthropological Society is packed with activity. Two keynote lecturers - [Soumhya Venkatesan](#) as the conference keynote, and [Tom Boellstorff](#) as the Westermarck Lecturer, will set the stage of the main theme of the conference, Comparisons. There will be film screenings every day, both morning and afternoon, and eight parallel sessions of panel presentations every day, also both morning and afternoon.

In the evenings, there will be a welcome reception on the Monday, a courtyard party with food vendors, a 50th celebration cake and other events on the Tuesday, and a closing session to reflect on the three days on the Wednesday. There will be book launches and student panels, and one of the best-known anthropology podcasts in Finland, Antroblogi, will be around, so look out for them.

There will also be plenty of opportunities to talk to each other: the film sessions begin at 10 and the panel sessions begin at 10:30 each day, and there is 1.5 hours for lunch. That will give you time to look around, catch up with old friends and make new friends, and catch your breath as well. We want you to enjoy this conference to the full, rather than see it as an endurance test. This is an opportunity to celebrate anthropology, particularly in Finland, but also on behalf of all the parts of the world from which presenters have come to join us: 27 countries in all. We welcome every one of you.

Interesting times

Yet, while this is a time for celebration of a discipline that has grown and matured tremendously over the last fifty years in Finland, there is no escaping the fact that we are living in interesting times. Over the last few years, events have been piling up to such a degree that it has pushed many anthropologists, perhaps even the majority, into asking how the skills at which anthropology excels could be used to counteract some of the worst excesses of what has been going on in just about every place where anthropologists have been doing their research. In addition to doing anthropology, what else can we do when confronted with such seemingly insurmountable trouble? There will be many opportunities to think about that and discuss it during this conference, and it might be a good topic to raise in the closing session: there is no doubt that thinking anthropologically changes people; how might such thinking help to change other things?

THE THEME: COMPARISONS

The theme in this conference is **comparisons**, and the two keynotes from Soumhya Venkatesan and Tom Boellstorff will provide plenty of food for thought to guide the conference. Here, we provide a reminder of how the organizing committee wrote the call:

Comparison is political: it can generate assertions, judgements, impressions, hierarchies, critiques and questions that might lead to challenges to the status quo. Comparison is also impossible: what criteria are being used to compare and what is comparison for (Candea 2019)? These conditions make comparison(s) simultaneously essential, intriguing and disputed in anthropology, which makes them worthy as the theme for this conference.

Teresia Teaiwa (2006) has argued that comparative analysis ought to be viewed as a “path to humanism”, a way of making sure we learn from the past. Yet she also noted that comparisons and analogies reduce “complex histories and realities to simple characteristics and features”.

This captures a paradox at the core of comparisons, one that particularly affects anthropology. Anthropology’s comparative method invites us to “trim down and ‘control’ the plethora of material, drawing it back from a sense of infinite expansion” and focus on the main point (Strathern 2009). Webb Keane (2014) suggests that comparison involves the ability to think with others’ ethnographies along with our own from the constant movement between the intimacy of fieldwork and the distant gaze of theorists.

Two of the most important comparative projects in anthropology are “comparison” in the sense of finding commonalities, and comparison-as-contrast. Finding commonalities can generate political analogies, but also creates common denominators, classifies, and generalises, whereas finding contrasts works across often significant differences such as legal documents compared to Fijian mat weaving (Riles 1998).

Which brings us to a third comparative project: studying comparison itself as a practice used by people to navigate their daily lives, which often act as inspiration for our own theories of comparison and contrast. Specifically, how encounters between (more-than) humans can be shaped by practices of contrast and comparison. For example, essentialising differences between one group of people and another can be used to justify colonialism and appropriation of resources. Yet it is also possible to develop comparison as a method of recognizing how differences between self and other are constructed and, in doing so, opens the possibility for change.

HOW TO NAVIGATE THIS PROGRAMME

In this document you can find the conference programme, a practical guide to find your way in Helsinki and the university premises, and a list of participants and panels.

The programme comprises three sections: the “[Programme at a glance](#)” section provides a general overview of the three days. This is followed by a day-by-day schedule that lists the titles of each panel session and film in chronological order along with their respective time and place. You can find further details in the “[Panel and film details](#)” section, such as the themes of the panels, the titles and abstracts of the papers, and the name of their authors.

Next, you can find the abstracts of [Soumhya Venkatesan’s Keynote Lecture](#) and of [Tom Boellstorff’s Westermarck Lecture](#). Following the 2025 Edward Westermarck Lecture, the program will continue at the Faculty of Social Sciences courtyard. Participants can buy food from local vendors. A tent canopy will be set up in case of rain and some drinks provided by the conference organisers, but feel free to pop by the nearest Alko store for a genuine cultural experience (please check the Practical Information section for more info).

We will be celebrating [recently published books](#) by some of our conference participants on Wednesday during the lunch break (12:30-14:00, [Aula Rectoria](#)).

This document also includes a “[Practical information](#)” section, where you can find information about arriving in Finland, public transport, electricity plugs and sockets, emergency contacts, and maps and directions to the main venue and all the rooms where sessions will be held. You will also find information about certificates of attendance, suggestions about the usage of social media, and an overall description of the evening party and other extra activities. If you are new to Helsinki and feel like exploring it a bit, you might find our suggestions in this section as well. If you are travelling with kids and are wondering where you can take them to eat or play, we’ve got you covered! Please check our suggestions at the end of this “[Practical information](#)” section.

Finally, the last section includes [a list of all the panels](#) in their numbered order.

We hope that you will find this document useful, however, if at any time during the conference you need help or assistance, do not hesitate to contact us at comparisons-25-conference@helsinki.fi

We wish you a wonderful conference experience!

The 2025 SAS/FAS Conference Organising Committee

PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE

This page shows the overall programme of the entire conference, including both the Panel Sessions and the Film Screenings. The following pages show the programme of each day with titles of all sessions and their convenors or the titles of the films and their directors.

Please note: the Film Programme starts at 10:00 each day, i.e. 30 minutes earlier than the Panel Sessions.

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Time/Day* | Jun-16 | Jun-17 | Jun-18 |
| 10:00-12:00 | Film Programme** | Film Programme | Film Programme |
| 10:30-12:00 | Panel Sessions | Panel Sessions | Panel Sessions |
| 12:30-14:00 | Lunch break | Lunch break | Lunch break & Book Launches |
| 14:00-15:30 | Panel Sessions & Film Programme | Panel Sessions & Film Programme | Panel Sessions & Film Programme |
| 15:30-16:00 | Coffee break | Coffee break | Coffee break |
| 16:15-17.45 | Keynote Lecture | Westermarck Lecture | Closing session |
| 18:00 | Opening Reception | Courtyard Party SAS/FAS 50th Anniversary Master's thesis prize | |

*All times local, i.e. in Eastern European Summer Time (EEST) Time Zone, (UTC+3)

**Each film will be followed by a 15-20minute discussion with the filmmakers

PARALLEL SESSIONS AND FILM SCREENINGS

Monday, 16th June

| Time | Program |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10:00-12:00 | <p>Film screening</p> <p><u>The Hospitable Gaze (Konstantinos Kalantzis) - Studium 1 (F3020)</u></p> |
| 10:30-12:00 | <p>Panel Sessions</p> <p><u>Panel 2: Knowing Nature to care for it: ecological action in the making – Part 1 (Paula Palanco Lopez, Olli Haanpää) F2044</u></p> <p><u>Panel 3: Global and Public Health (Perpetual Crentsil, Vincent Jumbe) - Part 1 F3006</u></p> <p><u>Panel 4: Tensing Senses: Comparing/contrasting participant observation & sensory methods – Part 1 (Mari Korpela, Roger Norum) F3017</u></p> <p><u>Panel 6: Negative Capability and Productive Uncertainty in Crises of Closure - Part 1 (Kenneth Sillander, Ivan Tacey, Isabell Herrmans) F3004</u></p> <p><u>Panel 13: Imagining Resettlement: Disillusionment and the Paradox of Comparison – Part 1 (Jennifer Long, Stefan Millar) F3010</u></p> <p><u>Panel 19: Practice & Imaginaries: Comparing Digital Everyday in China and Nordic countries (Zhuo Chen, Jingwen Gan) U4075</u></p> <p><u>Panel 22: Contrasts and Analogies – Part 1 (Matti Eräsaari, Rodolfo Maggio, Sonja Trifuljesko) F3003</u></p> <p><u>Panel 23: Visible and invisible disappearance: affects, remembrance and justice practices F3005</u></p> |
| 12:30-14:00 | <p>Lunch (<u>Aula Rectoria</u>)</p> |
| 14:00-15:30 | <p>Film screening</p> <p><u>Flotacija (Eluned Zoë Aiano, Alesandra Tatić) - Studium 1 (F3020)</u></p> <p>Panel sessions</p> <p><u>Panel 2: Knowing Nature to care for it: ecological action in the making – Part 2 (Paula Palanco Lopez, Olli Haanpää) F2044</u></p> <p><u>Panel 3: Global and Public Health (Perpetual Crentsil, Vincent Jumbe) Part 2 F3006</u></p> <p><u>Panel 4: Tensing Senses: Comparing/contrasting participant observation & sensory methods – Part 2 (Mari Korpela, Roger Norum) F3017</u></p> |

| | |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>Panel 6: <u>Negative Capability and Productive Uncertainty in Crises of Closure – Part 2 (Kenneth Sillander, Ivan Tacey, Isabell Herrmans) F3004</u></p> <p>Panel 13: <u>Imagining Resettlement: Disillusionment and the Paradox of Comparison – Part 2 (Jennifer Long, Stefan Millar) F3010</u></p> <p>Panel 22: <u>Contrasts and Analogies – Part 2 (Matti Eräsaari, Rodolfo Maggio, Sonja Trifuljesko) F3003</u></p> <p>Panel 25: <u>Crosslocations, infections and comparison (Sarah Green, Avi Betz-Heinemann) U4075</u></p> |
| 15:30-16:00 | Coffee (Aula Rectoria) |
| 16:15-17:45 | <p>Keynote lecture - Auditorium (F2044)</p> <p>Soumya Venkatesan: Comparison: gains and losses</p> |
| 18:00 | Opening Reception (Agora) |

Tuesday, 17th June

| Time | Program |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10:00-12:00 | <p>Film Screenings - Studium 1 (F3020)</p> <p>Hanging Out (Mari Korpela)</p> <p>Our Little Garden (Sointu Toiskallio)</p> |
| 10:30-12:00 | <p>Panel Sessions</p> <p>Panel 2: <u>Knowing Nature to care for it: ecological action in the making – Part 3 (Paula Palanco Lopez, Olli Haanpää) F2044</u></p> <p>Panel 5: <u>Love at its Limits: Thresholds and Internal Comparison (Timothy Cooper, Garima Jaju) F3017</u></p> <p>Panel 7: <u>A Roundtable on Participatory Action Ethnography (Khalil Avi Betz-Heinemann, Konstantinos Apostolou) U4075</u></p> <p>Panel 10: <u>Disturbed Intimacies: Unmaking and remaking kinship through disappearance (Saana Hansen, Laura Huttunen) F3004</u></p> <p>Panel 16: <u>Coexistence as in-betweenness: everyday practices of comparison – Part 1 (Bruno Lefort, Saara Toukolehto) F3005</u></p> <p>Panel 17: <u>Studying Religious Communities: Reflections on ‘the Insider’ and the ‘Outsider’ (Emine Neval, Sumeera Hassan) F3003</u></p> <p>Panel 32: <u>Entangled Ways of Knowing: Ethical and Epistemological Innovations in More-than-Human Research (Hilal Alkan) F3010</u></p> <p>Panel 42: <u>Student Panel: the trials and tribulations of fieldwork F3006</u></p> |

| | |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12:30-14:00 | Lunch (Aula Rectoria) |
| 14:00-15:30 | <p>Film Screenings - Studium 1 (F3020)</p> <p>Walking with Fermenters (Kazu Ahmed, Meri Teperi, Salla Sariola)</p> <p>Panel Sessions</p> <p>Panel 2: Knowing Nature to care for it: ecological action in the making – Part 4 (Paula Palanco Lopez, Olli Haanpää) F2044</p> <p>Panel 16: Coexistence as in-betweenness: everyday practices of comparison – Part 2 (Bruno Lefort, Saara Toukolehto) F3005</p> <p>Panel 20: The Ethics of More-than-Human Research: Care, Responsibility and Practice (Alicja Staniszevska, Pilvi Hämeenaho) F3004</p> <p>Panel 24: Mediated portrayals of communities in the context of the war in Ukraine (Jukka Jouhki, Suvi Mononen) F3010</p> <p>Panel 27: Experience, Affect, Belief, Care (Toomas Gross) F3017</p> <p>Panel 29: Rethinking Infrastructure through Comparative Lenses: Climate, Environment and Cultures in Transformation (Ria-Maria Adams) F3006</p> <p>Panel 33: Religious ecologies compared: Ethnographic case studies from Africa (Timo Kallinen) U4075</p> |
| 15:30-16:00 | Coffee (Aula Rectoria) |
| 16:15-17:45 | <p>Westermarck Lecture Auditorium (F2044)</p> <p>Tom Boellstorff: <i>The Climate of Comparison</i></p> |
| 18:00 | Courtyard Party and 50th Anniversary celebration |

Wednesday, 18th June

| Time | Program |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10:00-12:00 | <p>Film screening- Studium 1 (F3020)</p> <p>Another Summer (David Edwards, Alzbeta Kovandova-Bartonickova)</p> |
| 10:30-12:00 | <p>Panel Sessions</p> <p>Panel 1: Cross-disciplinary comparison and the shaping of anthropological knowledge – Part 1 (Raluca-Bianca Roman, Jonathan Lanman) F2044</p> <p>Panel 9: Compensation and repair: Comparison and the measuring of incommensurable wrongs – Part 1 (Katja Uusihakala, Saana Hansen, Hanna Rask) F3017</p> <p>Panel 11: Ethnography of importance? Studying ‘minor matters’ in times of destruction – Part 1 (Tiina Järvi, Dalia Zein) U4075</p> |

| | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p><u>Panel 12:</u> <u>Comparative Tropes of Virality in Environmental Activism (Lukas Fort, Birgit Bräuchler) F3003</u></p> <p><u>Panel 14:</u> <u>Queer Grief (Antu Sorainen, Paul Boyce) F3004</u></p> <p><u>Panel 21:</u> <u>Mobilizing Repair and Hope in the making of Green Futures – Part 1 (Anu Lounela, Michaela Haug) F3005</u></p> <p><u>Panel 26:</u> <u>Activism for social and climate justice through digital, sensory, and hybrid ethnographies (Elisenda Ardèvol, Gemma San Cornelio, Ona Anglada, Sandra Martorell;) F3010</u></p> <p><u>Panel 28:</u> <u>In-between: Identity, Mobility, and Belonging (Olga Cielemecka) F3006</u></p> |
| 12:30-14:00 | Lunch and <u>Book Launches</u> (<u>Aula Rectoria</u>) |
| 14:00-15:30 | <p><u>Film screening - Studium 1 (F3020)</u></p> <p><u>Arkadaşloch - Nobody's problem (Nilay Kılınç)</u></p> <p><u>Panel Sessions</u></p> <p><u>Panel 1:</u> <u>Cross-disciplinary comparison and the shaping of anthropological knowledge – Part 2 (Raluca-Bianca Roman, Jonathan Lanman) F2044</u></p> <p><u>Panel 8:</u> <u>Collaborative Ethnography, Power, and Imagination (Maarit Forde, Amílcar Sanatan) F3010</u></p> <p><u>Panel 9:</u> <u>Compensation and repair: Comparison and the measuring of incommensurable wrongs – Part 2 (Katja Uusihakala, Saana Hansen, Hanna Rask) F3017</u></p> <p><u>Panel 11:</u> <u>Ethnography of importance? Studying 'minor matters' in times of destruction – Part 2 (Tiina Järvi, Dalia Zein) U4075</u></p> <p><u>Panel 15:</u> <u>Interdisciplinary approach to the study of queering grief (Elina Einiö, Antu Sorainen) F3004</u></p> <p><u>Panel 21:</u> <u>Mobilizing Repair and Hope in the making of Green Futures – Part 2 (Anu Lounela, Michaela Haug) F3005</u></p> <p><u>Panel 30:</u> <u>Navigating border divisions, (post?)colonial practices and citizenship regimes (Florian Stammer) F3003</u></p> <p><u>Panel 31:</u> <u>Well-being, Ideology, Economy, Work (Pia Hagqvist) F3006</u></p> |
| 15:30-16:00 | Coffee (<u>Aula Rectoria</u>) |
| 16:15 | Closing Session: Where do comparisons go now? Auditorium (F2044) |

KEYNOTE LECTURE



Comparison: gains and losses

Soumhya Venkatesan, University of Manchester

16th June, 16:15-17:45

Abstract

What do anthropologists do when we compare, what do people do when they compare? I show how comparison produces meaning, including fresh ways of understanding the world and making particular projects worthwhile by way of contrast. Equally, I ask: when does comparison stop being helpful? When might greater insights be gained by staying with things? I will think through these questions ethnographically as well as synthetically, the latter mainly by focusing on decolonisation and its aspirational reach.

Soumhya Venkatesan is Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Manchester. She is the author of *Decolonizing Anthropology: An Introduction* (2024, Polity) and the organiser of the Group for Debates in Anthropological Theory (GDAT). She has conducted ethnographic fieldwork in South India among Muslim weavers and Hindu priests, and in England among freedom-loving Brexiteers and pub philosophers.

2025 EDWARD WESTERMARCK LECTURE



The Climate of Comparison

Tom Boellstorff, University of California at Irvine

17th June, 16:15-17:45

Abstract

In this talk I explore comparison's potential for anthropological inquiry in climates of technological transformation, global warming, and authoritarianism. Such attention to emergence benefits from historical perspective. I thus begin with comparison as a diachronic versus synchronic project. How have time and space shaped meanings and practices of comparison? In a second line of analysis, I examine the productively troubled boundary between the comparative and the ethnographic. How does comparison both constitute and

destabilize the “fieldsite,” and culture itself? I then turn to comparison as method versus analysis. How does comparison shape fieldwork, how is it employed to convey the results of research, and how do these inform each other? A key point to emerge from this discussion is that the grids of similitude and difference through which comparison takes place are not ontologically prior to comparison itself. They are constituted through comparison, which is thus both emic and relational. I develop these analyses of comparison through two interlinked case studies: the metaverse and global warming. In so doing I will argue for the importance of comparison for theorizing the relationship between the online and offline, as well as formations of the real in the context of authoritarianism.

Tom Boellstorff is Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Irvine. A Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and former Editor-in-Chief of *American Anthropologist*, the flagship journal of the American Anthropological Association, their research has focused on topics including climate change, digital culture, disability, game studies, globalization, language, nationalism, queer studies, and the history of technology. They are the author of *The Gay Archipelago: Sexuality and Nation in Indonesia* (Princeton University Press), *A Coincidence of Desires: Anthropology, Queer Studies, Indonesia* (Duke University Press), and *Coming of Age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human* (Princeton University Press). They are coauthor of *Intellivision: How a Videogame System Battled Atari and Almost Bankrupted Barbie®* (MIT Press) and *Ethnography and Virtual Worlds: A Handbook of Method* (Princeton University Press), and coeditor of *Data, Now Bigger and Better!* (Prickly Paradigm Press) and *Speaking in Queer Tongues: Globalization and Gay Language* (Indiana University Press). Dr. Boellstorff's articles have appeared in venues including *American Anthropologist*, *American Ethnologist*, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *Cultural Anthropology*, *Current Anthropology*, *Disability Studies Quarterly*, *Games and Culture*, *International Journal of Communication*, *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, *Ethnos*, *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies*, *Media, Culture, & Society*, and *Visual Anthropology Review*.

PANEL, PAPERS AND FILM ABSTRACTS

Monday

Film

10:00-12:00

The Hospitable Gaze

97mins, 2024, Konstantinos Kalantzis - Studium 1 (F3020)

An ethnographic film that distils two decades of research in Crete's mountainous region of Sfakia, celebrated for its rugged traditionalism, while also stereotyped for its fierce illegality. Through photography, the film delves into the social imaginary concerning Others—tourists, and locals, hosts and guests, perpetrators and victims, ethnographer and his interlocutors—while examining the medium's power to reconstruct the past and illuminate the fragility and intimacy of the ethnographic encounter. The film makes the case that negotiations of boundaries of insideness and enmity are largely dependent on the force and the affordances of visual culture.

10:30-12:00

Panel details

Panel 2: Knowing Nature to care for it: ecological action in the making – Part 1

Paula Palanco Lopez, Olli Haanpää

The phenomenon of 'caring for the environment' is by no means new – environmentalist movements have existed consistently throughout the 20th century, and their roots expand far earlier than that (Haq & Paul, 2011). However, these prominently political movements are not the only way in which people have engaged with and tried to protect the natural environment: conservation, restoration, recycling, degrowth, alternative living (such as eco-villages, etc.)... all these are ways in which different social groups have tried to address various environmental problems, changing their relationships and knowledges about nature. So far, these organised actions have been well studied in isolation, in relation to particular socio-historical contexts. However, they share a connection as enactments of the same idea: there is a problem and there are actions humans can take to solve it. In this panel, we want to bring together stories and case-studies about how different groups of people conceptualise and know 'the environment' in order to care for it. What kinds of socio-ecological contexts allow these initiatives? What roles do these groups have in their societies, and how are these societal relations shaping their practices? We invite submissions that investigate (but are not restricted to) local citizen-led environmental restoration projects, activist movements that directly challenge institutional conventions and regulations, or alternative lifestyle groups that challenge the status quo through new practices and livelihoods. With this, we want to

showcase the diversity of ways in which knowledge generation about ‘nature’ and ‘the environment’ – and the relations that are formed in the process – shape ecological action.

Amey Zhang, *Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society*

Knowing Nature, Lacking Culture: Maintaining Spaces in a Wilderness Homeschool

In this paper, I explore how a concern about ‘culture-lessness’ shapes the environmental action of educators and parents in rural New York state. In a social environment marked by the discontinuity between generations and a prioritization of individual choice, this group of adults offers a lens for viewing harmful relations with the environment in terms of a ‘lack of culture’: the absence of stably transmitted, many-generational practices that scaffold learning to relate to nature. Based on 10 months of ethnographic fieldwork, this paper investigates how educators and parents address this problem of ‘culture-lessness’ through a wilderness homeschool that mentors children in “deep nature connection.” Through this homeschool, adults seek to create spaces in which, through the conscious effort of adults, children can experience a type of interaction with nature that is construed as spontaneous, effortless, and unmediated. What is it about certain child-nature experiences that these adults value and invest great effort in reproducing? What tools do communities develop to create and maintain spaces that they do not perceive to be supported by their broader cultural environment? How do practices change when they are no longer motivated by necessity or tradition, but are rather consciously and effortfully chosen for the end of nature connection? How do the motivations and abilities of children, growing up in changing environments, alter the ideals of nature connection as they are put into practice? And how are ideas of ‘nature’ and ‘the environment’ created in this context?

Elena Palma, *Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society (LMU)*

Learning to Care for the River in a Sacrifice Zone

Mapuche-Pewenche people living in Alto BioBío in central Chile used to develop a narrow relationship of care towards their Mapu (land) and the whole Itrobill Mongen (everything that is alive). Children learn to care in the family context during childhood, spending much time outside, in contact with the environment. During the last decades, the life of Pewenche people has changed due to globalization and capitalistic processes, and the access to their land and water has drastically diminished, converting the territory into a “sacrifice zone” (Lerner, 2010). What are the consequences of this privatization and land exploitation in how children learn to relate to their Mapu? How do the community respond? To answer these questions, we’ll look at the specific case of the Ralco and Pangué’s dams in the BioBío river and how these constructions have affected the Mapuche-Pewenche community of Kallaqui and the relationships with the BioBío. A river that was described to the ethnographer as “a dear friend, someone you could trust” was then described as a “dead” river, “untrustworthy, unpredictable”. In a scenario of progressive detachment, a group of people have started kayaking the enclosed river BioBio. They have started an environmental and kayak school for local Pewenche children called Kayakimün, where children they learn to sail the river, its ecological and cultural significance. Drawing on a 16 months fieldwork, I will focus on children’s experiences and the role of white-water sports in developing a relationship of care with the river.

Laura Wickström, *The Polin Institute, Åbo Akademi University*
Comparisons Between Contemporary Voices of Eco-Islam

This paper presents four distinguished theorists and activists within the environmental discourses in Islam, or what could be called Islamic eco-theology or eco-Islam, and their views on climate change. These four scholars are Fazlun Khalid (1932-), Ibrahim Abdul-Matin (1977-2023), Nawal Ammar (1958-), and İbrahim Özdemir (1960-). Khalid is the leading figure of Islamic environmentalism and the founder of the Islamic environmental organization Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences (IFEES). Abdul-Matin is the founder of an Islamic environmental movement called the Green Deen and was an advocate of an eco-sensitive lifestyle. Throughout her work, Nawal Ammar has emphasized the diversity within Islam based on various indicators such as geography, technology, culture, education, socio-economic status and political engagement. İbrahim Özdemir is a Turkish scholar and the first Muslim to complete a Ph.D. in Islam and environmental philosophy. He was part of a group of Muslims who began to reflect on Muslim perceptions of the environment and climate change in response to the 2015 Paris conference. This later resulted in the Islamic Declaration of Climate Change. These scholars and activists are selected because of their importance and inspiration for the development of the environmental thinking and environmental action. They also represent different interpretations of Sunni Islam. The aim is not to conduct a Qur'anic study, but to present the interpretations and arguments of these four scholars and activists through the concepts of social justice, reinterpretation and, radical environmentalism.

Olga Cielemecka, *University of Eastern Finland*

Bordering natures and forest doubles. Weaponization of natural environment for anti-migrant politics in the Polish-Belarusian border crisis

Weaponization of natural environment for anti-migrant politics in the Polish-Belarusian border crisis. Polish filmmaker Szymon Ruczyński's animated short 'There are people in the forest' takes viewers to the Polish-Belarusian borderland to speak of the ongoing humanitarian crisis that transpired in 2021 when groups of migrants and asylum seekers clandestinely traversed the area on their route to Europe. The camera zooms out revealing a dense and ample wilderness area and, between the trees, hidden in the thicket are people on the move – walking, hiding, shivering from cold, getting into cars, being pushed-back. This paper focuses on the doubling of the borderland space – on the one hand, we have a border-adjacent heritage forest that serves as a biodiversity hub and a significant wildlife corridor and is protected under national and European nature protection schemes. On the other, it is also a securitized hostile environment whose natural features have been weaponized against border transgressors (De Léon 2015; Czerny et al. 2022; Hameršak and Pleše 2021). In contrast to how the heritage forest is curated to provide nature experiences for visitors and nature enthusiasts, managing wildness as a tool for anti-migrant politics produces a vastly different effect within the same place. When principles of nature conservation and border management goals are at odds with each other, what (which bodies, mobilities and ecologies) is being granted protection? Teasing out the themes of doubling, contrasting and comparing, this paper analyses the process in which the functions and forms of the natural environment are 'doubled' to produce a technology of bordering out deportable others.

Panel 3: Global and Public Health – Part 1

Perpetual Crentsil, Vincent Jumbé

Many factors determine health and social well-being. Comparisons can be made about these factors such as the nature of health systems, health promotion efforts, healthcare delivery services, and medical facilities. Socioeconomic conditions, patterns of consumption associated with food and communication, demographic patterns, urbanisation, ease of global travel and advanced technologies can lead to better health outcomes but increase the vulnerability to poor health. How do implementations and strategies compare between countries in the Global North and South, in rural and urban dynamics, regarding gender, reproductive health, etc.? This multi-disciplinary panel welcomes papers from medical anthropologists and researchers on culture and health. Topics include (but are not limited to): care (formal/informal); drug procurement and distribution; health and civil society practice in Global North and South; drug research and development; traditional healing; cultural adversity and adaptation in Global Health practice; economic and political aspects of medicine; political economy of inequality; migration and health inequalities; multispecies ethnography; new (medical) technologies; globalisation and health risks.

Saana Raittila-Salo, *University of Helsinki, University of the Witwatersrand***Pragmatics of neglect: Unmet long-term care needs of older adults in rural South**

Family caregivers of older adults in rural South Africa may be viewed as neglectful by social services even when the deficits in care are due to the complexities of poverty, social inequality, and lack of formal support. In this paper, I use the perspective of unintentionality to reconceptualize neglect of older adults in resource-poor settings. Drawing on 8.5 months of multi-sited household ethnography in rural South Africa, I focus on selected family case studies to address the incapacities to care in family social networks. The research on which I draw included 111 home visits to 13 Mozambican-background families (formal participants, n=39), complemented by interviews with professionals (n=24) and visits to local services, such as the old age home and church gatherings. Mozambican-background families were resourceful in navigating their family networks and in finding support from the community, but extreme poverty and years of lack of documentation overshadowed their everyday survival, and many family caregivers struggled financially, resulting in prioritizing income generative activities over care work within the household. This study informs community-based interventions in Southern Africa through validating local understandings of aging, care and human needs. Social workers could better support family caregivers by addressing the root causes of the lack of care for older adults before interpreting struggles in families to provide care as familial neglect. The study points towards the application of social network-informed interventions to identify care support from family and kin, community helping structures, and broader social networks.

Aleksi Hupli, *Tampere University / Emerging Technologies Lab***Comparing medical psychedelics and cannabinoids for alcohol use disorder**

Science on mind altering substances, like psychedelics and cannabinoids, is witnessing a renaissance especially since the turn of the second millennia. While cannabis as medicine dates back several centuries around the globe (e.g. Russo 2007), mid-20th century also

witnessed promising clinical results using psychedelic-assisted therapy (PAT) for instance in the treatment of drug-induced addiction and end-life-anxiety (e.g. Garcia-Romeu et al 2016). Since 1960s and 1970s research on both was heavily restricted via international and national drug scheduling which continue to create barriers for research (Nutt et al 2013). However, nowadays increasing amounts of pre-clinical and clinical research projects around the globe are investigating their potential to treat various disorders, both psychiatric and somatic (e.g. Garcia-Romeu et al 2016). In this paper I will investigate the social life cycle, or biography (Van der Geest et al 1996) of the above-mentioned mind-altering molecules by focusing on recent clinical developments in treating alcohol use disorder. I will compare psilocybin-assisted therapy developments with treatments using cannabidiol (CBD). This comparison can bring forth several relevant differences between psychedelic and cannabinoid-based treatment modalities. For example, in the case of psychedelics, the treatment protocols developed currently are mainly in the form of medication-assisted (psycho)therapy, in which psychedelic technologies are used to facilitate and enhance (psycho)therapeutic processes. Cannabinoid-based medicines on the other hand are used more as a substitution for alcohol among patients (e.g. Subbaraman 2016) or to treat cravings (Burnette et al 2022). References (not included in the word count): Burnette et al (2022) Novel Agents for the Pharmacological Treatment of Alcohol Use Disorder. *Drugs* 82, 251–274 Garcia-Romeu et al (2016) Clinical Applications of Hallucinogens. *Experimental and Clinical Psychopharmacology*, 24 (4) Nutt et al (2013) Effects of Schedule I drug laws on neuroscience research and treatment innovation. *Nat. Rev. Neuroscience* Russo, E. (2007) History of Cannabis and Its Preparations in Saga, Science, and Sobriquet. *Chemistry. & Biodiv.*, 4(8) Subbaraman (2016) Substitution and Complementarity of Alcohol and Cannabis: A Review of the Literature. *Sub. Use & Misuse.*, 51(11), 1399–1414 Van der Geest et al (1996) The Anthropology of Pharmaceuticals: A Biographical Approach. *Annual Review of Anthropology*.

Md Tahmid Hasan, *University of Helsinki*

Well-being in-making: An Ethnography among Bangladeshi Students in Finland

Finland has witnessed a surge in education migrants, commonly called international students, from the Global South in recent years, with Bangladesh consistently among the top-origin countries. Yet, their lived experiences and well-being remain largely underexplored. Being a Bangladeshi student in Finland, I addressed this gap by conducting an ethnography with peers in multiple Finnish universities, using a participatory approach. Yet, their lived experiences and well-being remain largely underexplored. Adopting a participatory approach, I conducted an ethnography with peers in multiple Finnish universities employing brainstorming cafés, in-depth interviews, and participant observation in a social media space. Engaging with my interlocutors, I argue that education migration defies the neat dichotomy of “education for immigration” and “immigration for education,” emerging as an interactive process involving humans (migrants, non-migrants, hosts) and non-humans (policies, technology, states) within the broader context of power, historical legacies, and everyday interactions. The interplay among these aspects reveals the multiplicity of their liminality, i.e., as a student, immigrant, non-resident Bangladeshi, and part-time worker, shaping individuals’ meaning-making process and rendering well-being a concept perpetually “in-making.” This fluidity and dynamic definition of well-being highlights the shifting aspirations and migration motivations while challenging the initial colonial-inflected visions of a ‘better life in the West.’ Therefore, education migration constitutes an ongoing, relational endeavor of becoming, and by tracing

how these migrants occupy—and seek to transcend—forms of liminality, this research enriches anthropological debates on transnational mobility, power, and identity.

Perpetual Crentsil, *University of Helsinki*

Researching Cancer among African migrants in Finland

This paper discusses conducting research on cancer among African migrants in Finland. It examines methods for data collection, privacy and confidentiality issues that also show cancer as a disease—a process—embedded in social practices, perceptions and spaces within mundane social structures as well as relations that affect each other in interesting ways. Respondents' notions about cancer also express ideas outside of clinical/biomedical explanations. There are various sites of belonging and not belonging that legitimise or contest one frame of reference over another and affect the research procedure. Intersectionality and regimes of practices based on demographic, social, economic, gender, and cultural variables affect notions about cancer even as confidentiality and ethical considerations also influence the researcher's positionality, data collection and methods for knowing. Secrecy and privacy about cancer also compares with researching HIV/AIDS in Ghana/Africa. This paper is based on an ethnographic research on cancer prevalence and complications among African migrants in Finland (and on my previous study of HIV/AIDS in Ghana) using participant observation, unstructured interviews and conversations as well as a questionnaire survey for data collection. Keywords: cancer; perceptions; HIV/AIDS; confidentiality; positionality; African migrants; Finland.

Stephen Egharevba; **Perpetual Crentsil**; *University of Helsinki*

Minorities' perceptions and anxieties about policing during covid-19 in Finland

Many research studies have premised that ethnicity or minority status is one of the most striking factors producing apprehension or dissatisfaction with the police. This paper discusses African and Asian migrants' perceptions and anxieties about policing during the COVID-19 period in Finland. Migrants often bring unique perceptions and anxieties that contribute to their vulnerability within the broader society. The findings in this study indicate that most of the respondents are concerned about the police based on their anxieties or perceptions which influence certain attitudes towards the police, whether negative or positive. This paper argues that minorities, often marginalised in societal hierarchies, perceive bias in police attitudes and behaviours, which they view as reflective of the broader Finnish policing ideology. Keywords: COVID-19, policing, anxieties, perceptions, migrants in Finland.

Panel 4: Tensing Senses: Comparing/contrasting participant observation & sensory methods – Part 1

Mari Korpela, **Roger Norum**

In the practice and imagination of anthropology, participant observation has long been at the core of both how anthropologists collect their data and how anthropological knowledge is generated. At the same time, while sensory methods are clearly having a moment, a number of the discipline's constituent "novel" methodological approaches (e.g. ecoacoustics, visual or tactile tools, artistic interventions) have themselves historical roots that indeed date back well over a century. Reflecting critically on the compulsion researchers often feel to innovate and invent 'novel' research methods, this panel reflects on what is actually being gained by explicitly including sensory methods in the anthropological toolkit. How does the data

generated by such approaches compare with "traditional", tried-and-tested ethnographic research? How much does methodological experimentation actually add to our work (considering that anthropological textual output is often evaluated via rather conservative metrics)? Is classical participant observation best understood as the very essence of what anthropology does, or should it be seen rather as a point of departure for a discipline that desperately needs to evolve? This panel welcomes papers that critically elaborate on various traditional anthropological and newer sensory ethnographic practice, considering distinct methodological approaches and experiments.

Maria Nätyнки, *University of Oulu*

"I need to feel what they feel". Exploring touch with sensory research methods

Two articles (one published, one half-completed) draw on my ongoing doctoral research project 'Embracing wind, calming water, and healing rope'. Pleasure through touch in multisensory more-than-human relations. The project explores human - more-than-human touch within selected groups of people who form meaningful and pleasure-giving sensual relationships with natural bodies and making worlds by these sensory engagements. The first article reveals three women's more-than-human tactile companionships with trees and water. The second article will uncover how naturists are seeking tactile more-than-human pleasures from nudity. I consider touch as more-than-human tactile entanglements, which offers a novel perspective on gendered and sexualised bodily 'becomings'.

In this presentation, I will critically elaborate on how I briefly entangled with these peoples' tactile entanglements in certain places, times, and materialities with the sensory ethnography research methods used: go along interviews, thick participation, and touch walking. The latter is my hybrid 'experiencing-with method', created from existing walking methods previously used to explore olfaction and soundscapes. I also collected 'touch biographies', written accounts, where the participants recall their touch histories, to enrich the empirical data. I also wrote pages of field notes to capture the course of events and self-reflection. I claim that there are many strengths of the experiencing-with method. It attuned my body to haptic knowledge of natural bodies, multisensory impressions of the environment and affective engagements with the natural bodies in a way that extends beyond words. However, it can be still questioned whether these 'novel' methods are just revamped versions of participant observation.

Galina Kallio; Will LaFleur, *University of Helsinki*

Sensing farming landscapes

The everyday and long-term practices of small-scale agroecological farmers are, at their core, profoundly sensory. Farmers sink their hands into the soil, examining its smell, texture and life through touch, sight, and smell; they move along rows of diverse crops, looking, touching, and tasting to discern what is growing, what is thriving, and what is struggling. These embodied practices are deeply attuned to the rhythms of the landscape, whether or not an ethnographer is present to label them as such. The role of the ethnographer, however, is not to impose a definition but to illuminate the inherent sensuousness of such work--to narrate and detail the material world in which farmers dwell and correspond. In doing so, s/he reveals the practical concerns of farming as inseparable from broader socio-ecological, economic, technological, and political contexts. As the ecological crises intensify, these farmers are increasingly viewed through two dominant frames: as agents of carbon sequestration, and as key informants in understanding the attentive, more-than-human relationships and sense-abilities of nonhuman

species. Yet, both perspectives lean heavily on natural scientific representations--modeling carbon flows, visualizing microbial life under the soil--relying on methods that render these processes shapeless, odorless, tasteless, soundless, and invisible to the human eye. In doing so, they paradoxically sideline the sensory ways of knowing that are integral to farming landscapes. We propose a critical re-examination of the sensory and its role in ethnography, particularly in capturing the aliveness, sense-ability, and multispecies entanglements that define more-than-human worlds. By tracing these sensory dimensions, we seek to restore attention to the embodied, sensuous practices that constitute farming, raising a conversation about bringing the sensory back into the foreground of how we understand and engage with farming landscapes that are always and inherently more-than-human.

Rye Hickman; Valerie Nelson, *University of Greenwich*

Resonating fields: soil bioacoustic in multi-species ethnography

This paper examines how soil bioacoustics, an emerging method for conservation monitoring, offers both complementary and contrasting approaches to ethnographic knowledge production. Drawing on fieldwork that combines classical participant observation with acoustic monitoring of soil ecosystems, this research demonstrates how sensory methods can enhance conventional anthropological approaches. By comparing data gathered through human-centred participant observation with bioacoustic recordings of soil organisms, this study reveals the methodological tensions and opportunities that emerge when bridging natural science techniques with anthropological inquiry.

The paper analyses three key comparisons: first, between the temporal and spatial scales accessible through participant observation versus bioacoustic monitoring; second, between the types of relationships and interactions revealed through each method; and third, between the forms of knowledge produced when combining these approaches. Through detailed examination of agricultural and conservation field sites, the research demonstrates how bioacoustic methods can capture otherwise imperceptible multi-species interactions while simultaneously contextualizing these findings within broader social and cultural frameworks revealed through traditional ethnographic engagement.

This methodological innovation contributes to ongoing debates about the evolution of anthropological methods by showing how sensory approaches can expand the discipline's comparative capabilities without abandoning its foundational techniques. The paper argues that soil bioacoustics, when integrated with participant observation, enables a more nuanced understanding of human-environmental relations while also challenging anthropology to reconsider its methodological assumptions. This comparison of methods ultimately reveals how different forms of attention and documentation can generate complementary insights into the complex relationships between human and non-human actors in more-than-human soil relational webs.

Catrien Notermans; Anke Tonnaer; *Radboud University*

Sensing the river: innovative designs for more-than-human research

This paper explores how to expand our 'traditional' methodological toolbox for ethnographic fieldwork beyond the human. Methods of collecting and representing ethnographic data, generally, take spoken language and written reports as the fundamental ways of transmitting knowledge. These are essentially anthropocentric and logocentric, and thus tend to disregard the knowledge gained from sensorily connecting beyond the human (Gatt & Lembo 2022).

Post-anthropocentric scholarship, however, explicitly asks for such embodied knowledge. Our paper addresses the question of how sensory methods combined with artistic design and participatory research may help us to incorporate more-than-human actors in our ethnographic research, to connect and create familiarity with 'nature' bodies and subsequently listen to these other-than-human 'voices'. We critically reflect on our methodological experiments that were meant to collect new narratives on more-than-human relations in the multi-sensory landscape of the river Waal in the Netherlands, one of the country's largest rivers, flowing from Germany to the North Sea. In reaction to dominant anthropocentric hydraulic discourses we experimented with multimodal artistic design to make the Waal tangible as a living body and to give expression to the unwritten affect and attachment people foster for the river. These experiments were done together with the river Waal, students of Anthropology at Radboud University, and citizens of the city of Nijmegen, the town for which the Waal is the central body of water. Our paper presents the insights of the experiments and reflects on what we gained by including these sensory and artistic methods in our anthropological toolbox.

Panel 6: Negative Capability and Productive Uncertainty in Crises of Closure – Part 1

Kenneth Sillander, Ivan Tacey, Isabell Herrmans

This panel explores the productive potential of Indigenous Peoples' open ways of life and their embodiment of "negative capability" in contemporary crises of closure. John Keats' concept of negative capability – "the ability to remain in uncertainties, mysteries, and doubts without the irritable reaching after fact and reason" – is adopted to reframe Indigenous challenges and conditions for resilience. Beyond viewing negative capability merely as an intellectual capacity to dwell in uncertainty and embrace ambiguity, we propose extending it to Indigenous Peoples' (and other marginalized groups') often profound practical abilities to bear with precariousness and hardship and make do with available material resources. Historically, endemic socio-political, economic and environmental uncertainties have prompted many Indigenous groups to develop markedly flexible traits and pronounced "orientations of openness" as means of creative adaptation (e.g., fluid socialities, diversified subsistence strategies, relational inclusiveness, eclecticism, opportunism, and pragmatism). However, the distinct nature of their contemporary conditions – such as environmental degradation, land dispossession, commodification and state-driven schemes of inscription and purification – pose unique challenges to their established lifeways. The challenges arise as growing "certainty" – fixed boundaries and identities, resource scarcity and reduced autonomy – narrows the scope for "productive uncertainty." By examining the intersection of these dynamics in a comparative perspective, we aim to probe the specific utility of negative capability and open orientations while recognizing their limits. We invite case studies and theoretical reflections illuminating these dispositions and their articulations with closure and persisting uncertainty in diverse domains including socialities, epistemologies, religions, economies, and environmental relationships.

Kenneth Sillander, *University of Helsinki*

Coping with and through uncertainty

A growing body of work in anthropology and beyond has frequently reframed uncertainty and cognate phenomena (ambiguity, detachment, disjuncture, mistrust, risk, volatility, etc.) as productive conditions generative of opportunities and agency. This paper contributes to this

line of inquiry by queering the rationale and affinity of a range of different sociocultural attributes that are shared by many Indigenous groups of insular Southeast Asia. These attributes include diverse economic, social, and cultural dispositions such as resource diversification, economic opportunism, organizational flux, residential mobility, onto-epistemic porousness, pragmatism, personal autonomy, egalitarianism and the doctrine of opacity of minds. The paper proposes that these orientations may be considered as connected facets of a cultural matrix of means of coping with and through uncertainty. In distinction to James Scott, who has understood many of these qualities as strategies of state evasion, I propose they rather form adaptations to a generic uncertainty encompassing conditions of exogenous and endogenous unpredictability, including existential and local social in addition to political vicissitudes. Drawing on long term ethnographic research among the Bentian Dayak people of Indonesian Borneo, the paper exemplifies the discussion by way of four social orientations prominent among them: open aggregation (Gibson and Sillander 2011), social grace (Rosaldo 1993), opacity (Rumsey and Robbins 2008), and negative capability. Rather than always facilitating effective adaptation or enabling change, I suggest that the adaptive potential of these orientations largely lies in enhancing an ability to endure prevailing conditions and lasting uncertainties.

Ivan Tacey, *University of Plymouth*

Arts of Elusivity and Uncertainty: Batek Strategies of Negative Capability in a Changing World

Batek Maia villagers at Batu Jalang, Malaysia have had enough. State promises to provide economic opportunities and development remain unfulfilled and the villagers remain intensely mistrustful of the State and local Malays. Using a case-study of the villagers attempts to return to Kawasan Pagai – the land of the creator beings—this paper explores Batek social and linguistic tactics of elusivity. In Malaysia, the colonial and post-colonial State has systematically attempted to render land, resources, and people more legible—by fixing boundaries and identities. However, in many instances this has inadvertently amplified Indigenous peoples’ capacities for negative capability. Like many other Southeast Asian Indigenous peoples, Bateks are renowned for their anarchic lifeways and have historically been highly successful in evading and outmanoeuvring the rigidifying forces of state control. Drawing on Mathew Carey’s (2017) suggestion that mistrust can work as a dynamic and productive social force, alongside Gibson’s & Sillander’s (2011), Scott’s (2009) and Benjamin’s (2002) ideas of anarchic sociality, I explore how Batek strategies of elusivity, which include social plasticity, name avoidance and economic flexibility, can operate as productive “lines of flight.” Drawing on long-term ethnographic research among Batek communities living under diverse conditions—ranging from areas with substantial forest cover and relative autonomy to those marked by severe environmental degradation and intense state control—I examine the varying effectiveness of these tactics in countering state-driven schemes of inscription, capture, and closure.

Tomi Bartole, *University of Plymouth*

The Governance of Uncertainty: Haptics, Motion and Heuristics in the Sepik village of Awim, Papua New Guinea

Governance, the art of governing, has occupied people through the ages and across cultures, but since the 1980s the concept has seen a global resurgence. In the Pacific region, the new language of governance has gained purchase through the foreign policies of non-Pacific Island states, which aim at ‘modernizing and developing’ Pacific states. This paper, based on 16 months of fieldwork in the Sepik village of Awim in Papua New Guinea, approaches governance

as a Melanesian concept that is concerned with uncertainty rather than risk and control. Uncertainty, unlike risk and control, is not necessarily a problem to be solved, but an emergent property of the interactional dynamics (communication) in which the participants are caught – uncertainty permits people to hope and act in ways that less uncertain situations do not allow. Ethnographic moments of uncertainty are elicited through haptic indigenous epistemologies in a problem-solving ritual that has the ritual form of a handshake and a charismatic movement that found its way into the National Parliament. The Governance of Uncertainty thus turns the stakes around by asking not how governance has an imprint on uncertainty, but rather how uncertainty makes something as governance even possible.

Klara Österlund Trane, *University College Dublin*

The Capitalist Web of Death and Harm

This paper critically examines the commodification of death and destruction as integral components of capitalist systems. It explores how capitalism creates value not only through life-sustaining activities but also through processes that necessitate harm, dispossession, and destruction. Building on Moore's (2015) concept of the "capitalist web of life," this study introduces the notion of a "capitalist web of death" to analyze how global economic systems derive value from militarization, colonial exploitation, and systemic violence. The paper has two main objectives: 1) To elaborate on the creative, analytical lens, where patterns are formed by interactions and interferences within capitalist systems, revealing how they commodify death to sustain accumulation; 2) By interrogating capitalism's mechanisms of value creation, the paper highlights how insecurities, everyday violence, and ecological degradation are intrinsic to its operations. These two objective's creative analytical contributions and theoretical critiques delve into socio-economic dynamics' biopolitical and material dimensions, revealing the interplay between production, embodiment, and devaluation. The paper aims to show this theorization of capitalism's commodification of death and harming in cases such as state repression and profit-driven policies that marginalize human and environmental well-being. It moves beyond binary notions of life and death, offering alternative perspectives on value and accumulation. Ultimately, this study sheds light on capitalism's depleting processes, exposing how its drive for profit perpetuates harm and challenges traditional economic metrics, with profound implications for social and ecological justice.

Panel 13: Imagining Resettlement: Disillusionment and the Paradox of Comparison – Part 1

Jennifer Long, Stefan Millar

Canada's resettlement narrative, often portrayed as a multicultural utopia, offers newcomers an idealized vision of integration and opportunity. Yet, the lived realities of resettlement frequently diverge from this promise, revealing structural inequities that strain family dynamics, hinder individual aspirations, and exacerbate social exclusion. This panel explores the gap between these White fantasies—rooted in Ghassan Hage's notion of White multiculturalism (2000) and Himani Bannerji's paradox of diversity (2016) where non-White newcomers are positioned as peripheral contributors to an imagined community—and the everyday struggles of resettlement. Central to our inquiry is the profound sense of disillusionment experienced by newcomers as their past, present, and future migration trajectories collide. For many, the romanticized vision of Canada as a land of opportunity is

shaped by comparisons with the hardships of one's homeland. The realities of navigating social and economic systems expose structural barriers, personal disappointments, and broader societal contradictions, as multicultural resettlement policies neglect deeper needs of those they claim to welcome. This panel will engage in a critical dialogue on the role of comparison itself, both as a method and a social practice, in shaping our understanding of resettlement and integration. Across two panels, presenters will critically engage with these dynamics, whether in the Canadian context or beyond, to tease apart the paradox of comparison: how idealized imaginaries and lived realities are constructed and contested.

Stefan Millar, Lam Majok Thoan, *University of Helsinki, MacEwan University*

Mimicry in the Migration Regime: Resettlement and Resistance from Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya

In Kakuma Refugee Camp, the UNHCR is responsible for the processing of resettlement claims to third countries. For many refugees, resettlement can be described as the ideal outcome from the prolonged displacement, but the likelihood of receiving resettlement is extremely rare due to increasing rise of anti-immigration rhetoric from states in the global north. To be eligible for resettlement, refugees must undergo rigorous interviewing, cross-checking, and medical examinations. Successful applicants for resettlement, often emphasize their vulnerability and qualities as a “good” global citizen. Such performances, we argue, are a form of mimicry, where refugees perform subservience to UNHCR through appropriating the UN's narratives. However, refugees are not powerless to this process, and many are conscious of these performances, often playing into them to access resettlement. Based on Millar's twelve months of ethnographic research and Majok's personal experiences of living in Kakuma and being resettled to Canada, we explore how resettlement in Kakuma creates a neo-colonial relationship between refugees and the governing agencies. Taking inspiration from postcolonial theory regarding mimicry (Bhabha 1994), we intend to critically address the process of resettlement, by demonstrating how the UNHCR attempts subjugates refugees through the process of resettlement. We argue that the UNHCR attempts to contain refugees in camps with the promise of resettlement, effectively tethering their future-aspirations to the camp. However, refugees have capacity to navigate beyond this binary neo-colonial relationship, finding alternative routes to mobility beyond the control of the UNHCR.

Bruno Lefort, *University of Oulu*

“I can only think about the past, never the future”

Grounded in participant observation conducted in an associative emergency housing center in Marseille, France, this paper zooms in on the story of Hala, an undocumented woman who had recently settled there. At the intersection between personal tragedy and structural inequalities, including border regulations and the precariousness they bring about, Hala's trajectory exposes structural barriers to belonging as much as the magnitude of everyday “minor” events, which contribute to derail one's existence. If life in the center was still far from comfortable, Hala found herself accompanied by a team of social workers, psychologists, and legal advisors, as well as, maybe even more importantly, companionship and emotional warmth projecting an alternative social imagination where her place and value were recognized. Yet, after several months there, when her situation could inspire hope compared to what she had experienced before, Hala remained beyond disillusionment, unable to imagine a future for herself. Not because of a lack of perspectives, but due to the overwhelming presence of a traumatic past. Based on her story, this paper hence explores the disjuncture one can experience between split temporalities – an existential time-lag necessary for rebuilding a sense of hope? – that

is at the same time the cause and consequence of the dialectics of existential movement and stasis. In doing so, this paper reflects on how lived realities can actually suspend the ability of future-making, exposing the combined role of personal hardship and societal exclusionary dynamics in hindering people's right to a future.

Hava Sare Güneş, *Middle East of Technical University*

In-Between Lives: The Emotional Geographies in Transient Migration

Migration is a prevalent phenomena in Iran, where people frequently search for better chances in the Global North in order to get away from economic, political, and social restraints. This study examines the transient migration experiences among Iranian women who have migrated to Turkey as an ambiguous stop on their journey to imagined "first-world" destinations. Concentrating on the transient characteristics of their stay and emotional-social dimensions of migration, the research interrogates how the relation between the resettlement imaginaries and the everyday realities of living in a transient space, in limbo shapes their sense of home and belonging. Relying on qualitative methods, this study will try to explain how Iranian migrant women operate the paradox of comparison: the idealized image for a better future versus the ambiguity of the structural challenges of their temporary lives in Turkey. Their aspirations for a new home and future coexist with the necessity of facing uncertain and precarious conditions in the present. This duality, along with the remnants of the past regarding time and space, generates unique emotional and social challenges, complicating their relationship with the space they temporarily inhabit. To contribute critical discussions on the gap between resettlement imaginaries and lived realities, the study will clarify how transient migration reshapes notions of belonging and home. Through Iranian women's migration trajectories, this paper engages with the broader dynamics of comparison as both a method and a social practice, questioning the idealized imaginaries as constructed and disrupted in this context. Ultimately, the study reveals how transient spaces of migration expose the contradictions inherent in resettlement and the emotional burden of life in between.

Bhokraj Gurung, *University of Kent*

Migrant Dreams and Lived Realities: Bidesh, Hope and Disappointment among Nepali

This paper examines Nepali migration experiences by analysing the imaginative aspects of migration amid emic understandings of bidesh (abroad, elsewhere or a foreign country), and how it shapes everyday activities, commitments, and pursuits that migration begets within conditions of hope and disappointment. It discusses how migratory dreams or imaginary aspirations of going to bidesh feature as a critical condition that underlies Nepali migration alongside the lived realities and experiences of migrants and their families. It asserts that migratory pursuits to bidesh among Nepalis also brings forth a situational paradox – meaning that while migration enables the realisation of aspirations such as immediate or lifelong dreams of building houses, undertaking marriages or education of children, it also entails migrants' experience of lived realities defined by disappointment, separation, and a longing for home. This paper also analyses hope, both in the individual and collective sense to examine how it underlines migratory undertakings among Nepalis. Approaching hope as an analytical framework implies both potentiality and uncertainty; the former encompasses desires, dreams, and social imaginaries of the good life in the horizons of the future, while the latter examines unpredictable or precarious life contexts and how people confront them. By drawing on the intersections of hope, imaginary future(s) and migration, this paper not only examines how

idealised imaginaries and lived realities are constructed and contested, but also illustrates intricate migratory experiences within the interconnected spaces of bidesh alongside the rural and urban in Nepal, and how movements between these spaces (re)mould one another

Panel 19: Practice & Imaginaries: Comparing Digital Everyday in China and Nordic countries

Zhuo Chen, Jingwen Gan

This panel explores the interplay between practices and imaginaries of digital technologies in everyday life in China and the Nordic countries. While both regions are widely recognized as global leaders in digitalization, their trajectories are informed by distinct historical, cultural, and political-economic contexts. By comparing these regions, we aim to uncover how digital technologies shape, and are shaped by, diverse social norms, values, and infrastructures. Focusing on the intersection of practice and imaginaries, the panel investigates how everyday digital experiences—such as cashless payments, data-driven governance, or platform-based sociality—are embedded in broader sociotechnical imaginaries of progress, efficiency, and community. Drawing on ethnographic case studies, the contributors examine practices ranging from the mundane (e.g., navigating public services) to the transformative (e.g., reshaping urban infrastructures), highlighting how digital technologies mediate relationships between individuals, communities, and institutions. Through a comparative lens, the panel addresses key questions: How do digital imaginaries of "smart" futures or "humane" technologies influence everyday practices? What tensions arise as global technological paradigms intersect with local needs and values? How does the materiality of digital infrastructures constrain or enable specific social relations? By parallel comparison between the Chinese and Nordic cases, the panel challenges binary frameworks of "West" and "non-West" in digital anthropology and contributes to a nuanced understanding of digital transformation across contexts. We invite discussions that engage with comparison as a method, emphasizing the relational and situated nature of digital imaginaries and practices.

Robert Statkiewicz, *University of Łódź*

Anthropology and Participation. A way to engage in reality of big corporations

According to Czarniawska corporations can be perceived as a community that can be engaged in anthropological studies and as such described and researched. It is especially interesting for anthropologists of organizations to research how the decisions are made in such groups, and how do they come up with new knowledge within their community. Czarniawska noticed that nowadays, in spite of big corporations, these themes have become even more interesting. This is because such organizations rarely depend on one-human decisions (the whole process seems to be more complex and scattered) and are highly protective about their internal processes. In my paper I would like to present how anthropology, participatory design and principles of inclusive research can become values that drive internal corporation community to answer their community's challenges. I will focus on part of my industrial PhD project, which aim to - on the one hand – describe processes of creation of a new knowledge in organizations, while on the other propose to create a new framework and model for introducing Digital Accessibility within organization. I will try to answer those questions: (1) How can anthropology and participation answer the needs of the big corporations? (2) How anthropology, participatory design and inclusive research intertwined with each other? (3) How may implementation of those values look like? I will answer those questions using literature

review and own material from conducted process of participatory design with internal community.

Kirsikka Grön, *University of Helsinki*

Nothing is inevitable: The flexibility imaginary in the Chinese platform economy

This research is about the flexibility imaginary of digital platforms. By introducing the term flexibility imaginary, we interpret the collective adaptability and responsiveness that the Chinese research participants express in the face of changing conditions and unforeseen transitions within the Chinese platform economy. This imaginary encapsulates the idea of replaceability as a source of future speculations and presents an overall sense that with collective or state efforts, things can and will be changed in the platform economy. We offer flexibility imaginary as a methodological lens to challenge the stuckness in future speculations of digital platforms, as it rejects the discursive inevitability of big tech and guides us to think about the permanence and impermanence of the state, collectives, and corporate actors in the digital economy.

Jingwen Gan, *University of Helsinki*

Financial lives of older adults in Shanghai seen through everyday apps use

This study sheds light on the financial lives of older adults in Shanghai, showcasing a spectrum of digital practices ranging from gamified money earning practices to online stock market trading. The paper explores how the use of financial-related apps of older adults in Shanghai divides money to leisurely and serious, and how the app uses and these separate monies affect the way older adults define and categorize their social relationships, financial and temporal practices and futures. The study demonstrates that older adults are active and creative participants that can shuttle flexibly in the complicated digital economic world, mitigate potential risks and maximize not only financial but also social advantages. This study combines the digital financial lives of the older adults with the dimension of time, revealing how elderly individuals in Shanghai perceive the past and present, as well as their imaginations for the future. In this research financial and money-related apps serve as a methodological entry point to economically turbulent lives of older adults in Shanghai.

Zhuo Chen, *University of Helsinki*

Chasing the City Brain: visions and materialities of smart infrastructure in Hangzhou, China

The research is about the envisioned and imagined novel urban infrastructure, City Brain, in Hangzhou China. By examining the collaborative process between the government and private sector in producing smart infrastructure and analyzing the roles and relationships of various human and non-human actors involved in this process, this study explores the knowledge and values generated through so-called digital technology-driven innovation on urban infrastructure and the diverse ways in which “smart” is conceptualized within local communities where digital technologies are implemented. The fieldwork that is already conducted reveals nuanced power dynamics among the City Brain builders, including the founder Wang, a science and technology visionary, as well as the computer scientists, engineers, entrepreneurs, government officials, and scholars who either support or oppose Wang’s City Brain Initiative. Their perceptions and practices significantly shaped the development of City Brain, transforming it from a science and technology experiment into a city-scale social experiment. This transformation highlights the costs and challenges associated with such experimentation on urban infrastructure, and illustrates the layers of

intellectual, political and economic processes when technological innovations like City Brain are projected onto the city as a whole.

Panel 22: Contrasts and Analogies – Part 1

Matti Eräsaari, Rodolfo Maggio, Sonja Trifuljesko, Tuomas Tammisto

Contrast, one of the most thought-provoking tools available to anthropologists, is a particular kind of comparative movement: zooming in on unique phenomena rather than zooming out to generalise on shared features. When we compare woodcarving with the dishwashing machine (Strathern 2005) to gain greater traction, we are contrasting. When we classify kinship systems, we are using a comparative approach based on creating analogies. Contrasts and analogies, as opposite comparative moves, are not just tools used by anthropologists, but also by the people anthropologists work with to generate diverging effects. Yet the two also converge in comparison (Candea 2018): we do not contrast anything at will, but assume some underlying principle or relation that makes disparate ideas or things comparable. Binary opposites tend to be alike in all significant respects but the one they are contrasted on (Sahlins 1996), while measuring tends to flatten away all unnecessary contrast and focus on a single connecting feature (Crump 1990). We invite papers with as outrageous contrasts as you please – provided that the contrast yields new insights, new questions, methodological propositions or terminological interventions. We welcome contributions from all fields of anthropology; the papers can discuss “contrast” theoretically, but also ethnographically — namely how the people we work with employ “contrast” — or methodologically, focusing, for instance, on the challenges created by contrasts encountered in the field. This is an open-ended panel which will hopefully broaden our understanding of contrast as a tool for anthropological thought.

Tuomas Tammisto, *Tampere University*

"Free money for those who plant it, hard work those who carry it.": Contrasting

A betel nut trader in Pomio, Papua New Guinea noted that for rural villagers, who grow betel nut, its sale is “free” money, whereas transporting it from rural areas to towns, or “carrying it”, is hard work. Villagers, on the other hand, contrast the relatively high price betel nut fetches in town with what the traders pay them. In both cases, the contrast is made to justify the price. In a similar fashion, rural women who sell food in villages and plantation markets put different prices for their produce in the respective locations, because one is the “village”, thereby implying a major difference, or contrast, between the two places and the appropriate value orders of them. In this paper, I examine how people in the rural Pomio area seek to assert particular valuations and value orders in terms of contrast, namely by asserting the difference between two “things” that are in some important sense not the same. By examining the non-equivalences people use, I seek to examine the difference, or contrast, between “contrast” and “comparison”, and why people sometimes use one instead the other to assert particular valuations.

Johanna Mugler, *University of Bern*

«What we do is not about (economic) justice»: Contrasts and Analogies in the Creation of International Tax Norms

Having access to taxing rights to tax parts of the globally produced profits of multinational enterprises is a highly contested transnational issue. International tax norms are based on the premise that corporations pay taxes in the jurisdictions where they have a «real» economic

presence and where they create value, but the practices for the recognition of presence and identification of value and economic activity for tax purposes are not simply a technocratic exercise defined by the pursuit of neutral determinants that can easily be assessed. The paper explores key contrasts and analogies that international tax experts and tax norm creators from economically advanced countries employ to legitimate their economic value and presence conceptualizations and ignore others. Analyzing these contrasts and analogies assists the ethnographer, I argue, to reveal deep-seated cultural and often racialized assumptions about who is an innovator, who takes risks and who has the capacity for self-government as norms prioritize specific internationally recommended tax mixes or decision-making, design, contract, and the possession of capital and intellectual property over production and manufacturing. After exploring the worlds of international tax norm creators the papers zooms in into the world of the ethnographer: what does she lose by following these contrasts and analogies and what are the contrasts and analogies she is employing herself in the process? Finding contrasts and analogies between the insights of hunter-gatherer anthropologists with international tax payments, as I do in my work, might seem outrageous at first, but I suggest, in order to understand better how taxes can enable very different fiscal socialities, it is productive to pay attention to the many similarities between these two types of transfers.

Chakad Ojani, *Stockholm University*

The ethnography of small and large infrastructures: Contrasts and comparisons

The anthropology of infrastructures is replete with scalar imaginaries. As an analytic, infrastructure has the capacity to address social processes at scale, and it also enables ethnographic scale jumping; for example, between the small and the large or the local and the global. However, the infrastructural, as a quality, is also itself an outcome of scalarity and comparison. It relies on vertical orders of above and below, figure and ground, or epiphenomenon and condition of possibility. Using scale as a basis for comparison, in this talk, I contrast two ethnographic projects on what could be deemed small and large infrastructures, respectively. The first project deals with fog catchers in Lima, Peru. In the absence of water infrastructure in the city's informal neighborhoods, residents try to set up these micro-infrastructures to capture not only fog but also land titles and state infrastructure. The second project is set in Sweden and explores large-scale infrastructures, including a rocket launch site, ground stations, and satellite constellations in orbit, which together impact and gain particular kinds of meaning in situated socio-political settings. Whereas the first project investigates how small, improvised infrastructures instigate or redirect larger processes, the second project is primarily concerned with the way small social settings sometimes adapt or modulate large infrastructures. Contrasting this difference in focus reveals ethnography's infrastructure; specifically, a division between the large (figure) and the small (ground), with influence often being analytically traced from the latter to the former.

Bernida Webb-Binder, *Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia, United States*

Considering the Comparison in Black and Pacific Art

This paper addresses how research on contemporary Pacific Islands Art is guided by Teresia Teaiwa's scholarship about "comparison" and "analogy." In her examination of "the Africanization of the Pacific," Teaiwa writes that in comparative studies with Oceania as one constant in the equation, it is often the Pacific that gets short shrift. Accordingly, my book manuscript, *Black Pacific Art Considered*, utilizes indigenous Pacific ways of knowing. I define

Black Pacific art as the artistic or popular representations of identity that arise when the lived experience of Blackness meets the lived experience of Pacificness; in other words, the book puts Black and Pacific art in dialogue prompted by Teaiwa's interrogation of "comparison." As an art historian working at the intersection of African American, Pacific, and American art history, I acknowledge the role of comparison in the discipline since the early 20th century as well as its limitations in interdisciplinary inquiry especially through the dichotomy of commonality and contrast. This paper questions comparisons and untangles analogies in Black and Pacific art.

Panel 23: Visible and invisible disappearance: affects, remembrance and justice practices

Corina Tulbure, Leyla Safta-Zecheria,

This panel invites empirical and theoretical contributions that interrogate the meanings of "disappearance" and its social afterlife in contexts shaped by the "presence of absence" (Bille et al. 2010) in everyday life. Who is made to "disappear," and by what means? Whose disappearances are rendered visible, and whose are invisibles or made unknowable? How do the questions of (in)visibility and (un)knowability surrounding disappearance intersect with demands and practices of remembrance and accountability, particularly in contexts of classist, racist, ableist or political violence that may discredit those seeking to learn about the lives of others? How do states relate to the disappearance of people in the context of displacement? How do these practices intersect with national and transnational political imaginaries of the "good life" and "justice"? The panel sets out to explore different contexts and meanings of disappearance and to examine the role of states, institutional agents, and non-state actors in disappearances and accountability processes, focusing on the rendering visible of a politics of disappearances and the role of states within it. In our panel, we invite contributions that engage these questions by looking at various cases, e.g. illegalized migration, industrial 'accidents', institutional care, forced displacement, as well as any other instances in which the presence and circulation of persons and knowledges is impeded, contested or fragmented.

Alina Mierlus, Autonomous University of Barcelona

Disappearance as forms of visibility: Data and the Anthropogenesis

Anthropology studies human beings in different cultural and biological settings, striving to understand human behaviour. However, as these settings cross into the digital space - whether we talk about social networks or conversational bots - it opens a new perspective on interactions and studying human behaviour. In this paper, I take Blumenberg's antinomy of anthropogenesis as a starting point. This antinomy states that there is a principle of deactivation of the body, which acts as a process for the manifestation of the "living body". In other words, deactivating the body or a disappearance enacts new forms of visibility. One of the main characteristics of these forms is that one is constantly instilled to see the other. New forms of practices emerge that can push for broader change. Peter Sloterdijk refers to these practices in his book, *You Have to Change Your Life*, as the anthropotechnics turn. Following this line, we go a level deeper to affirm that the progress in language technologies, the diversification of social networks, and the paradigm change towards a data-driven artificial intelligence are preparing us for a data turn in anthropological research. My main objective is to figure out how these new forms of visibility manifest and, as a first step, expose a framework for understanding data descriptions and the data cycle. Furthermore, I shall reflect on the

body's disappearance in these digital spaces and the physical disappearance that digital data can not capture. How can be described these disappearances or missing data?

Saila Kivilahti, *Tampere University*

The Materialities of Absence in Undocumented Sea Migration

In this paper, I discuss the presence of absence in undocumented migrants' sea journeys from Western Africa to Spain. Bille et al. (2010), in their theorization of the "presence of absence," elaborate on how people's lives are shaped by the interdependence of the materially present and absent. To investigate the "materialities of absence," I examine the interplay between body and place in knowledge production. Even when the body is not physically present, it manifests as an "absent presence," where the material reality of the body is underscored by its conspicuous absence (Nilsson Stutz & Tarlow, 2013). Thus, the materiality of the body remains a powerful site for knowledge-making, both through its presence and absence (García-Deister, 2017). The absence of bodies also imbues the places they are connected to with meaning, a dynamic I explore using Merleau-Ponty's (2004) notion of the "imagining body in a place" and Parr and Fyfe's (2012) theorization of "missing geographies." For my research participants, leaving by boat and subsequently being unheard of signified that the individual had most likely died en route. This assumption arises from an acute awareness of the dangers inherent in undocumented sea crossings, which generate knowledge about the fates of disappeared migrants. The materiality of the body can thus produce tacit knowledge even in its absence, particularly when imagined in high-risk environments such as the sea.

Ville Laakkonen, *Tampere University*

Un-identification and Non-identification: Marking the Greek Border with Disappearances

I argue in this paper that disappearances and border deaths of refugees and migrants should be viewed as intrinsic to the operations of Europe's borders. With Greece and the Greek-Turkish border as my ethnographic site, I engage in a crucial comparison in the context of Mediterranean migrations: On the one hand, the European border regime is characterised by an ever-increasing level of technological sophistication to count, locate, identify, survey, and deter people on the move. Yet, on the other hand, the interest to know the refugees and migrants seems to all but dissipate in the event of their disappearances and deaths. After thousands upon thousands of lives lost, the Greek/ European border is characterised by names without bodies and bodies without names. Drawing on fieldwork on Lesbos, in the Evros region, and in Athens, I analyse the indifference death and disappearance are dealt with and how what I call forensic bordering is manifested in the everyday routines of the border regime. Forensic bordering is, I argue, a continuation of border violence by other means which imprints the border on the bodies of the disappeared and dead. If forensics are perceived as tools of justice, these border forensics do the exact opposite – avoid accountability. Comparing violence in life to violence in death leads us to the fatal logics at play on the frontiers of Fortress Europe and allows us to critically interrogate the afterlives of deaths and disappearances as markers of border.

Corina Tulbure, *ICUB, University of Bucharest/University of Barcelona*

Objects without People: Mobility and the Erasure of Border-Crossers' Worlds

Following the objects of absent border-crossers in Tunisia, I look at the social lives of the disappearances at the borders and the role these objects play in families' search for their disappeared loved ones. On the one hand, these objects make present the absence of their

owners, having their own afterlife as a testimony to their physical disappearance and the loss of their entire worlds. On the other hand, the objects, evidences and requests for information and accountability presented by the families of the disappeared border-crossers are absent from state agendas, since their search is ignored by institutions, aside from activist and social organizations. For instance, when families seek to travel to Europe to trace the steps of their missing loved ones and reconstruct their journeys, visas are systematically denied. In other cases, absent border-crossers are registered in state archives, even though they have been missing for years. This divergence between individual remembrance and demand for justice, and the various states' lack of response and indifference to the search for disappeared border-crossers highlights a fracture between individual memory and collective memory, where disappearances at the border and border violence are erased from the present history of the nation-states.

Leyla Safta-Zecheria, *University of Babeş Bolyai/ West University of Timisoara*
Ableism, necropolitics and the disappearing ethical impulse to preserve life

This paper is an investigation into how cemeteries surrounding residential institutions for persons with disabilities that grew out of children's institutions during late socialism reveal how deaths of institutionalized persons with disabilities are remembered, contested and normalized within the local communities next to these institutions. It seeks to be an investigation into how deaths of persons with disabilities are mourned and/or normalized in everyday life. Building from the observations of how death is rendered mundane – I propose to look at the continuities and fractures with eugenic practices and discourses of the pre-socialist, socialist and postsocialist period – as well as the fragmented knowledge and political practices by which massive numbers of deaths of persons with disabilities in institutions were rendered (in)visible and to whom.

Film

Monday 14:00-15:30

Flotacija

77mins, 2023, Eluned Zoë Aiano, Alesandra Tatić - Studium 1 (F3020)

In Eastern Serbia, in a town with a dual identity divided between magic and industry, a family whose destiny is intrinsically linked with both does their best to ensure the survival of their traditions and their future generations. Desa is the widow of the union leader who is trying to continue his legacy by ensuring the rights of fellow mine-worker families. Meanwhile, her brother Dragan Marković is the last in a line of dragon hunters, but it's hard to continue, now even the dragons are being driven away. This film follows a particular family as they try to navigate both.

Panel details

Panel 2: Knowing Nature to care for it: ecological action in the making – Part 2

Paula Palanco Lopez, Olli Haanpää

The phenomenon of ‘caring for the environment’ is by no means new – environmentalist movements have existed consistently throughout the 20th century, and their roots expand far earlier than that (Haq & Paul, 2011). However, these prominently political movements are not the only way in which people have engaged with and tried to protect the natural environment: conservation, restoration, recycling, degrowth, alternative living (such as eco-villages, etc.)... all these are ways in which different social groups have tried to address various environmental problems, changing their relationships and knowledges about nature. So far, these organised actions have been well studied in isolation, in relation to particular socio-historical contexts. However, they share a connection as enactments of the same idea: there is a problem and there are actions humans can take to solve it. In this panel, we want to bring together stories and case-studies about how different groups of people conceptualise and know ‘the environment’ in order to care for it. What kinds of socio-ecological contexts allow these initiatives? What roles do these groups have in their societies, and how are these societal relations shaping their practices? We invite submissions that investigate (but are not restricted to) local citizen-led environmental restoration projects, activist movements that directly challenge institutional conventions and regulations, or alternative lifestyle groups that challenge the status quo through new practices and livelihoods. With this, we want to showcase the diversity of ways in which knowledge generation about ‘nature’ and ‘the environment’ – and the relations that are formed in the process – shape ecological action.

Daniel Mohseni; Kabir Bäckström; Oslo University

Theogenic soils: humans, gods, and ecology in the Blang Mountains, China

In the Zomia uplands of southwest China, along the China-Myanmar border live a small ethnic minority that call themselves Blang. Until the 1950s, Blang communities lived in self-governed villages at the edges of kingdoms, maintaining soil fertility and a diverse ecology through shifting, swidden cultivation. In scholarship, such soils are often termed anthropogenic, however, in the Blang context, it makes more sense to think of the resultant soils and forests as theogenic. According to my Blang friends and interlocutors, the land surrounding their villages is owned by local mountain gods. Humans can borrow land for cultivation from the gods, but when soil fertility is depleted after a year or two, they return their borrowed acreages, and fertility is restored. This likewise creates a varied forest, which can sustain a variety of beings. Since the arrival of the nation-state into the mountains, this system of knowledge and practices has been disrupted by modernisation attempts and land reforms. Blang communities blame the banning of shifting, swidden cultivation for the illness that now afflicts the land, forcing them to employ fertilizers and pesticides, which in turn makes the land sicker. In my presentation, I would like to show how the arrival of a new force—the state—has affected knowledge-making and the ecology.

Agata Mazzeo, *University of Bologna*

Taking care of the “nature” to take care of ourselves

Climate change and apocalyptic narratives about the end of the world may have an impact on mental health (Cianconi et al. 2023); children, adolescents and young adults are among those vulnerable groups (including environmental scientists and activists, climate refugees and women) who may develop the so-called “psychoterratic syndromes” (Albrecht 2011). Based on current collaborative research with anthropology graduate students at the University of Bologna (Emilia-Romagna, Italy), invited to think about their future, with a focus on the relationship among health, environment and society, I will share some preliminary reflections on the qualitative data co-produced in occasion of in-depth interviews, focus groups and photovoice exercises. I will focus on how study participants make (directly or indirectly experienced) extreme climate events meaningful, how they conceive of their current or possible engagement with ecological action and how they conceptualize their relationship with the local context in which they live, beyond a nature/culture dichotomy and in a more-than-human perspective. In particular, I propose to interpret the practices of activism undertaken before and after extreme climate events such as the floods occurred in Emilia-Romagna (Italy) in 2023 and 2024 as practices of care for the consequences of climate change’s impact on the mental health of vulnerable individual and collective social actors.

Jaanika Kingumets, *Tampere University*

Negotiating practices of environmental care in Meri-Pori in Western Finland

The tensions and conflicts around nature and environment involving different parties often revolve around “as if” diametrically different understandings of intactness and damage, tradition and transformation, care and carelessness. In such oppositional processes of sense-making, there is also a tendency to treat the locals’ experiences and anticipations as uniform. However, what locals mean when expressing their habitual practices as well as present and future needs for “caring for the environment” can be both diverse and contradictory. In this paper, my aim is to unpack the vernacular narratives of “caring for the environment” in two coastal suburbs in Meri-Pori area in Western Finland. It is a place where nature values, local livelihoods and industrial development have been subjects of continuous negotiations for more than hundred years already. Lately, in connection to the industrial revitalization of the former industrial hub that has experienced serious socioeconomic decline, these continuous negotiations have turned into a nature-industry conflict in prevailing public discourse. To disentangle this issue from local inhabitants’ perspective, I draw on ethnographic research that I conducted in the area in Autumn 2022 to Summer 2023. In my analyses, I will present a variety of different voices emerging from those called locals and argue that local understandings of environmental care are diverse and may be directed to different purposes. They depend for example on experiences of “living with the industry”, local lineage and generational obligations, and ownership relations.

Kaisa K. Vainio, *University of Turku*

Human-Animal-Plant Bonds in Finnish Cities: Insights from IPBES Value Typologies

Urban environments are dynamic spaces where humans, animals, and plants coexist, forming complex interdependencies that shape both ecological and social landscapes. This paper explores the affective and functional dimensions of human-animal-plant relationships in Finnish cities—Turku, Tampere, and Lappeenranta—through the lens of the IPBES value

typologies: intrinsic, instrumental, and relational values. By focusing on everyday affective encounters with urban nature, such as observing birds or walking in green spaces, we examine how these experiences cultivate emotional bonds and a sense of belonging in city dwellers. Furthermore, we investigate the affordances of urban biodiversity in fostering mutual relationships, emphasizing how green spaces and community gardens serve as vital ecological and social infrastructures. These interactions not only enhance human well-being but also contribute to urban resilience by promoting ecological stewardship. The IPBES values assessment framework provides a comprehensive understanding of these relationships, highlighting the intrinsic worth of urban nature, its instrumental benefits to human health and ecosystem services, and the relational values that bind communities to their natural surroundings. By employing case studies from Finnish cities, this paper aims to illuminate the diverse ways urban populations perceive and engage with nature, offering insights into how urban planning can better integrate human-nature relationships to foster sustainable and inclusive urban futures.

Panel 3: Global and Public Health – Part 2

Perpetual Crentsil, Vincent Jumble

Many factors determine health and social well-being. Comparisons can be made about these factors such as the nature of health systems, health promotion efforts, healthcare delivery services, and medical facilities. Socioeconomic conditions, patterns of consumption associated with food and communication, demographic patterns, urbanisation, ease of global travel and advanced technologies can lead to better health outcomes but increase the vulnerability to poor health. How do implementations and strategies compare between countries in the Global North and South, in rural and urban dynamics, regarding gender, reproductive health, etc.? This multidisciplinary panel welcomes papers from medical anthropologists and researchers on culture and health. Topics include (but are not limited to): care (formal/informal); drug procurement and distribution; health and civil society practice in Global North and South; drug research and development; traditional healing; cultural adversity and adaptation in Global Health practice; economic and political aspects of medicine; political economy of inequality; migration and health inequalities; multispecies ethnography; new (medical) technologies; globalisation and health risks.

Moussa Douno, *Rachel Carson Center (RCC), Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich*

Negotiating Care: Parental Involvement in Clinical Management of Lassa fever at Phebe Hospital's Isolation Unit in Liberia

To effectively contain High-Consequence Infectious Diseases (HCIDs) and prevent their rapid spread within hospital settings, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for clinical management recommend the strict isolation of patients confirmed or suspected to have these infections. Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers, including Lassa fever (LF), which is endemic to West Africa, fall under these stringent protocols. However, adherence to these SOPs depends on various factors, including the availability of sufficient material and financial resources and local communities' perceptions of the isolation unit. In resource-limited settings, where these highly infectious diseases are often endemic, implementing these SOPs can be particularly challenging. In Bong County, Liberia – a region endemic to LF – the clinical management of this HCID necessitates a negotiation of care between healthcare workers (HCWs) and the

parents of confirmed patients, especially when these patients are children or adolescents. At Phebe Hospital's isolation unit, a unique dynamic emerges: contrary to infection prevention and control guidelines, parents (mainly mothers) of LF-positive children and adolescents are admitted alongside their children as “caretakers”. Within the isolation unit, while HCWs provide conventional or formal care to cure the patients, mothers on the other hand provide “informal” care to their children as if in a typical family setting. This paper examines the factors driving such care negotiation that leads to parental involvement in the care of LF patients and explores the perspectives of both mothers and HCWs regarding this unconventional approach. Additionally, it evaluates the implications of this practice for LF control efforts in the region

Walter Fondo

Development, Health, and International Cooperation in Africa

Health-related challenges remain a pressing concern requiring collective discourse and action. This paper explores the intersections of development, health, and international cooperation in Africa, focusing on the philosophical underpinnings of the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It examines how NGOs contribute to addressing health and development issues while fostering international collaboration. Through their grassroots efforts, NGOs play a pivotal role in delivering critical health and developmental services across communities in many African countries. This study evaluates the scope of NGO activities and their impact on promoting sustainable development and international partnerships.

Ildze Jakunova, *University of Helsinki*

Navigating the fragmented landscape of mental health care in Latvia

My paper presents an analysis of the health care landscape in Latvia from the perspective of young people experiencing depression and anxiety. Focusing on their help-seeking activities, I will illustrate how Latvia's current system is shaped by Western mental health paradigms – centred on psy disciplines – and local cultural and historical legacies, contributing to a ‘fragmented’ care landscape. Since regaining its independence in 1990, Latvia has undertaken significant health care transformations, aiming to align with care frameworks in other Western market economies. In mental health care, the reforms include the introduction of a gatekeeping system in primary care, the proliferation of private-sector specialists, and deinstitutionalisation. The state also sought to adapt international diagnostic and therapeutic approaches, embracing psychopharmacology and psychotherapy. While Latvia welcomed these changes and continues to follow mainstream mental health care trends, my interlocutors' experiences reveal challenges in traversing the health care system, marked by a broad selection of care specialists, diverse discourses, and the coexistence of multiple, at times competing, notions of mental health care. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork with 18-30-year-olds in Riga, this paper examines key points of contention young people encounter when seeking help and engaging with stakeholders – the state health care system, care specialists, and family. The discussion aims to highlight divergences between the expected care pathway and the way people choose to engage with health care services. It also aims to underscore how, within the current care landscape, self-guided care plays a significant role in navigating mental health.

Jhabindra Bhandari, *Central Department of Anthropology, Tribhuvan University, Nepal*
Health and Illness Narratives: Storytelling as Agency, Belonging and Community

With a focus on health and illness narratives, and the storytelling about health in humanitarian settings, my ethnographic field research explores ways in which health is and has been shaped by individual and collective experiences of agency, belonging and community. This is a case study of Chepangs who are socio-politically and culturally marginalized indigenous communities for decades in Nepal. The ethnographic fieldwork aims to explore how they experienced illness and health, and how it has changed their socio-cultural, political, health seeking behavioural context in terms of agency, belonging, community. **Methods** This is an ethnographic fieldwork in Raksirang of Makwanpur district from July to August, 2024. The methods particularly included participant observations, in-depth interviews, participatory social mapping, case studies, and informal interactions with mothers, health workers, female community health volunteers, political leaders, civil society representatives, school teachers and community representatives. **Findings** The narrative analysis of telling and retelling of stories that open up new perspectives on the illness and health experiences of the marginalised ethnic minorities in terms of silences, collective consciousness, religious, indigenous knowledge and practices to heal the social sufferings and experience adaptive mechanisms in their families and communities. Through an ethnographic fieldwork, it attempts to explore and document social, cultural and moral realities such as absence of a missing loved one due to disaster or pandemics, not only in ritual and cultural sense, but also in a socio-political sense. Majority of the families affected by climate change, disaster and pandemics, first and foremost, rely on traditional or religious leaders and perform ritual practices for care and support. **Conclusions** Health narratives among poor, indigenous and socially marginalised communities are overwhelmingly considered as embodied experiences of their illness and health conditions. Their motivations, incentives, and capacities for demand creation are largely driven by the agency, collective consciousness, belongingness, community feelings and ownership. Therefore, storytelling is an innovative approach to share and understand the wider determinants of health, local governance, inclusive approaches and practices in rural communities of Nepal.

Panel 4: Tensing Senses: Comparing/contrasting participant observation & sensory methods

Mari Korpela, Roger Norum

In the practice and imagination of anthropology, participant observation has long been at the core of both how anthropologists collect their data and how anthropological knowledge is generated. At the same time, while sensory methods are clearly having a moment, a number of the discipline's constituent "novel" methodological approaches (e.g. ecoacoustics, visual or tactile tools, artistic interventions) have themselves historical roots that indeed date back well over a century. Reflecting critically on the compulsion researchers often feel to innovate and invent 'novel' research methods, this panel reflects on what is actually being gained by explicitly including sensory methods in the anthropological toolkit. How does the data generated by such approaches compare with "traditional", tried-and-tested ethnographic research? How much does methodological experimentation actually add to our work (considering that anthropological textual output is often evaluated via rather conservative metrics)? Is classical participant observation best understood as the very essence of what

anthropology does, or should it be seen rather as a point of departure for a discipline that desperately needs to evolve? This panel welcomes papers that critically elaborate on various traditional anthropological and newer sensory ethnographic practice, considering distinct methodological approaches and experiments.

Olivia Barnett-Naghshineh; Hanna Bess Boelsbjerg, Aarhus University

Microphenomenology and Anthropology: Ethnography as an ethics of care

Microphenomenology is an interview method that offers a rigorous, systematic and precise examination and description of lived experience. A good MP interview may also enable a strong sense of connection between the interviewer and interviewee (Heiman et al 2022) through deep listening and repeating back, with the same words and gestures what the interviewee has said. This can create a sense of closeness and intimacy between the researcher and interviewee. Participant observation similarly can create intimacy and closeness as researchers enter the lived worlds of their interlocutors. Together, these methods allow insight into the sensorial and emotional world of an interviewee as they live a specific moment. An affective proximity created through the interview can both benefit from ethnographic methods, as they allow for ongoing relationships over time, but also create tensions and challenges as levels of internal experience are opened through MP interviews that may otherwise not be revealed through usual ethnographic practice. Through research with a range of people including a religious community in Norwich, UK, women in Highlands Papua New Guinea (Barnett-Naghshineh 2025), as well as findings from the Heart Openings research (ERC, PI Suhr) in Denmark, Egypt and Tanzania, we highlight the methodological contrasts between MP interviews and 'traditional ethnography' and the possible complementary of the two.

Jānis Šabanovs, Rīga Stradiņš University

Sensing the Unwritten: Latvian Family Food Rituals and Sensory Ethnography

Participant observation, a cornerstone of anthropological inquiry, gains new dimensions through the integration of sensory methods, offering novel pathways to explore unwritten, embodied practices. Family food rituals--encompassing grocery shopping, preparation, and shared meals--reflect values, identities, and relationships shaped by ecological, cultural, and economic factors. These sensory interactions, grounded in taste, smell, texture, and sound, create embodied narratives that adapt to shifting contexts and intergenerational dynamics. Combining in-depth interviews, participant observations, and sensory ethnography, this research examines how food practices are woven into everyday life. Observations of meal preparation and consumption in rural and urban Latvian households reveal how sensory processes influence decisions and routines, from ingredient selection to cooking methods and table rituals. These unwritten traditions are revealed as both deliberate and habitual, functioning as mechanisms for maintaining harmony, fostering relationships, and preserving cultural identity within families. This paper contributes to the evolving toolkit of anthropology, advocating for a reflexive balance between traditional methods and sensory innovations. It underscores the potential of sensory ethnography to deepen our understanding of multi-dimensional family dynamics and to foster methodologies that resonate beyond textual representation, challenging the primacy of written outputs in the discipline.

Mari Korpela, Tampere University

Beyond participant observation: film-making with international teenagers

During my ethnographic research among 8-15-year-old children of highly skilled international professionals in Finland, I made an ethnographic film with five 14-year-old boys. In this presentation, I discuss what extra value the film-making gave and what has happened with the film afterwards. I argue that long-term participant observation was crucial for the research with children and teenagers to succeed. The participant observation was obviously very sensorial, yet, those sensorial experiences were mine. The film enables sensorial experiences to an audience. The visuals and audio of the film enable me to show aspects of the participants' lives that I would not be able to express well in written word. Moreover, the film has enabled me to have an ongoing relationship with the participants after the project ended since they have joined a few screenings. This has strengthened my relationship with them, and it has provided me with valuable insights into their current lives. At the same time, a few members of the academia have questioned me about the rationale of making a film: it is time-consuming, and I could have written 2-3 articles within the same time. Moreover, since I am a novice film-maker, my technical skills of film-making are limited: as a result film festivals have rejected my film. I argue, however, that even if film-maker community does not value the film, it is highly valuable to my research project and the participants themselves, and the long process of film-making includes various significant sensory experiences.

Panel 6: Negative Capability and Productive Uncertainty in Crises of Closure – Part 2

Kenneth Sillander, Ivan Tacey, Isabell Herrmans

This panel explores the productive potential of Indigenous Peoples' open ways of life and their embodiment of "negative capability" in contemporary crises of closure. John Keats' concept of negative capability – "the ability to remain in uncertainties, mysteries, and doubts without the irritable reaching after fact and reason" – is adopted to reframe Indigenous challenges and conditions for resilience. Beyond viewing negative capability merely as an intellectual capacity to dwell in uncertainty and embrace ambiguity, we propose extending it to Indigenous Peoples' (and other marginalized groups') often profound practical abilities to bear with precariousness and hardship and make do with available material resources. Historically, endemic socio-political, economic and environmental uncertainties have prompted many Indigenous groups to develop markedly flexible traits and pronounced "orientations of openness" as means of creative adaptation (e.g., fluid socialities, diversified subsistence strategies, relational inclusiveness, eclecticism, opportunism, and pragmatism). However, the distinct nature of their contemporary conditions – such as environmental degradation, land dispossession, commodification and state-driven schemes of inscription and purification – pose unique challenges to their established lifeways. The challenges arise as growing "certainty" – fixed boundaries and identities, resource scarcity and reduced autonomy – narrows the scope for "productive uncertainty." By examining the intersection of these dynamics in a comparative perspective, we aim to probe the specific utility of negative capability and open orientations while recognizing their limits. We invite case studies and theoretical reflections illuminating these dispositions and their articulations with closure and persisting uncertainty in diverse domains including socialities, epistemologies, religions, economies, and environmental relationships.

Isabell Herrmans, *University of Helsinki*

The myna bird struck dumb: Precariousness and productive uncertainty in Luangan shamanic practice and contemporary lives

In John Keats' renowned poem, the nightingale's song evokes the simultaneous beauty and fragility of life, a theme echoed in Luangan shamanic poetry through the simile of the 'myna bird struck dumb.' I argue that the simile – designating the patient gone quiet – evokes not just the fleetingness and fragility of life, but that it also conjures a positive qualification of life's indeterminacy and its transformative potential which is harnessed in Luangan shamanic practice. The simile of the myna bird struck dumb might also be extended to stand for a life of decreasing opportunities and freedoms as industrial oil palm cultivation and demands for religious purification reduce the scope of the Luangans' opportunities and autonomy. This paper explores the "patchy" (Tsing 2024) productivity of uncertainty that remains available to Indigenous Luangan Dayaks in East Kalimantan, Indonesian Borneo, amid their present states of insufficiency and circumscription. It also attends to the limits of such productivity as options and freedoms decrease with monocropping and monotheism. Through a montage of examples of patchy resilience – encompassing ritual virtuality, narratives, and day-to-day activities – the paper explores the potential of negative capability and the constraints of capitalist closure and doctrinal fixity.

Andrew Johnson, *Stockholm University*

What If? Meditations on loss and hope on the Mekong.

Conditions on the Mekong River for fishermen are in a state of profound flux. In the wake of hydropower projects upstream, cycles of flood and retreat are now punctuated by a new arrhythmia dependent upon hydropower needs upstream, in Laos and China. This in turn impacts fish yields, threatens fishing grounds and equipment, and introduces new existential questions into the lives of those who depend upon the great river. But these uncertainties are layered atop lives that have long been dependent upon other uncertainties, also governed by distant forces: migrant work, political protest, and cross-border relationships between Thailand and Laos. The question of "what if" persists – what if fisheries disappear, what if hydropower dams break, what if authoritarianism returns, what if links and connections to distant sources of power dry up? This, too, raises the question of authorship, something which achieves expression in the figures of "jao", "masters" (see High 2022) of fortune and resources. Jao can be material (e.g. a noble, a king) or spirit (e.g. a ghostly entity inhabiting geographic features or a city center), but are ultimately as unknowable as they are vital. The changing material conditions of the river indicate changes in the governance of jao both worldly and supernatural. Here, I look at this question of "what if" via anthropological theory on haunting and ruin, but also in an existentialist light, as an open-ended search for meaning without resolution.

Karen Heikkilä, *University of Helsinki*

Alcoholism & Indigenous Community Care Systems: The Case of Semai Orang Asli

The Semai Orang Asli of Peninsular Malaysia first gained popularity in the 1960s as a non-violent people due to the research of Robert Knox Dentan, an American anthropologist. Ever since, Semai have appeared in psychology and peace studies literature as a textbook example of primitive democracy and egalitarianism. While Semai non-violence could be traced to strict adherence to an intricate taboo complex, there are other reasons for its existence as a defining

trait of Semai life. In the past, it meant choosing flight over fight, of physically escaping the terrors of invasion and enslavement, by retreating into the hinterland. Today, however, non-violence is less clear-cut. Men and women are forced to leave their ancestral villages to work in towns and cities, and this has compartmentalized roles and expectations by gender. Men, in particular, feel indigent and powerless when their wives leave home to earn money, or when they themselves work in racist-rife non-indigenous environments. Although concealed from the outside world, the trauma of “compounded colonization” finds violent expression on the domestic front when alcohol is used as a coping strategy. The impacts of alcoholism on gender and familial relationships and on securing Semai territorial rights are also discussed, culminating in an examination of the Semai bicaraaq conflict resolution process, village churches, and the kebut/naseeq ritual as indigenous care systems, in restoring a sense of slamaad (balance and wellbeing) to alcohol-users. Rooted in the Semai taboo complex, this idea finds meaning in Semai re-engaging with and protecting their customary lands.

Panel 13: Imagining Resettlement: Disillusionment and the Paradox of Comparison – Part 2

Jennifer Long, Stefan Millar

Canada’s resettlement narrative, often portrayed as a multicultural utopia, offers newcomers an idealized vision of integration and opportunity. Yet, the lived realities of resettlement frequently diverge from this promise, revealing structural inequities that strain family dynamics, hinder individual aspirations, and exacerbate social exclusion. This panel explores the gap between these White fantasies—rooted in Ghassan Hage’s notion of White multiculturalism (2000) and Himani Bannerji’s paradox of diversity (2016) where non-White newcomers are positioned as peripheral contributors to an imagined community—and the everyday struggles of resettlement. Central to our inquiry is the profound sense of disillusionment experienced by newcomers as their past, present, and future migration trajectories collide. For many, the romanticized vision of Canada as a land of opportunity is shaped by comparisons with the hardships of one’s homeland. The realities of navigating social and economic systems expose structural barriers, personal disappointments, and broader societal contradictions, as multicultural resettlement policies neglect deeper needs of those they claim to welcome. This panel will engage in a critical dialogue on the role of comparison itself, both as a method and a social practice, in shaping our understanding of resettlement and integration. Across two panels, presenters will critically engage with these dynamics, whether in the Canadian context or beyond, to tease apart the paradox of comparison: how idealized imaginaries and lived realities are constructed and contested.

Jennifer Long, MacEwan University

Newcomer and Host Community Disillusionment in Canadian Resettlement

Since the Russian invasion into Ukraine on February 24th, 2022, humanitarian support for Ukrainians in Canada has been “salient and unprecedented” (Hyndman, 2023, p.1). Canada’s federal government, for example, crafted a new permanent residence pathway for Ukrainians (Government of Canada, December 5, 2023). In Canada’s multicultural context, Ukrainian newcomers received social and financial support to integrate into urban cities across the nation, while trying to navigate “continually changing inner and outer worlds” (Schulman, Kraemer, & Baratta, 2019, p.10). Since 2022, almost 29,000 newcomers have arrived in Edmonton, Alberta’s second largest city (AAISA, 2023). While the number of resettled Ukrainian

newcomers tells one version of a praise-worthy political story, these “numbers don’t reveal much of the evolving personal tales of what happens when the political hoopla recedes” (Schulman, Kraemer, & Baratta, 2019, p.10). In this presentation, I describe findings from qualitative data collected in Winter 2024 through focus groups (N = 25) with members of the Ukrainian-Edmontonian diaspora and life history interviews (N = 15) with Ukrainian newcomers living in Edmonton. This data demonstrates how recent Ukrainian newcomers have a different idea of what resettlement looks like, when compared to third and fourth generation Ukrainian-Edmontonians actively supporting resettlement efforts. While Ukrainian newcomers re-build their lives – navigating triumphs, losses, and disillusionment in their new world – the Ukrainian-Edmontonian diaspora reveals pre-conceived notions of ‘Canadian ways of integrating’ that also highlight the role of Whiteness when conceptualizing who is the ‘right kind of migrant’ in Canada’s imagined multicultural nation (Hyndman, 2024; James, 2024).

Terje Toomistu, *University of Tartu*

Comfort refugees or state traitors? On the (dis)comfort of the Estonian migrants

First introduced by prominent Estonian politician and former Minister of Education, Tõnis Lukas, the term “comfort refugee” quickly became a widespread social stereotype in Estonia. It refers to individuals who move abroad for a more comfortable lifestyle or better economic opportunities, implying that their migration is driven by convenience rather than by fleeing persecution or danger. Following the EU enlargement, transnational mobility for work and study has increased significantly among young Estonian adults, particularly those of Generation Y, now in their late 20s and 30s. These young people, who have come of age in a borderless Europe, often engage in migration that is characterized by temporality, circularity, and open-endedness (Cairns 2021), a phenomenon referred to as “liquid migration” (Engbersen and Snel 2013). However, in Estonia, public discourse on migration is shaped by lingering anxieties, with emigrants sometimes viewed as ‘state traitors’ who benefit from higher wages and better welfare systems abroad while abandoning their home country. This paper explores the discourse surrounding ‘comfort refugees’ and ‘state traitors’ in Estonia, as well as the response to that discourse among Estonian migrants abroad, drawing on over 50 interviews and an extensive survey of more than 2,000 respondents. The paper reveals the complex relationship between global mobility, national identity, populist nationalism, and the specificity of East-to-West migration discourse in Europe.

Claire Felix, *University of Lisbon, Institute of Social Sciences*

Selective Hospitality and the Paradox of Resettlement in Athens, Greece

In Athens, asylum seekers and refugees (ASRs) who aspire to a better life, often hold idealized portrayals of the West, where human rights are unconditionally respected, and dignity and rights upheld as part of resettlement. Yet, ASRs lived realities are experienced through discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion. These, often unveil structural barriers in the resettlement process, violating respect and equality according to the hosts’ perceptions. Based on 11 months of ethnography in Athens, this research investigates the complex interplay between lived experiences, fantasized futures, and everyday efforts. It introduces the concept of ‘selective hospitality,’ showing how multiple hosts—from state institutions to civil society actors and host members—regulate access to rights and recognition based on cultural proximity, nationality, and ethnicity, reinforcing hierarchies of inclusion and exclusion (Herzfeld, 1992). However, ASRs and allies enact informal grassroots practices, challenging traditional notions of citizenship as merely a legal status. These acts of citizenship from below

demonstrate how democracy is actively reimagined and reshaped on the ground. Rather than being passive recipients of 'selective hospitality,' ASRs transform into active agents of democratic engagement, contesting exclusion through acts of solidarity and resistance (Isin, 2008). This paper contributes to migration and democracy discussions and argues for an understanding of democratic engagement rooted in daily practice—an insurgent, participatory form of citizenship that fills the gap left by legal and societal barriers that shape ASRs' experiences.

Yasmynn Chowdhury, *University of Oxford*

Precarious refuge: Rohingya resettlement and the limits of inclusion

For Rohingya refugees fleeing Myanmar, resettlement offers a rare reprieve from the severe material and sociopolitical constraints of protracted displacement. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork and life history interviews with resettled Rohingya communities in the global North, this paper examines the comparative relationship between imaginaries of resettlement and lived realities post-resettlement, contextualised within histories of statelessness and ethnic cleansing. Rohingya construct these comparisons through implicit narratives, articulating three domains of precarity that colour their everyday resettlement experiences: (1) material precarity: shaped by structural barriers to employment, health care, and basic resources, compounded by pressures to achieve 'self-sufficiency' while supporting family and diaspora members through remittances; (2) affective precarity: marked by ruptures in familiar modes of sociality, cultural strangeness in social encounters, and ambivalent experiences of 'hospitality'/'hostility'; and (3) political and existential precarity: characterised by the ongoing collective struggle for safety, citizenship and homeland return, and relationally-determined experiences of (non)refuge, as transnational connectedness with kin and other diaspora members collapses distance from suffering. Furthermore, discourses of 'inclusion' in host societies contrast with lack of meaningful infrastructures of material/financial support for self-directed community initiatives, for nurturing collective belonging and preservation of Rohingya identity. Attending to the experiences of Rohingya across a collection of sites of resettlement across the US and UK, this paper also considers the role of comparison as a methodological tool to help unsettle our understandings of how social/material assemblages of resettlement, and their associated constraints and affordances, shape the lived immediacies of Rohingya's intimate worlds in their new 'homes'.

Panel 22: Contrasts and Analogies – Part 2

Matti Eräsaari, Rodolfo Maggio, Sonja Trifuljesko

Contrast, one of the most thought-provoking tools available to anthropologists, is a particular kind of comparative movement: zooming in on unique phenomena rather than zooming out to generalise on shared features. When we compare woodcarving with the dishwashing machine (Strathern 2005) to gain greater traction, we are contrasting. When we classify kinship systems, we are using a comparative approach based on creating analogies. Contrasts and analogies, as opposite comparative moves, are not just tools used by anthropologists, but also by the people anthropologists work with to generate diverging effects. Yet the two also converge in comparison (Candea 2018): we do not contrast anything at will, but assume some underlying principle or relation that makes disparate ideas or things comparable. Binary opposites tend to be alike in all significant respects but the one they are contrasted on (Sahlins 1996), while

measuring tends to flatten away all unnecessary contrast and focus on a single connecting feature (Crump 1990). We invite papers with as outrageous contrasts as you please – provided that the contrast yields new insights, new questions, methodological propositions or terminological interventions. We welcome contributions from all fields of anthropology; the papers can discuss “contrast” theoretically, but also ethnographically — namely how the people we work with employ “contrast” — or methodologically, focusing, for instance, on the challenges created by contrasts encountered in the field. You can disagree with our definition of contrast or agree with it. This is an open-ended panel which will hopefully broaden our understanding of contrast as a tool for anthropological thought.

Matti Eräsaari, *University of Helsinki*

Citing and liking

In this paper, I contrast Facebook likes and academic citations. The contrast has its roots in the use of citation indexes as a method for measuring the academic impact of a publication. Since the adoption of citation indices, however, citations have been further transformed from an external metric into a vessel of academic empowerment in the shape of citation boycotts and preferential citation practices. The latter, from a more critical point of view, flattens the citation to a monetised token or, worse, the equivalent of a Facebook “like”. In my presentation, I examine the analogy in order to better understand the features of the academic citation, and what we gain or lose by placing it in a new functional category or role.

Sonja Trifuljesko, *University of Helsinki*

The Units of Labour: Contrasting Story and Time in Agile Frameworks

In the 1990s, a new framework for managing human endeavour, called Scrum, was developed within the software industry in the US, spreading over time elsewhere and gradually seeping into other sectors with the expansion of information and communication technologies. Primarily lauded for boosting productivity, Scrum is described by its co-creator Jeff Sutherland (2014) as ‘The Art of Doing Twice the Work in Half the Time’. Yet, time is not the labour unit inherent to Scrum and other ‘agile management’ frameworks but story. A story comprises information about for whom the work is done, what it involves, and what its purpose is. Stories are measured through points that take into account not only the amount of work a story entails to be completed but also its complexity and innate uncertainty. Moreover, story points are assigned through relative rather than absolute sizing, in other words, by comparing one story to another. This paper closely examines the differences rendered between story and time as the units of labour in agile frameworks. Analysing discussions on Reddit, I ask how the contrast between story points and hours is articulated. In what sense are the two units diametrically opposite? What do they have in common? Finally, what effects are envisioned to result from the use of one unit over the other? I put my findings into conversation with the classical labour theory of value, to provide some insights on the reconfiguration of work practices brought about by the software industry boom over the past several decades.

Ward Keeler, *University of Texas at Austin*

Contrasting Concepts of Self

After making signal contributions to South Asian studies, Louis Dumont famously turned his attention to the West. Without claiming for myself Dumont’s magisterial command of South Asian and Western philosophical traditions, I wish to follow his example by taking insights I have gained in Indonesia and using them to question assumptions people in other parts of the

world apply to their social relations. In this presentation, I focus on contrasting understandings of the self. To illustrate contrasts between Indonesian and international (originally Western) conceptualizations of the self, I look at conventional understandings of how to deal with emotional distress: by naming and processing an individual's distress, or by asserting one's ability to put such distress aside and so becoming ready to reenter normal social interaction with others. This contrast follows from Westerners' diminishing faith in hierarchical arrangements. That is, a focus on selves seen as endowed with unfathomed depths, combining a post-Enlightenment individualism and post-Freudian understanding of intra-psychic conflict, compensates for a sense that ties among people cannot be relied upon to sustain an individual's place in the world. This take on selves implies dealing with distress by introspection, in order to attain clarity about current experience. In Indonesia, a focus on selves seen as defined in and through interaction minimizes concern for individual identity and uniqueness. This take on selves encourages actors to reengage with others without regard to any emotional disarray, because only through interaction can such distress be dismissed and overcome.

Rodolfo Maggio, Pei-Yi Guo, *University of Helsinki, Academia Sinica*

The legacy of the lagoon: Contrasting shell valuables in the Solomon Islands

In the past few decades, two types of traditional shell valuables in the Solomon Islands developed very different trajectories. Bakia is a large ring made from a giant clam shell from the Western Province (Scheffler 1962), and tafuli'ae consists of strings of small seashell rings and red cloth from Malaita Province (Ross 1981). These two valuables have some significant features in common: in their respective societies, they are considered the standard objects to validate important events such as weddings, compensation rituals, and the attribution of land access rights. However, they differ in materials and current usage; bakia is rarely used and not produced anymore (McDougall, 2016), while tafuli'ae has seen innovative production to meet rising demand. We contrast these two valuables through our experiences working, respectively, in Langa Langa Lagoon and the Marovo Lagoon, and explore their differing "social lives" (Appadurai, 2011) and materiality (Miller, 2005).

Panel 25: Crosslocations, infections and comparison

Sarah Green, Avi Betz-Heinemann

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the science, the conspiracy theories, the policies and regulations as well as the SARS-CoV-2 virus and a variety of non-human animals that were drawn into the story (mink, horseshoe bats, even pangolins at one point), all coexisted in the same places. Yet the media kept reporting that those who held one set of views about all of this lived 'on a different planet' from those who held a different set of views. That spatial metaphor implying a total disconnect suggests that knowledge shapes how people experience their worlds; and second, it suggests the coexistence of radically different understandings: the different planets are all in the same place. This is what could be called a crosslocation (see Green, La hteenaho, Douzina-Bakalaki, Rommel, Viscomi, Soto Bermant and Scalco, 2024, *An Anthropology of Crosslocations*; HUP). Moreover, the infectiousness of SARS-CoV-2 pointed to the way normal life inevitably involves coexistence with microbes: they are everywhere all at once, and they are often a part of who, what and where we all are. If comparisons depend on being able to say where one thing ends and another thing begins, how do we deal with the

simultaneous coexistence of different ways to locate things, which implies that where to locate the borders also varies? Participants are invited to contribute papers that explore the dilemma of how to conduct comparisons when the borders overlap, particularly in relation to the concept of infection.

Avi Betz-Heinemann, *University of Helsinki*

No Cyprus Is an Island: Crosslocations in the Oriental Mediterranean

Earth, water, wind and fire; a seemingly benign and elemental categorisation of our planet. This ancient taxonomy and its variations, often associated with Aristotle, has multiple origins in different empires that once ruled large swathes of the world. With imperial and colonial mapping this folk taxonomy was further naturalised, into land as something to be owned and as separate from water. For example, Cushman (2013) shows that water systems in the 18th and 19th century were not at first studied as a part of the land sciences like geology, reflecting earlier intellectual traditions divisions rooted in ancient elemental theory. This is a small snapshot of a long *durée* history of the naturalised separation between water and land as fundamentally different kinds of matter. It underpins many assumptions in human-environmental relations today particularly those pertinent to human health. In this paper I explore how the notion of water as separate from the land and earth, as something abstractable in the hydrological and intellectual sense, gave rise to a globally hegemonic understanding of disease, in particular malaria. And how the concept of 'Crosslocations' can be applied as a framework to understand how this has come to pass and why and how it might also be transformed. I take the case of Cyprus, itself a land that has been constructed by many as a singular bounded island despite multiple attempts to demonstrate otherwise, to explore this topic.

Mankei Tam, *Ca' Foscari University of Venice*

Innovation with Guts: Translating Microbiome Research to "Tell Hong Kong's Story"

During the pandemic, the border separating Hong Kong from mainland China—a political device of the "One Country, Two Systems" that has historically carried functions of biosociality and biosecurity—did not suffice as a virus barrier. This paper discusses how WAND, a university research institution focusing on the gut microbiome, tackled the question of Hong Kong's autonomy and conflicts with Chinese sovereignty. By shifting the "first line of defense" from the border to the citizen's bodies, scientists enlisted symbiotic microbes to stabilize the immune responses to vaccines and establish a new normalized body using biomarkers in the gut microbiome. Drawing on an ethnography at WAND, I ask: how can microbes, the forms of life that microbiome scientists contemplate, address the question of Hong Kong's specificity within a new ecology of comparison (Choy 2003)? What kinds of knowledge and forms of value are produced to relate Hong Kong citizens' well-being to the Chinese populace's health concerns? WAND incorporates the translational research model to develop new diagnostics and therapeutics through the pharmaceutical industry. I trace how WAND scientists move knowledge from the lab to the market and across the Hong Kong-China border to facilitate new scientific collaborations while negotiating with a biopower that aims to accelerate Hong Kong's integration with mainland China in the post-pandemic era. In doing so, WAND scientists' knowledge production constitutes a kind of care, relating microbiome science to reframe Hong Kong citizens' well-being while redefining the city's specificity within the changing geopolitics in Asia.

Nataliya Aluferova, *University of Hamburg*

Intersecting Realities: The Role of Home Pharma Kits in Crosslocation Dynamics

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly intensified the polarization of discourses surrounding healthcare systems, vaccinations, self-care practices, and overall health. In my paper, I would like to discuss how medical products are shaped by geographic circulations and transmitted across networks of human relations through the analysis of home pharmaceutical collections. Medications have become a central element in this context. My research focuses on the (dis)trust that Russian-speaking emigrants in Germany experience toward the German healthcare system and vaccines. This community exhibits a high degree of medicalization, with medications playing an essential role in their daily lives and healing practices. A notable manifestation of low trust is the stockpiling of medicines imported from Russia and other post-Soviet countries, underscoring the importance of the home medicine cabinet. For many participants, their home pharmaceutical collections have increased during the pandemic, influenced by a combination of panic, preparedness, and an anticipated crisis. Various practices related to the medications brought from their home country, such as sharing, storage, and gifting, illustrate how the home medicine cabinet serves as a “crosslocation”, connecting the medical practices of different realities.

Viljami Kankaanpää-Kukkonen, *University of Helsinki*

Spanish transhumant beekeepers living and thinking with parasites

Like all animals, domesticated honeybees are always riddled with numerous different parasites simultaneously. While this banal statement is largely uncontested, the meaning, significance and even existence of different parasites infecting the honeybees can be an arena of contestation. This paper examines how professional transhumant beekeepers from the village of Fuenlabrada de los Montes in Extremadura, Spain categorize, compare and ultimately either fight or ignore different parasites their bees are living with. This epistemology of parasites held by transhumant beekeepers is contrasted with academic research of bee pathogens, conducted both in Spain and elsewhere. The transhumant and mobile nature and large industrial scale of their beekeeping activities compels the beekeepers to experience and interpret the significance of various different pathogens, such as *Varroa destructor*, *Nosema ceranae* and Deformed Wing Virus, in a way that remarkably differs from contemporary scientific understanding and practice, to the extent that some beekeepers have lost their faith in bee science. This paper shows how tradition, state-funded pharmaceuticals, questionably legal local treatments and personal idiosyncrasies and beliefs combine in Spanish countryside to create a particular way of thinking about and dealing with bee parasites.

Salim Aykut Ozturk, *Danish Institute of Study Abroad*

An Island in Spite of Itself: Time and Intimacy in Istanbul

How does physical distance can be a lens through which multiple-temporalities and – intimacies made sense? Focusing on a group of non-Muslim islands off the coast off Istanbul, this paper explores a very specific ethnographic context where ‘the locals’ are denied being insiders for multiple reasons that are at the heart of Turkish nation building. By studying infrastructures and services regarding urban transport (boats and their schedules), housing (heating and security) and health (during and after the pandemic), it tackles the ways through which cycles, rhythms, routines of life and nature co-constitute physical space. In doing so, it provides a vivid account of everyday comparisons of the self – with its place and its feel – to

other selves – and their places and feel. Finally, the paper offers a fresh look onto contemporary non-Muslim subjectivities in Turkey by concentrating on everyday modalities of time and intimacy instead of ethnicity.

Tuesday

Film

10:00-10:40

Hanging Out

19mins, 2023, Mari Korpela - Studium 1 (F3020)

Temporary labour migration of skilled professionals is increasing in various parts of the world. Often, such expatriates are accompanied by their children but very little is known of their views and experiences. In her ethnographic research project, Korpela investigated the views and experiences of such children and youth in Finland. During her fieldwork, she filmed a group of 14-year-old boys on their free time in a Finnish town. The film is a reflexive story of this collaborative film project.

10:40-12:00

Our Little Garden (International Premiere)

59mins, 2024, Sointu Toiskallio - Studium 1 (F3020)

19-year-old Alonso dreams of one day being self-sufficient. 76-year-old Ana María likes to keep her mind active by learning and enjoying plants with all her senses. Heriberto has recovered from cancer and wants to cleanse his body. In the hustle of Santiago de Chile's megacity, gardeners of different ages have found a respite, a connection to the soil and a community in a garden on the edge of the capital city.

10:30-12:00

Panel details

Panel 2: Knowing Nature to care for it: ecological action in the making – Part 3

Paula Palanco Lopez, Olli Haanpää

The phenomenon of 'caring for the environment' is by no means new – environmentalist movements have existed consistently throughout the 20th century, and their roots expand far earlier than that (Haq & Paul, 2011). However, these prominently political movements are not the only way in which people have engaged with and tried to protect the natural environment:

conservation, restoration, recycling, degrowth, alternative living (such as eco-villages, etc.)... all these are ways in which different social groups have tried to address various environmental problems, changing their relationships and knowledges about nature. So far, these organised actions have been well studied in isolation, in relation to particular socio-historical contexts. However, they share a connection as enactments of the same idea: there is a problem and there are actions humans can take to solve it. In this panel, we want to bring together stories and case-studies about how different groups of people conceptualise and know 'the environment' in order to care for it. What kinds of socio-ecological contexts allow these initiatives? What roles do these groups have in their societies, and how are these societal relations shaping their practices? We invite submissions that investigate (but are not restricted to) local citizen-led environmental restoration projects, activist movements that directly challenge institutional conventions and regulations, or alternative lifestyle groups that challenge the status quo through new practices and livelihoods. With this, we want to showcase the diversity of ways in which knowledge generation about 'nature' and 'the environment' – and the relations that are formed in the process – shape ecological action.

Christof Lammer, *Humboldt University of Berlin and University of Klagenfurt*

Giant Panda Matchmaking: How Kinship is Measured in Species Conservation

This paper examines the multiple kinship measurements that inform the “genetic population management” of the giant panda – the “vulnerable” species claimed as the global symbol of biodiversity conservation and China’s national treasure. My reading of breeding recommendations shows that the so-called “genetic matchmaking algorithm” relies on degrees of genealogical closeness to rank pandas according to their “mean kinship value” and the “mate suitability index”. These calculations become possible when the uncertain parentage of the “founders” (“wild” pandas that reproduced in captivity) is treated as unrelatedness. Genetic testing is used to solve the “uncertain sire” problem – gaps produced in the panda pedigree through a gendered ex-situ conservation strategy. When behavioral biologists measure lived closeness and highlight affinity rather than descent for successful reproduction, the ranking of male giant pandas is reorganized. When reproductive biologists promise to develop embryo transfer protocols in pseudo-pregnant pandas with the help of endocrinologists who measure kinship as embodied maternal care, genetically less valuable female pandas become revalorized. Surprisingly, the primacy of genetic quality thus opens the space for other ways of knowing giant pandas. Different experts tap into the flow of resources. In turn, their measuring of kinship reshuffles the value of this iconic animal and the institutions that keep them.

Freja Marie Hegelund, *Lund University*

Knowing to care and caring to know in peatland restoration in Denmark

Peatlands have become a silver bullet in climate mitigation policy globally. Restoring and rewetting agricultural peatlands is key for meeting reduction targets within the agricultural sector. But unlike other sectors, change rests on the decisions of individual farmers. In Denmark, a political aim towards restoring 100.000 hectares of agricultural peatlands by 2030 is challenged by uncertainty, disagreements and negotiations among farmers (who own the land), public authorities (who are tasked with realizing the policy goal) and soil scientists (who produce the data basis for the restoration efforts). Based on ethnographic fieldwork carried out in 2025 within a local peatland restoration project in Denmark, this paper sheds light on contradictory and overlapping ways of knowing and caring for peatlands among these key stakeholders. According to van Dooren, care requires contextual and critical knowledge about

the object of care (van Dooren 2014). This paper explores what hierarchies of care are being constructed (Giraud 2019) when knowledge is being questioned and negotiated. Hence, the paper asks how knowledge is being negotiated to fit different perceptions of “good” care for peatlands in restoration efforts by investigating what emotional, political, temporal and epistemic frames orient caring acts in peatland restoration, what counts as care, and how else care might be imagined and practiced.

Marc Daferner, *Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt*

From Vineyard to Glass: Towards a More-than-Human Understanding of Co-Production

A horse pulls a plough in the vineyard. Germany 2024: Something unusual is taking place within the wine industry. A small but growing number of wineries in Germany and across the globe is exploring alternative practices in producing wine. The core of their winemaking practices can be described as co-producing wine with nature, aiming at bringing winemaking practices into a harmonious and respectful relationship with nature. Within the industry, the actors speak of natural wine or low-intervention wine, when talking about this phenomenon. However, the producers of these wines are not unified by a self-contained orthodox perspective. Instead, they seem to be in a kind of search movement in which they experimentally try out different practices in viticulture and winemaking. Since a standardized set of practices for producing natural or low-intervention wines has not (yet) been established it is hard to clearly denote what distinguishes their production from established bundles of winemaking practices, for example in conventional, organic, or biodynamic production. In my contribution I focus on practices of a careful treatment of the soil and the wine that Daniel, one of our research partners, and his nonhuman companions, e.g., his horse Funa, are applying when working their family's vineyard and producing wine in Southwest Germany.

Luca Battisti and Egidio Dansero, *University of Turin*

Landscapes in the making: NbS and art for the revitalisation of Natura 2000 site

This contribution examines the transformation of the Stellantis-La Mandria site in Piedmont, Italy, a Natura 2000 site historically associated with industrial activity. Acknowledging the transitional nature of these areas, the paper explores how Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and art installations can facilitate their transformation. Efforts to improve access to the site have been complicated by significant changes in land use and ownership. Using participatory methods, the research identifies areas that provide Cultural Ecosystem Services (CES) and investigates the effectiveness of NbS in managing invasive species and restoring habitats. It also suggests potential sites for art installations, proposing an innovative approach to strengthening the relationship between people and the natural environment. The study reveals divergent stakeholder perspectives: some advocate art as a means of raising awareness of the natural environment, while others warn that it could overshadow the site's historical and ecological significance. This dichotomy illustrates the complex interplay between art, ecology and historical continuity in landscape management.

Panel 5: Love at its Limits: Thresholds and Internal Comparison

Timothy Cooper, Garima Jaju

What does it feel like to dwell on a threshold? What hesitations, exhilarations or exhaustions characterize its intensity? What moral outrage, violence, doubts or controversies follow in its

wake? Building on studies of the role of abstraction in anthropological analysis, this panel's focus on thresholds seeks to draw attention to the possibility of internal comparison. What does it mean to compare a thing to itself? Rather than looking to outcomes, events or ruptures, we look to incremental changes that hold together tensile boundaries, producing an unsettled peace or state of irreconciliation. We take this project up in relation to love and how its limits are tried and tested in social, religious, ethical, and political lives, with attention to questions of ethnicity, class, caste, gender, religion, race, nation and beyond. What happens when love goes too far, becomes too much? When love co-exists with violence, it can challenge and demarcate the limits of tolerance between people, animals, and things. Labours that seek to manage the violent excesses of love engage internal and interpersonal comparisons of relationality, reciprocity and retribution. In religious devotion, the comparative threshold between veneration and worship underscores the notion that there is an appropriate magnitude of love that one must strive for but that one can never really know. Moving beyond love's binary relation to hate, this panel dwells on the thresholds of love – its point of excess in comparison to itself – asking how its limits are disciplined, demarcated, challenged, and dwelled upon.

Timothy Cooper, *University of Cambridge*

Magnitudes of Love: Islamic Videography and the Challenge of Internal Comparison

“Live mourning” is a genre of Islamic videography documenting collective expressions of grief, recitations of praise and lament, and programmes of oration commemorating the Prophet Muhammad's family and the Shi'i Imams. Recorded, consumed, and preserved by Pakistani Shi'a minoritized by religious difference, it's “liveness” describes its technology, qualitative intensity, and temporality, but also the ethical challenge its content poses. The first Shi'i Imam, Ali ibn Abi Talib, those who “exceed the lawful limits of love” for him. In the present, the “liveness” of Shi'i videography also describes this challenge of comparing – through innovation and experimentation – an ethical virtue to the possibility of its exaggeration. The comparative threshold between veneration and worship underscores the notion that there is an appropriate magnitude of love that one must strive for but that one can never really know. Ethnographically situated among videographers and collectors of Shi'i media in Lahore and South Punjab, this talk will situate Shi'i experiments with the limits of love in the context of a recent shift towards internal comparison in anthropological thought.

Garima Jaju, *University of Cambridge*

Devi's commentary: complaint, comparison and the thresholds of domestic violence

The act of a woman making a legal complaint about domestic violence invites public scrutiny. Based on fieldwork in Gurgaon, India, I argue that the ensuing public talk and its interrogative force is not limited to the case or its complainant. It also opens a reflexive space where proximate observing women interpret and narrate their own domesticity and management of domestic violence in comparison to the case of the complainant. Contrary to expectations of feminist solidarity, the act of a woman complaining can offend the observing woman, who, in turn, presents her own non-complaining as a virtue, emphasizing its social maturity and moral responsibility in maintaining familial love and harmony. I present the case of Devi, a young daughter-in-law in an upper caste, low-income household in the city of Gurgaon, as she volunteers her commentary on her brother's wife who has fled her marital home (Devi's natal home) complaining of cruelty and violence. The complaints by Devi's sister-in-law -- and the common assumption about its lack of veracity and moral judiciousness, the patriarchal

condemnation of the scandal it has caused, and Devi's own conflicted positionality within patriarchal honour as the outraged sister of the accused brother -- becomes the comparative frame within which Devi reflects on her own domesticity, and determines the gendered thresholds of love, violence and endurance.

Heidi Härkönen, *University of Helsinki*

Stretching Motherly Love in Contemporary Cuba

This presentation explores the thresholds and limits of motherly love through a focus on the strained caring relationships between a teenaged Cuban boy and his two closest care-givers; his biogenetic mother and his patrilineal aunt; his day-to-day mother through social practice. I have conducted long-term ethnographic research amongst these low-income Havana residents, and over time, motherly and kinship love have entered into difficult contradictions and competing loyalties between the boy and his two mothers, moving on ambiguous thresholds where the limits of love are continuously stretched for different persons. During my latest fieldwork period in Havana in 2024, the boy's two mothers' love for him had encountered a new threshold, when the boy had engaged in theft and was suspected to be using drugs, despite of his day-to-day mother's devoted efforts to care for him. These events lead people to re-negotiate the meanings of biogenetic kinship, embodied connections and continuous care, stretching kinship love, which in everyday discourse is praised as unbreakable, over difficult thresholds. How do people handle hurtful events and upsetting changes in kin relationships that are sometimes already on a shaky ground because of past neglects or a lack of biogenetic motherhood? Theoretically, this talk engages with anthropological literature on motherly love and Latin-American suffering mothers, exploring how motherly love becomes stretched and complicated in situations where the, in everyday discourse love-affirming, biogenetic motherhood is missing. When do wrongdoings become too much and how much is love conditioned by difficult negotiations of motherly love as all enduring?

Sandra Nasser El-Dine, *Tampere University*

Love as caring practices among exiled Syrians amid Lebanon's economic crisis

This paper explores how love, as embodied in everyday caring practices, is reshaped in conditions of extreme precarity. Based on fieldwork conducted in early 2023 among married Syrian women in Beirut's Bourj Hammoud district, I investigate the (im)possibility of sustaining marital love amidst Lebanon's ongoing economic crisis. Syrian spousal dynamics are typically shaped by gendered caring practices: wives demonstrate love through domestic tasks such as cleaning and cooking, while husbands provide material well-being. Love is experienced as an affective force enacted through mutual acts of care. I propose that Lebanon's economic collapse has created a threshold moment that unsettles these patterns of care and reciprocity for Syrians residing there. The country's infrastructure has largely collapsed, and access to electricity, water, and fuel remains unreliable. Due to hyperinflation, the purchasing power of salaries has decreased drastically, making it a constant challenge to cover basic living expenses. Against this backdrop, my paper asks how practices of care evolve when survival itself becomes precarious: is it possible to sustain love in desperate times?

Ari Ofengenden, *Tulane University*

Thresholds of Attachment: Relational Psychoanalysis and the Limits of Love

This talk explores the thresholds of love through the lens of relational psychoanalysis, examining how love's excesses and failures manifest within interpersonal attachments.

Relational psychoanalysis posits that the self is constituted in and through relationships, where love becomes both a sustaining force and a site of rupture. At its limits, love exposes the fragility of boundaries between self and other, oscillating between intimacy, dependency, and loss. Drawing on clinical vignettes and theoretical insights, I analyze moments where love exceeds its capacity to heal and instead produces ambivalence, violence, or profound disconnection. These thresholds—where love becomes “too much” or “not enough”—reveal the labor of managing relational imbalance, as individuals unconsciously negotiate internal comparisons between idealized and actualized forms of love. I argue that love’s limits are not simply points of breakdown but generative sites for understanding the tensions of reciprocity, care, and retribution. How do individuals strive to sustain attachments when love is infused with resentment, envy, or fear of engulfment? What happens when the demand for recognition within love leads to self-erasure or boundary collapse? By framing these questions through relational psychoanalysis, I show how love at its limits produces unsettled forms of relationality, marked by both longing and resistance. This talk contributes to the panel’s exploration of thresholds by situating love’s excess within the dynamics of attachment and comparison, offering a psychoanalytic perspective on how love is disciplined, fractured, and ultimately redefined at its limits.

Panel 7: A Roundtable on Participatory Action Ethnography

Khalil Avi Betz-Heinemann, Konstantinos Apostolou

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” This widely quoted remark from Margaret Mead reflects the dialogical nature of thought, action, and commitment. In sociocultural anthropology, Marilyn Strathern’s focus on relations, Tim Ingold’s focus on intergenerational ecological learning and David Graeber’s focus on dialogical encounters are just a few examples of an emphasis on how creativity, learning, and knowledge emerge through mutual encounters and relational practices. While participatory action research has in practice been embraced by an increasing number of anthropologists, the individual ethnographer remains valorized for reasons external and internal to the discipline. This question of the ‘lone anthropologist’ has been written about in anthropology for at least half a century. This roundtable again revisits this question by inviting participatory action ethnographers to reflect on their experiences and highlight barriers to its practice. The aim is to imagine a future that embraces dialogue as being at the very heart of anthropological practice. Brief submissions that introduce a practice and commitment to participatory action ethnography are welcome.

Sung-Hoon Hong, *Seoul National University*

Cooperative Comparisons to the Urban Paradox of Nonworking Land

Who owns a city where the comparison between production and consumption is complex? This question becomes even more pertinent when we consider the impact of the recursive industrial revolution on urban landscapes. To revive cities left behind by rapid deindustrialization, one approach is to exchange creative services that emerge from free play on unused land. In these urban areas, nonworking land stimulates playful activities, fostering harmonious comparisons between production and consumption. By drawing analogies between these two for the sake of well-being, people’s curiosity grows, the land flourishes, and the city experiences experimental revitalization. However, the commercial success of nonworking land raises

significant questions about public ownership. Who truly owns a city? In a system where landowners wield economic power and rent-seeking is justified, a city's prosperity means that those who engage in play without owning land will gradually lose their embodied spaces. While this injustice doesn't suggest that creative players can simply seize land from innocent landowners, it has inevitably sparked new speculation. Can we build a new city that thrives on play, starting from empty nonworking land? In Seoul, South Korea, some individuals, including an anthropologist and psychedelic rock bands who remain poor despite working on nonworking land, have formed cooperatives to tackle this paradox within the city's recursive dynamics.

Selin Genç; Aegli Sakellari; *Visual Voices Cyprus*

Participatory Action in Cyprus; Collaborative methods and grassroots engagement

The Old Town of Nicosia in Cyprus embodies a contradiction: trans-communal relationships thriving in a post-conflict landscape, amid regimes and artifacts of division. It is also where we met—two master's students of anthropology during our respective fieldwork. One of us is Greek, and the other is a Turkish-American national—two familiar Others. We both participated in artistic and activist initiatives focused on fostering trans-communal dialogue and promoting creative change through various art media. Two years later, we reconvene to exchange feedback on our experiences studying and engaging in peacebuilding initiatives. We discuss our aspirations for collaborative projects and explore creative methods, such as podcasting, to make social and artistic actions visible to audiences beyond the confines of Nicosia. The following questions have shaped our research and inspire our practice: 1. How can we engage with grassroots activism within academia? 2. How do we document and position ourselves within marginalized or co-opted projects? 3. Under which circumstances is collaborative ethnography feasible today? 4. If academia provides us with a platform to highlight collective initiatives, who should we include, and how do we pursue public anthropology to reach further audiences? 5. Can familiar Others contribute valuable insights to the study of (un-)familiar and strange encounters (Ahmed, 2000)? Our role in this roundtable is to present these questions and share our perspectives on participatory action and the potential of collaborative ethnography.

Codrin Dinu Vasiliu, *Romanian Academy*

Knowledge ethnography from participatory actions to localised anthropology

In contemporary challenges, knowledge ecosystems could be defined as material and symbolic infrastructures based on networks of participatory knowledge, governance, and development. In this perspective, systemic anthropology could use participatory ethnography as a strategic tool to explore, understand, explain, narrate, and conceptualize the local and global knowledge ecosystems. Participatory anthropology should prospect the horizon of the interactions between material and immaterial identities, local and trans-local cultures, organic and manipulatory discourses, immersive and exploratory values, human and more than human lives, past, present, and future narratives. Using systems thinking models, examples, and methodologies I will debate tools and strategies to integrate participatory ethnography within knowledge ecosystems. As an operational example, I will use the Cesar Center of Excellence. Cesar is a knowledge production and transfer hub, networking between 4 clusters and 25 living labs (www.cesar2030.eu). The presentation is based on the action to document the Cesar concept and system development. The action started in February 2024 and is based on the

participatory observation project: Building Cesar.

Konstantinos Apostolou, *KU Leuven*

An autoethnography of a local collaborator

Since the reflexive turn of anthropology in the 1980s, ethnographic authority has been extensively scrutinised (Clifford 1983, Clifford and Marcus 1986, Fabian 1983). The figure of the lone ethnographer and his omnipotence to represent others were challenged in order to move towards collaborative modes of knowing and writing. I find my participation in fieldwork at home, Cyprus, a striking example of how ethnography can be a participatory, dialogical and transformative process both for anthropologists and interlocutors. Although there is a vast body of self-reflective anthropological texts (re)conceptualizing the ethnographer's methodology and positionality (Lassiter 2005, Pedersen 2020, Sanjek 1993), I advocate that accounts of local contributors' reflections on their status are equally needed. I suggest that the project I'm participating in can be described as a reciprocal ethnography, a condition where all - researchers, scholarly audiences and participants - can learn something new (Lawless 2000, 198, Lassiter 2001, 141). Drawing on excerpts of my experience in a field trip in Larnaca, my hometown, and an interview with my childhood friend's grandparents, I attempt to display the transformative power of participatory ethnography. Through an autoethnographic account, I demonstrate how such dialectic experience let me defy taken-for-granted Cypriot stories of division and (re)discover nuanced stories of coexistence and collaboration.

Pekka Tuominen, *University of Helsinki*

Conventional straitjacket of anthropological representation

I argue that the "lone anthropologist" is largely a convention in how we represent our research. It is a great narrative that many of us have gotten used to: many of us remember the moment during our undergraduate years, reading Claude Lévi-Strauss' *Tristes Tropiques* and realising in the middle of the book that it was not the solo expedition that it first seemed. Lévi-Strauss had a team of guides, researchers, and even his wife with him. The story reads much better as a heroic quest, and this narrative presents a widely accepted model in the field

In *Tristes Tropiques*, the ever-present ambiguity of dialogical encounters does not disturb the clarity of structuralist contemplations – each encounter is meaningful and leads to profound insights. But this book is just one example of a broader trend. The messiness of everyday dialogical interactions often gets overlooked also in other ethnographic and anthropological writing, possibly for a range of related reasons. What causes this tendency? What are the root causes for this across various schools of thought—from functionalist analyses of societies to holistic frameworks of power and ontological totalities—why do anthropologists often downplay the complexity and messiness of everyday interactions?

Panel 10: Disturbed Intimacies: Unmaking and Remaking Kinship through Disappearance

Saana Hansen, Laura Huttunen

People disappear from their families and communities for various reasons, both involuntary and voluntary. Such reasons range from state actions to prolonged labor migration and strategies for managing tensions within kinship relations. These unaccounted absences disrupt intimate relationships and generate diverse strategies for managing the uncertainties they

create. One striking example of violent state-imposed absences is the removal of minority children from their birth families and their placement with majority families or institutions worldwide. These child removal policies – such as displacement of Indigenous children into residential schools and white families in Scandinavia, North America and Australia – are rooted in racist, political imaginaries of a good family and nation-state, oftentimes justified in the name of ‘child’s best interest’. In addition, individuals—both children and adults—disappear from their families and communities during migration in pursuit of better living conditions or the hope of a livable life. Sometimes, people are also made to disappear as a means to escape abuse and violence in their intimate relations. This panel invites scholars to explore how state policies and various forms of global inequalities have contributed to the unmaking and remaking of kinship, communities, and societies by creating protracted or permanent absences. Submissions are also encouraged to examine how affected families and communities have interpreted such disappearances and made calls for justice and reparation, or how people have coped with the absence of family members, and navigated the unknown, including efforts to track, follow, and reconnect with forcibly or unaccountably separated relatives.

Firat Kurt, *Kadir Has University*

The Negative Gift: Sovereignty, Subjugation & Enforced Disappearances in Turkey

This paper investigates enforced disappearances as a political strategy, theorizing their operation through the concept of the "negative gift"—an act that subverts the relational dynamics of giving by taking what does not belong to either the giver or the receiver. Enforced disappearances, from their origins in early 20th-century Germany to their systematic use in Turkey, represent a deliberate form of violence that redefines sovereign power in late modernity. Drawing on theoretical frameworks from Derrida, Agamben, and Lacan, this study explores how enforced disappearances disrupt the intersubjective relations of those left behind, destabilizing their identities and preventing the closure typically associated with mourning. The "negative gift" functions as a mechanism of subjugation, creating spatial and temporal zones of indistinction where sovereignty operates beyond the law. Focusing on the Turkish context, the paper examines the dual dynamics of enforced disappearances: the enforced self-identification of survivors with the disappeared and the omnipotence of sovereign agents such as paramilitary forces. These agents embody the paradox of a sovereignty that exists simultaneously within and beyond the legal order, producing a haunting political landscape. Through archival research and testimonies, this paper situates enforced disappearances within a broader critique of sovereignty, justice, and resistance. It argues that enforced disappearances are not merely isolated acts of violence but deliberate strategies that foreclose possibilities of political dissent and transform the social fabric. By conceptualizing these acts as "negative gifts," the paper opens new pathways for understanding the intersection of violence and power.

Annika Lehtonen, *Tampere University*

Relational mobility of street-connected youth in urban Northeast Brazil

Street-connected youth in Brazilian cities are neither static on the street nor completely isolated from their families and close relationships. In this paper, I reflect on the relational processes regarding how street-connected young people’s families, other relationships and societal influence affect their mobility and vice versa, and how they navigate between important settings in their lives. I explore how street-connected youth practise and describe their decision-making regarding socio-spatial mobility in relation to the multiple settings in

which they circulate. The study draws on ethnographic data collected in two Brazilian cities – Recife in 2018–2019 and Salvador in 2022–2023 – with seventeen street-connected young people. In this paper, I elaborate on how young people's movement regarding relational survival was fundamentally embedded in relations with others, while not ruling out the existence of their own agency in these mobility practices. The results illustrate the nuanced contexts in which the young people were both thrown out and ran away from difficult situations. I argue that, despite their desire to move, street-connected youth are not solely agents moving as they wish but rather move within complex relational processes that include various different people and motives. Thus, street-connected young people's relational mobility practices and multilocality need to be recognised in related policy and practice.

Laura Huttunen, *Tampere University*

Missing persons, political landscapes and cultural practices

In this paper, I suggest a theoretical frame within which to think about missing and disappeared persons, and the void created by their unaccounted-for absence, across cultural, political and geographical variety. I argue that that a missing person is always an anomaly in relation to the social and cultural order, and every disappeared person disturbs the normal flow of social life in families and communities, often also the smooth working of state bureaucracies. Consequently, disappearances and absences should be understood both in relation to families, kinship and intimate relations, and to the state power. Moreover, I argue that we need to analyse both the circumstances that make some people disappear, and the variety of responses that disappearances give rise to, ranging from complexities in kinship and intimate relationships to the public and political. Projects focused on searching for the missing and identifying unidentified dead bodies; political projects that call for accountability for disappearances. and more symbolic forms or reappearance, such as museums, memorials, artworks, ghosts and spirits, resonate in various ways with the intimate and the political spheres.

Kasper Eriksen

An absence that must be filled: a brief history of transnational adoption in Scandinavia

Historically Denmark, Norway, and Sweden have seen some of the highest rates of transnational adoptions in the world when measured per capita and received the most children relative to their population size. Recent revelations in all three countries have shown how foreign children were made available for adoption through criminally means such as falsified documents, lies, bribery and kidnapping throughout the 20th century and beyond. Much of the focus have been on the origin countries and adoption intermediaries and less on the role of the Scandinavian states themselves and the demand for children among their populations. This paper explores the great desire for children that drove transnational adoption in Scandinavia and examines how private actors were instrumental in how this practice developed historically. It uses adoption to break away from the top-down statist perspective on welfare states and demonstrate how private associations and families in Scandinavia both shape the services that they receive and play a crucial role in how these services are delivered and regulated. I argue that transnational adoption in Scandinavia has been primarily promoted by and for private actors (adoptive parents, associations) who successfully forced the welfare state to not only accept but also assist with the adoption of foreign children from abroad, in order to satisfy the great need for children in Scandinavia.

Saana Hansen, *University of Helsinki*

Un- and Remaking Kinship: The Removal of Greenlandic Children to Danish Families

This paper explores why and through what means hundreds – if not thousands – of Greenlandic children were removed from their birth families and placed into Danish families between the 1950s and 1970s. It examines the racialized and gendered kinship models, intertwined with what I call ‘postcolonial humanitarianism’, that legitimized the disappearance of numerous Indigenous children from their birth kin. The paper also explores how these acts were not only facilitated but also critiqued by authorities and families, particularly the birth mothers, at the time. It further examines how those affected have taken action – through legal and other means – to rebuild lost ties and demand justice and reparations, whether successfully or not. While the relationships formed in Danish families were often experienced with varying degrees of warmth and belonging, the paper concludes by reflecting on how this issue – affecting many Greenlandic families, breaking social worlds, and causing historical trauma – has remained largely silenced. It also considers how this past is being re-examined and reconstituted through legal actions and public attention. Drawing on ethnographic and archival research conducted since 2023, this paper investigates the displacement of Inuit children from Greenlandic to Danish families following Greenland’s formal incorporation into Denmark in 1953. It offers an ‘anthropologically informed history’ (Marre and Leinaweaver 2023, 122), challenging the politically and publicly constructed narrative of a benevolent Denmark and amplifying voices that speak to a sense of loss and the struggle with the unknown.

Sofia Stimmattini, *Université Libre de Bruxelles/Università di Bologna*

Empty Spaces, Embroidered Stories: Absences and Border Violence in Morocco

In Morocco, harraga are individuals who undertake unauthorized journeys to Europe, often facing deadly risks. Many go missing or die, leaving their families grappling with profound uncertainty and complex grief. Drawing on ethnographic encounters with the families of missing and dead Moroccan migrants, this paper focuses on disturbed intimacies, exploring, through an analysis of material culture, how families navigate absences provoked by border violence. I first examine the empty room of a missing migrant as a site of familial tension, where emotions like anger and sadness are embodied in the frozen atmosphere. I argue that border disappearances provoke necroabsences – a concept adapted from Jason De León’s necroviolence, to describe ambiguous absences shaped by border violence, state neglect, and unaccountability, where death is a real possibility but remains unspeakable. Next, I analyze the embroidery of a mother mourning her son, highlighting the interplay between grief and intimate tensions when the necroabsence is framed as a “bad death.” Finally, I discuss banners displayed during protests and Commemorations organized by associations as acts of defiance against the state’s refusal to recognize missing and dead migrants as grievable subjects. These counter-narrative practices not only challenge the exclusion of these migrants from state communities but also foster new forms of kinship and collective solidarity among affected families. In short, this paper examines how border disappearances and deaths fracture intimate and social ties in countries of origin and how affected families recreate collective bonds, reclaiming truth and justice.

Panel 16: Coexistence as in-betweenness: everyday practices of comparison - Part 1

Bruno Lefort, Saara Toukolehto

How do we live together? Between growing diversity and rising inequalities, this simple question has turned into a challenge for many European societies. Against the backdrop of contemporary debates proclaiming the destabilizing impact of migration on social cohesion, this panel proposes to rethink the nexus between coexistence, migration, and societal change from an alternative standpoint. To do so, it chooses to focus on what joins people together and separates them from one another in the course of the everyday. Giving prominence to what arises in-between people, everyday coexistence shifts the attention away from categorical identity thinking towards the inherently open and ambivalent existential space between the self and others. Equally made of prejudices and solidarity, connections and separations, this existential space is navigated using interpretations that rely on intimate relational and comparative knowledge. These evenly bring about chauvinistic and xenophobic attitudes, and acts of solidarities cutting-across generations, places, and social groups. Foregrounding people's everyday practices of comparison, this panel wishes to engage these multiple – and uneven – relationships and their concurrent, sometimes antagonistic interpretations of “what is between us”. Accordingly, we invite presentations that ask, for instance: How do people use comparisons to negotiate their joint presence in places they inhabit together? How do they navigate shared, disputed, and negotiated interpretations of in-betweenness to compose different experiences of coexistence? We call for ethnographic, explorative, and experimental explorations that engage with these or related questions.

Samuli Schielke, *Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient***Living with strangers: Relativist stereotypes and ad-hoc universalism in Dubai**

Egyptian workers in the metropolitan area of Dubai describe their migration as *ghurba*, Arabic for “strangerhood” or “living away from home”. Workers who are able to participate in the multicultural and cosmopolitan street and work life of Dubai often think of themselves as more worldly and sophisticated than others by virtue of their ability to work and interact with different kinds of people. This plurality is hierarchical, and social lives are mainly restricted to national and class bubbles. Interaction across bubbles is organised by stereotypes. I follow practices of everyday comparison that I encountered during my fieldwork while sharing quarters with Egyptian workers, blending in in a working class neighbourhood as a white person, and while finding myself firmly located in an Arabic speaking bubble in spite of my attempts to move beyond it. Migrant workers' lives as strangers among strangers in shared accommodations, at workplaces, and in consumer and street life veer towards bubbles of mutual recognition; and yet, they also require comparisons and negotiations to deal with people who are different. Bubbles, stereotypes, relativism, and hierarchies together contribute to the successful pluralism of Dubai's working class neighbourhoods. And yet the open-ended potential of interaction across cultural, religious, and class differences also results in situations where people need to establish what may be called ad-hoc universalisms: temporary shared grounds of judgement and action.

Puja Arti, *University of Warwick*

"Hospitality of the heart": Constructing co-existence in multi-religion Gujarat

How do acts of hospitality mediate the ambivalent space between self and other, fostering co-existence in contexts of religious difference? This paper explores how Hindu and Muslim youth in a university town in Gujarat, India—a region shaped by historical communal tensions—use hospitality as a framework for navigating their shared social worlds. By hosting one another in their homes, offering food and drink, and participating in everyday conversation, these youth engage in subtle acts of comparison, juxtaposing their own practices, values, and identities with those of their guests. These comparisons, embedded in the gestures and rituals of hospitality, reveal both commonalities and distinctions, enabling participants to negotiate their relational boundaries without erasing difference. Decisions about what foods to offer, how to address religious practices, and how to navigate social etiquettes require hosts and guests alike to interpret and adjust to one another, creating moments of mutual recognition and recalibration. Drawing on theories of conviviality (Gilroy 2004) and “indifference to difference” (Amin 2012), I argue that these acts of hospitality constitute a relational practice of comparison that transforms the existential tension of religious difference into a site of connection and negotiation. Based on interviews and participant observation, this paper analyses the “in-between” space of hospitality as not only facilitating trust but also creating a dynamic space where individuals reflect on and navigate the boundaries between themselves and others. Such practices of comparison shed light on the relational adjustments involved in shaping the ambivalent spaces of social life in polarised contexts.

Rae Hackler, *University of Bristol*

Exisiting in the In-Between: Comparison as a Framing for Identity and Community

Since 2020, thousands of Hong Kongers have emigrated, 15% resettling in the UK under the BN(O) visa pathway. Migration has landed them in the In-Between: Not a refugee and not an economic migrant. In the midst of migrating to preserve their Hong Kong identity, they become generically Asian or Chinese. While many say migrating to the UK is not as challenging for them because, as a former colony, ‘all the street signs are the same,’ they are very conscious of their place in Bristol and how they resettled. While many see themselves as ‘cultural refugees,’ who had no option but to leave Hong Kong, they are hyper aware of their special legal status outside of asylum, and adamant that they do not be conflated with the ‘burdeness,’ ‘illegal,’ asylum seekers. Hong Kongers frame their experience and the frictions between themselves and ‘local British people’ through familiar narratives: Hong Kong as a place of East-meets-West, collective vs individualist viewpoints, along with ‘making ourselves exciting,’ through celebrating traditions that hadn’t been bothered with before, and using food as a central, social part of their identity has also been a tool of making friends. This paper explores how Hong Kongers engage with what academics might consider essentializing discourse to negotiate and untangle the homogenization of their identities as Asian migrants in a predominantly white place. What does this practice say about community tensions and understanding? How do Hong Kongers use difference to build community? What citizenship lies in the In-Between?

Ana Maria Luca, *University of Perugia*

From “dirty Chinatown” to “cool Asia next door”

Starting from Abdelmaliq al Simone’s idea of “people as infrastructure” (2021, 2004), I look at

how cosmopolitan consumers of East Asian pop culture (fans of anime, manga, cosplayers, videogamers, martial artists etc.) become “in-betweeners” that cross symbolic boundaries and transform tensions generated by migration in Prato, an industrial city in the vicinity of Florence, Italy. Macrolloto Zero, a former industrial neighborhood in the vicinity of the city’s historical center, was the recipient of massive Chinese immigration and hosts a booming fast-fashion industry that developed in the 1990s and the 2000s. The neighborhood wears a spatial and social stigma seen as a decaying urban space by both the administration and regular residents. Based on a two-year ethnographic study in Prato’s Chinatown, I argue that “Asia lovers”, embodying a form of multiculturalism that transcends ethnicity, have crossed symbolic boundaries and, through their fandoms, generated an emotional demand for Asian cosmopolitan space that found its expression in cultural tourism to Chinatown and Prato in general. Using their emotions, social networks and skills, they influence their individual spaces or become social entrepreneurs, thus actively deploying as connecting in-betweeners to transform the “dirty stinky Chinatown” picture painted by anti-immigration voices into the “cool Asia next door”.

Panel 17: Studying Religious Communities: Reflections on ‘the Insider’ and the ‘Outsider’

Emine Neval, Sumeera Hassan

This panel examines conceptual and methodological questions pertaining to the ‘insider’ and the ‘outsider’ ethnographers studying religious groups. It tackles, in particular, two issues. The first is the researcher and researched sharing identities and the implications for access to religious groups. Second, the panel addresses the question of the researcher’s positionality and its impact on the research process and its outcomes through case studies. The presenters position their work within broader discussions of collective identities—encompassing language, religion, ethnicity, and nationality—and contrasting experiences, such as refugee status, persecution, and the interactions between majority and minority groups. These reflections from the papers will demonstrate that insider status can facilitate access and build trust but also introduce potential biases and ethical dilemmas. On the other hand, the outsider perspectives can provide critical distance but may encounter barriers to being accepted by the community they research. However, some studies indicate that these positions are not always fixed; sometimes, one is dominant, and other times, the other one is. The panel contributes to the ongoing discussions about the political and methodological implications of ethnographic fieldwork. It examines how differences and commonalities are produced and negotiated in the ethnographic field, thus providing insights into how to research complex religious and sociopolitical sites and environments.

Richard Croft, UEF

My Ethnographic Research on Messianic Jews Made me a Messianic Jew. God Help Me!

My empirical theology research, ethnography, started at UEF Comparative Religion by comparing Muslim Background Believers (MBB) in Bangladesh with Messianic Jews (MJ) in Israel. I started as an outsider to MJs. Yet, I have Jewish ethnic roots, and so people assume that I am Jewish. My mother’s maiden name is the same as that of one of the founders of Israel. My family was scared by the Holocaust, so I had gateways to MJs. My family background is mobile, global, ethnically mixed, secular, and non-religious. My Christian faith started through charismatic relational spirituality. These are not unusual for many MJs. After three years in

Bangladesh, I returned to Finland in 2011 and tried assimilating into the Finnish Lutheran religion. This failed, and my workplace in a Lutheran organisation became increasingly hostile. Being foreign and having diverse globally connected ways of thinking became problematic. I was considered a threat to Finnish purity. Gaining funding was difficult, so my research became prolonged. Because the MJs of Israel are complex, I researched them in the USA and Ukraine, among other places. This meant I developed expertise in MJs, and with a theology degree, I was invited to leadership. My immersive ethnographic position became part of my 'identity' journey. Discourses that were before strange, opened vistas to the Jewish Christian context for the New Testament. From that position, Christian theology increasingly looked like a peculiar gentile colonial cultural synergy. MJs, therefore, offer a lens into an indigenous de-colonialised Christianity, something pre-religion, a prophetic spiritual collective dialogue.

Tova Makhani Belkin

"So, Why Are You Not a Bahá'í Yet?" Positionality in the Study of Religious Communities

The insider-outsider dynamic in ethnographic research has long been debated in anthropology, particularly in the study of religious communities. Researchers like Roy Blanes (2006) and Pnina Werbner (2003) have highlighted the complexities of how researchers' identities influence their fieldwork. Despite these insights, less attention has been paid to how researchers' positionality evolves when studying communities actively aiming to recruit new members and exploring religious conversion. This paper examines the intersections of identity, belonging, and expectation through my three years of fieldwork with the Bahá'í community in Ireland. As a non-Bahá'í and immigrant, my positionality was shaped by layers of connection and difference. My Iranian heritage resonated with the Bahá'í community's roots, while my Jewish identity positioned me as an outsider navigating the geopolitical and spiritual implications of participation. Through deep engagement in community practices—devotional gatherings, cultural celebrations, and study circles—I experienced the inclusivity central to Bahá'í values. However, my involvement also revealed subtle expectations from some members that my research into religious conversion might lead me to embrace the faith. These dynamics required constant negotiation of my role as both participant and observer. I argue that these experiences illustrate the fluidity of insider-outsider boundaries and shed light on how religious communities balance openness and recruitment. This paper contributes to broader discussions on positionality in anthropology, highlighting how researchers' identities shape access, trust, and the ethnographic process itself.

Sumeera Hasan, *University of Helsinki*

Conducting Ethnography Under Suspicion: Matters of Trust Building

From an ethnographer's perspective immersed in a marginalized religious community, this reflexive article draws on empirical data and recollections from ethnographic fieldwork conducted among the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in Finland. The article provides a first-hand account of the complexities of negotiating trust and suspicion in research settings where the researcher's identity oscillates between insider and outsider. Examples from the data reveal how shared traits such as ethnicity, religion, and cultural familiarity can facilitate access and, paradoxically, generate mistrust. The methodological and ethical dilemmas of conducting research under suspicion are explored, including the role of gatekeepers, gendered hierarchies, and the emotional toll of being perceived as an outsider despite cultural commonalities. The paper's main contribution is to highlight the fluidity of insider-outsider dynamics and its impact on the research process. These dynamics carry significant methodological and ethical

implications, with emotional consequences for the researcher that can potentially destabilize the research relationship and data collection.

Emine Neval, *University of Helsinki*

Potentials and Challenges of Autoethnography: Study of the Hizmet Movement

This presentation examines the use of autoethnography as a qualitative research method in a study of the Hizmet (religious service) Movement in Finland conducted from 2021 to 2024. Originating in Turkey in 1966, the Hizmet Movement has transformed from a small religious community into a transnational Islamic movement, with a significant expansion of its diaspora following 2016. The study highlights the potentials of autoethnography, particularly the importance of an insider perspective in revealing complex dynamics and enabling a deeper analysis. At the same time, the presentation addresses important challenges, such as the risks of subjectivity, ethical dilemmas, and the need to maintain academic credibility. Through these reflections, the findings emphasize both the opportunities and limitations of autoethnography, providing methodological insights for future research into insider/outsider dynamics. Furthermore, the study enhances the understanding of the Hizmet Movement in Finland, illustrating that the members are not a uniform group and that there is a structure of authority and hierarchy within the HM. By employing the concept of habitus, I argue that there are multiple micro-habitus within the broader Hizmet habitus. Hence, this study contributes to the study of religious movements, particularly the Hizmet movement, in addition to its methodological contributions.

Nas Su UÇAK, *University of Helsinki*

Outsider Positionality and Access: Navigating Trust with Muslim Syrian Refugees

This paper examines the challenges of researcher positionality in ethnographic studies of young Syrian Muslim women refugees and their sense of belonging within host communities in Turkey and Finland, particularly in relation to their religious position. Drawing on interviews I conducted in both countries, the study explores participants' religious experiences and reflections on daily life as refugees in different social contexts. As a Turkish researcher, my positionality shaped my access to these communities. While cultural proximity facilitated initial contact in Turkey, trust-building remained as complex due to participants' varied political and personal experiences. In Finland, where these dynamics were compounded by the refugee experience within the European context, my outsider status posed additional barriers, particularly in terms of gaining access and establishing trust to discuss sensitive topics. The paper explores how national identity, religious affiliation, and political contexts influence the researcher's ability to gain access and build trust within displaced religious communities. Through a reflection on these fieldwork challenges, it examines how positionality—shaped by nationality, religion, and gender—affects the research process and its outcomes. By considering these dynamics, the paper contributes to broader discussions on the methodological and ethical implications of working with displaced, religious, and gendered communities, emphasizing the fluid and negotiated nature of insider-outsider positions in ethnographic research.

Panel 32: Entangled Ways of Knowing: Ethical and Epistemological Innovations in More-than-Human Research

Hilal Alkan, *Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin*

This panel explores how entanglements with more-than-human beings challenge conventional anthropological inquiry and invite new approaches to care, ethics, and knowledge. Drawing on diverse field contexts, panelists address how cross-species relationships unsettle assumptions of human exceptionalism, highlighting the affective and ethical complexities involved. They show that engaging with animals, plants, and sacred landscapes can reveal alternative ways of knowing and belonging—both locally rooted and globally significant. By foregrounding Indigenous perspectives, sensory and artistic methods, and reflexive pedagogies, the panel illuminates the transformative potential of recognizing our interdependencies, reimagining how research and practice might foster more inclusive and responsible multispecies futures.

Hilal Alkan, *Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin*

Drawing Connections: Exploring human-plant intimacies through art and autoethnography

Drawing on a multi-species ethnography of Turkish and Kurdish migrants in Berlin, my current research focuses on how intimate human-plant relations are both shaped by, reflective of, and affective in the experiences of migration and displacement. While conventional participant observation has been its methodological foundation, it has proved insufficient for capturing the temporal conjunctures, disjunctures, and sensorial intensities that emerged in everyday engagements with plants in a research setting. In response, I developed two experimental approaches that expand the anthropological toolkit: (a) a visual autoethnography carried out with the plants my interlocutors gave me in my own home, and (b) collaborative watercolor workshops in which research participants practiced plant drawing. These experiments opened vantage points that “ordinary” participant observation and interviews could not fully illuminate. The deliberate act of seeing, depicting, and dwelling with plants through drawing enabled a deeper attunement to their morphologies, needs, and preferences—eliciting emotional resonances that ranged from cathartic tears to evocative moments of singing. In parallel, the tactile and sensorial dimensions of this method often triggered recollections of pre-migration lives and childhoods, foregrounding the mnemonic potency of more-than-human encounters. My autoethnography, on the other hand, facilitated a long-term engagement with the beloved plants of my interlocutors and helped me to synch with the plant time, which was not at all possible in conventional participant observation in an urban setting. These two drawing exercises, one on the spot, momentary but collective, the other long-term, at home and in solitude led to the emergence of nuances in attentiveness that would otherwise be missing.

Daillen Culver, *Independent Scholar*

Knowing Through Consumption: Encounters with the Spirit of Ceremonial Cacao

For millennia, humans have come to “know” nature through the foods we consume. In today’s global food system where food products are all but stripped of their earthly origins, various alternative food movements have asserted conscious consumption as a form of ecological action, with mixed results. This paper considers the emerging market for ceremonial cacao as a nascent alternative food movement and environmentalist consumer practice by which

consumers come to “know” cacao as a more-than-human entity central to ecological healing. Drawing upon three weeks of immersive field research with cacao collectives in rural Guatemala, I ask: what kinds of “knowing” are made possible through “ceremonial” consumption? I argue that while ritual ingestion may enable promising forms of cross-species relationality, it may also obscure violent histories and structural inequalities that are crucial to socio-ecological justice. The ever-expanding global market for ceremonial cacao thus emerges as a space wherein consumers encounter both the potentialities and limitations of “ceremonial” consumption as an environmental consumer creed.

Phoebe Godfrey, *University of Connecticut*

A Pedagogy of Animacy for Intimacy: Embodiment, Seeing, Drawing and Knowing

This proposal is based on work I have done with my students in my course “Human Societies and the Living Earth” that focuses on comparing Western culture and Indigenous cultures in relation to how they construct and thus engage with the living Earth. In particular I use the work of Robin Wall Kimmerer *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants* (2013) and her concept of the ‘grammar of animacy’ that invites us to ask of all that we encounter in the world, “Who is that being?”, as opposed to “What is it?”, as would be the norm in English. Thus, as she goes on to state in her native language Ojibwe “...the same words to address the living world ...[are used]... for our family” because, as she states right afterwards, “... they are our family” (p. 55). In teaching this cultural perspective (I identify as a settler in North America) I have invited students to engage in ‘Embodiment, Seeing, Drawing and Knowing’, as one way to ‘re-animate’ what in our Western culture has become seen as merely ‘objects’. In other words, I invite them to embody an intimate relationship with themselves through mindfulness practices and from there see, draw and know the living world all around and connect to them. As part of my presentation, I will share more literature affirming this approach, as well as the results from my students and invite the audience to engage in a similar short but meaningful experience.

Ramesh Thunga, *University of Hyderabad*

Biodiversity Conservation Practices: The Role of Sacred Groves in South India

This study examines pre-modern indigenous practices rooted in religion and culture to conserve sacred groves and their biodiversity. It attempts an ethnographic study of Medaram Jatara, Keslapur Jatara, Jangu Bhai Jatara, and Gubbla Mangamma Jatara, which the Indigenous people of Telangana celebrate. This study attempts an ethnographical reading over such Indigenous practices of environmental conservation organized around sacred groves. Sacred groves are trees or areas conserved by indigenous people that are connected to their cultural, socio-economic, and religious practices. Simultaneously, they depend on these sites for marginal subsistence as well as for their spiritual healing. These groves are ecologically significant due to their high biodiversity. The diverse components of these ecosystems (sacred groves) are crucial for Indigenous peoples’ survival, culture, and identity. This article reads and documents how Indigenous practices centered around culture and religious values save biodiversity by protecting sacred groves. It conducts explicitly a field study on four important ceremonies celebrated by indigenous communities of Telangana state. They are namely, Medaram Jana Jatara, Keslapur -Nagoba Jatara, Jangu Bhai Jatara and Gubbla Mangamma Jatara. Among the four, three are annual festivals, except Medaram Jana Jatara, held every two years. Through this ethnographic study, the paper argues against the claim of environmental

conservation as an idea that stems from modern Western rationality.

Panel 42: The trials and tribulations of fieldwork: A Student Panel

Johanna Airaksinen, Nilüfer Çomak Elmas, Sointu Toiskallio, Linnea Sirén, Furqan Mohammed; *University of Helsinki Finland*

This Student panel presents current research by students of Anthropology at the University of Helsinki. After brief introductions to four Master's thesis projects from a wide variety of themes (community gardening in Chile through collaborative videography, partner preferences among Finnish Muslim women, community-building of marginalized NHL fans, and urban politics in poverty reduction efforts in Istanbul) the panelists will compare their experiences in the field as anthropologists-in-training and the state of the art of anthropology at the University of Helsinki.

Film

Tuesday 14:00-15:30

Walking with Fermenters

68mins, 2025, Kazu Ahmed, Meri Teperi, Salla Sariola - Studium 1 (F3020)

A documentary journey that takes the viewer through traditional practices of foraging and fermenting for rice beer/wine in Assam, India's northeast. As the camera follows three households and their arrangements to brew rice beer, we are told of tradition, legends, and cosmologies associated with this process – from foraging for herbs to squeezing out the rice nectar for consumption. Heritages that have now become targets of interest by commercial beer makers, as well as microbiologists, turning them into something to protect, rather than shared.

Panel details

Panel 2: Knowing Nature to care for it: ecological action in the making – Part 4

Paula Palanco Lopez, Olli Haanpää

The phenomenon of 'caring for the environment' is by no means new – environmentalist movements have existed consistently throughout the 20th century, and their roots expand far earlier than that (Haq & Paul, 2011). However, these prominently political movements are not the only way in which people have engaged with and tried to protect the natural environment: conservation, restoration, recycling, degrowth, alternative living (such as eco-villages, etc.)... all these are ways in which different social groups have tried to address various environmental problems, changing their relationships and knowledges about nature. So far, these organised actions have been well studied in isolation, in relation to particular socio-historical contexts. However, they share a connection as enactments of the same idea: there is a problem and there are actions humans can take to solve it. In this panel, we want to bring together stories

and case-studies about how different groups of people conceptualise and know ‘the environment’ in order to care for it. What kinds of socio-ecological contexts allow these initiatives? What roles do these groups have in their societies, and how are these societal relations shaping their practices? We invite submissions that investigate (but are not restricted to) local citizen-led environmental restoration projects, activist movements that directly challenge institutional conventions and regulations, or alternative lifestyle groups that challenge the status quo through new practices and livelihoods. With this, we want to showcase the diversity of ways in which knowledge generation about ‘nature’ and ‘the environment’ – and the relations that are formed in the process – shape ecological action.

Christian Ritter, *Karlstad University*

Knowing the lives of butterflies: Expertise and environmental care in Singapore

This paper explores how environmental organisations nurture expertise on multispecies landscapes in Singapore. In 2020, Singapore’s National Parks Board launched the OneMillionTrees campaign, which sought to intensify urban greening in the city. Drawing on participant observation in Singapore’s parks and gardens, 20 in-depth interviews, numerous photographs and screengrabs of app interfaces, the in-depth investigation explores how local nature communities embody expertise in fostering multispecies landscapes. Based on ethnographic fieldwork in Singapore, the main aim of the research is to assess the shaping of expertise among landscape-based professions, such as urban farmers and conservationists, and its potential for mitigating the loss of multispecies landscapes. Exploring the entanglements between future orientations, climate advocacy and environmental care in Singapore, the investigation traces how nature sightings and mobile phone apps transform the labour of biodiversity conservationists. Drawing on the trope of the patchy Anthropocene (Tsing et al. 2019), the study foregrounds more-than-human social relations. Singapore’s flora and fauna can be studied as scattered multispecies landscapes comprising local ways of knowing about plants and animals. In recent years, nature enthusiasts have increasingly made use of mobile phone apps to share their nature sightings with local and global audiences. Locating the design of multispecies landscapes within regimes of truth-making and practical ethics (e.g. Ong, 2005; Tsing, 2015), the ethnographic study reveals tactics for environmental repair and bottom-up climate activism. Portraying environmental advocacy in Singapore, its main case discusses the role of mobile phone photography and biodiversity databases in preventing the extinction of vulnerable butterfly species.

Munkhtamir Damdinsuren, *International Institute for the Study of Nomadic Civilizations*

Mongolians’ Shared values and the environment

This study examines the intrinsic connection between Mongolian pastoralist traditions and ecological action, emphasizing how shared cultural values shape environmental care. Drawing on fieldwork across Mongolia, the research examines how Mongolians conceptualize and act upon environmental values, such as those tied to homeland (nutag), mountains, water, and nature (baigal delkhii). Through in-depth interviews, the researcher analyzes the interplay between these values, identity, and environmental stewardship, highlighting the cultural and practical significance of nature in both rural and urban respondents. The findings reveal a deep cultural reverence for nature and its symbolic and practical significance as shared values. For instance, the Gobi desert’s scarce water resources emerge as a critical shared value, reflecting local concerns over environmental degradation caused by mining. Additionally, local pride in iconic landscapes, such as Khuvsgul Lake and Altai Mountains, underscores the intersection of

environment and local identity. By framing nature as integral to cultural identity and survival, Mongolian communities embody diverse pathways of ecological action that integrate traditional pastoralist practices with modern conservation needs. The presentation concludes by showcasing how Mongolian cultural knowledge generates unique ecological responses, urging a reimagining of “shared values” to balance pastoralism, development, and environmental care.

Saana Hokkanen, *University of Helsinki*

Knowing Familial Soils - An auto-ethnographic exploration

I grew up on a farm, in a rural area in central Finland. The house, the nearby fields and a berry orchard stand in a place that long ago used to be a hardwood swamp, with moist moraine soils (in Finnish these are called “korpi”). The memory from this is still present in the name of the farm, Korpela. In this auto-ethnographic exploration done in collaboration with my farmer father, I trace and discuss the different ways of knowing soils through personal experiences of having grown up on a farm, and from discussions between the three existing generations who have lived and worked on the farm. The contribution offers a discussion on how relationships with and knowledge about agricultural soils exist in a variety of ways, many which cannot be reduced to techno-scientific or agro-productivistic understandings. This contribution is both a sense-making effort and a work of translation between ways of narrating soils. The paper discusses embodied and perhaps silent ways of knowing land, which are often only examined in relation to indigenous philosophy, as well as makes visible the parallel and perhaps paradoxical epistemologies of soil knowledge that exist in a place. My position in presenting this work is one between worlds; as an academic researcher of agricultural politics, and someone with a personal, familial and affective relationship to specific soils and land.

Mélanie Congretel, *Université Rennes 2*

Reshaping traditions to reclaim relationships of care: the Sateré-Mawé case

We would like to discuss the case of an eco-ethno-development project led since the 1990s by a group of Sateré-Mawé indigenous people from the Brazilian Amazon, based on the fair trade of guaraná seeds and other local plants. Initially designed to regain economic, cultural and political autonomy in a context of growing dependence on the Brazilian state, the project gradually involved collaborations with local and foreign scientists, as well as with international certification bodies that opened the way to an active, strategic transformation of the Sateré-Mawé’s ecological knowledge. Our purpose is to describe the processes of knowledge production, hybridization, selection and translation that emerged from these collaborations, and to analyze how these epistemic processes have modified – or not – the relationships between the Sateré-Mawé and their environment. At the heart of the project is guaraná, an energizing plant that the Sateré-Mawé have domesticated, cultivated and consumed for centuries, and that they consider as their main authority and source of knowledge. We will see 1) how the Sateré-Mawé have mobilized their new understanding of the issues related to guaraná’s genetic diversity to build a science-based discourse defending their management practices (based on a temporary, reciprocal relationship of care with feral seedlings) in the face of injunctions to adopt improved varieties; 2) how the Sateré-Mawé consequently decided to submit their traditional cultivation practices to a collective, participatory debate and selection, in order to align their cosmology, their ecological knowledge and their project, thus showing the highly permeable and dynamic nature of

indigenous traditions.

Panel 16: Coexistence as in-betweenness: everyday practices of comparison – Part 2

Bruno Lefort, Saara Toukolehto

How do we live together? Between growing diversity and rising inequalities, this simple question has turned into a challenge for many European societies. Against the backdrop of contemporary debates proclaiming the destabilizing impact of migration on social cohesion, this panel proposes to rethink the nexus between coexistence, migration, and societal change from an alternative standpoint. To do so, it chooses to focus on what joins people together and separates them from one another in the course of the everyday. Giving prominence to what arises in-between people, everyday coexistence shifts the attention away from categorical identity thinking towards the inherently open and ambivalent existential space between the self and others. Equally made of prejudices and solidarity, connections and separations, this existential space is navigated using interpretations that rely on intimate relational and comparative knowledge. These evenly bring about chauvinistic and xenophobic attitudes, and acts of solidarities cutting-across generations, places, and social groups. Foregrounding people's everyday practices of comparison, this panel wishes to engage these multiple – and uneven – relationships and their concurrent, sometimes antagonistic interpretations of “what is between us”. Accordingly, we invite presentations that ask, for instance: How do people use comparisons to negotiate their joint presence in places they inhabit together? How do they navigate shared, disputed, and negotiated interpretations of in-betweenness to compose different experiences of coexistence? We call for ethnographic, explorative, and experimental explorations that engage with these or related questions.

Ahmad Moradi, *Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient*
Worldlessness under Dictatorship

In *On Humanity in Dark Times*, Hannah Arendt describes ‘worldlessness’ as the shattering of the shared world that exists ‘in-between’ people, depriving them of the ability to engage in discourse that respects differences. I situate Arendt’s call for open discourse in public space alongside her essay *Personal Responsibility Under Dictatorship*, where she insists on the moral obligation to judge (discerning what’s wrong and right) and to resist complicity, even under authoritarian duress. Drawing on fieldwork with Afghan refugees who returned to Iran after being injured in regional conflicts, this paper examines how these disabled ex-combatants actively sought to involve Iranian state actors and military cadres in their lives, inviting them to participate in intimate events such as children’s birthdays, religious gatherings, and even family disputes. Despite achieving a degree of state intimacy, their demands for kin-like care from the state unfolded within a broader context of national hostility. In public discourse, close identification with the state was equated with allegiance to an oppressive regime, leading neighbours and communities to respond with mistrust and derision. These dynamics often severed preexisting ties, highlighting the fraught nature of the ‘shared world’ in politically contested spaces. By foregrounding these everyday, conflictual encounters, this paper integrates Arendt’s insights on the moral imperative to judge and significance of discourse in sustaining world and humanity to illustrate how individuals craft moral judgments as well as navigate collective life under conditions that strain coexistence, exploring both the viability and dissolution of a ‘shared world’ under dictatorship.

Riikka Era, *Tampere University*

Everyday Negotiations: Small Children Seeking Ways to Coexist in a Finnish Reception Centre

What happens when a group of children, who have very little in common, end up living in an all-encompassing institution with their parents? Do they find things that connect them, or does the environment deepen the existing gaps between them, based on differences such as language, religion, or social class? This paper offers a peek into the everyday lives of small children living in a Finnish reception centre, emphasizing the relational aspects of shared lives in a transitional space. Based on four months of ethnographic fieldwork, this paper examines how children in a reception centre negotiate their everyday activities in this diverse environment. The children can be divided based on the statuses assigned by the nation-state – some under temporary protection and others seeking asylum. Despite differences, they share common desires: to be seen and heard by adults, to try new things, and to engage in play and creativity. Using new materialistic framing this paper explores the in-betweenness, the energy flows that drive interactions, and the ways children affect and are affected by their environment and its lively and non-lively critters. The initial findings suggest that by carefully examining the connecting and separating factors in such environments, and considering non-human actors, we can discover new ways to support the coexistence of marginalized children in our society. It also asks whether the whole idea of differences and comparisons is an adult-centric view and investigates which kinds of comparisons are relevant from children's point of view.

Alice Daquin, *University of Amsterdam*

The 'War on drugs' and mothers' intermediation in French urban margins

This paper draws upon urban anthropology and gender studies to analyze how mothers in poor neighborhoods physically and spatially negotiate the violent competition between the police and drug trafficking. Based on an ethnographic study conducted in 2021/2022 in a housing estate in northern Marseille (France) and utilizing drawings for spatial analysis, I examine how these mothers navigate a strategic yet precarious intermediary space between drug trafficking and the police on a daily basis. The French state's war on drugs, targeting drug trafficking in poor neighborhoods, has profoundly disrupted local social life. Mothers face spatial injunctions from both police officers and traffickers, aimed at excluding them from public outdoor spaces, while domestic spaces are simultaneously threatened by trafficking-related intrusions and police raids. As a result, these mothers are particularly vulnerable to forms of violence that tend to dispossess them of their living spaces. Nevertheless, some of them enjoy a form of local respectability that enables them to develop intermediation tactics to manage the interface between drug traffickers and police agents. They embody the role of the "good mother" by monitoring the distance between the neighborhood's children and traffickers, act as "outspoken mediators" by intervening in local altercations and occasionally accept the role of safeguarding the presence of local social workers. In a context of competitive loyalties, their art of intermediation hinges on a delicate and uncertain balance between inter-feminine solidarity and mutual comparison. This paper thus contributes to Panel 16 by offering an ethnographic analysis of the coexistences and power dynamics that unfold across spaces of urban peripheries.

Saara Toukolehto, *University of Oulu*

Mothering small children: comparing different approaches to child-rearing in the everyday life of a multicultural district

This paper looks at the broad question of ‘how do people live together?’ in an urban neighbourhood marked by transnational migration, networks of mobility and socio-cultural pluralism through the vantage point of motherhood and child-rearing. The paper zooms in on mother-child activities provided by local actors in which people of various backgrounds come into direct contact with each other around the theme of mothering small children. Taking these activities as the entry point, the paper looks at racialized mothers’ use of comparisons as part of how they make sense of their mothering practices and situate themselves in relation to different actors in their everyday lives in the district. The comparisons analyzed in the paper include contrasting or oppositional observations between what is perceived as the ‘Finnish way’ to raise children (often enforced by the institutions that provide said mother-child activities) and the mothers’ own approaches to child-rearing, which they often link to their socio-cultural heritage. By building on such contrast between what is perceived as ‘Finnish’ and what ‘culturally their own’, the women can be seen to position themselves in the local context in reference to their families and broader transnational networks, on the one hand, and the different localized actors, some of which exercise power over them, on the other hand. However, besides contrast, the women also find common ground in their approaches to mothering both with each other as well as with the generic ‘Finnish way’. In this sense, motherhood provides grounds for solidarities to be formed between actors that might not otherwise come into much contact. The paper proposes that everyday mothering practices offer a significant window into existential questions related to everyday coexistence. The paper draws on fresh ethnographic fieldwork observations and ethnographic interviews collected in the first half of 2025 at the neighbourhood of Itäkekus in the capital city of Finland, Helsinki.

Panel 20: The Ethics of More-than-Human Research: Care, Responsibility and Practice

Alicja Staniszevska, Pilvi Hämeenaho

The integration of non-human agency into social research continues to expand. Therefore, it becomes necessary to consider how we might ethically navigate more-than-human contexts. This panel invites scholars to reflect on the ethical and methodological dimensions of doing research in contexts where human and non-human lives co-shape and co-create social realities. By moving beyond anthropocentrism, we can consider how we represent and collaborate with non-human agents throughout the entire research process, from design and fieldwork to analysis and publication. In addressing these challenges, we also examine how practices of comparison emerge naturally within more-than-human ethnographies. Comparisons between human and non-human actors influence our understanding of relational dynamics, hierarchies, and transformations. In what ways do such comparisons help to uncover or mask the ethical implications of multispecies research? Furthermore, what part does comparison play in our efforts to critique and navigate power asymmetries, such as those rooted in colonial histories of appropriation and resource control? This panel welcomes contributions that examine the ethical, methodological, and epistemological aspects of working in more-than-human contexts. We encourage submissions that present insights drawn from a range of academic disciplines and theoretical frameworks, reflect on the ethical

challenges encountered in research practice, and propose methodologies and solutions for ethically engaging with more-than-human research partners at the practical and institutional levels. Through the panel discussion, we aim to build a dialogue that not only deepens the ethics of doing more-than-human research but transforms the ways ethnography is taught and practised.

Alicja Staniszewska, Pilvi Hämeenaho; *University of Jyväskylä*

The Ethics of Problematic Multispecies Research on the Example of Ticks

In this paper, we examine the ethical challenges anthropologists face when engaging with more-than-human actors, with a focus on those perceived as problematic. The study of cycles of cultural and environmental change often entails navigating coexistence with organisms that evoke strong negative emotions, such as disgust, fear, or hatred. Using ticks as a case study, we explore how these creatures' changing roles and meanings in Finnish nature expose the difficulties and responsibilities of living alongside migrating unwanted species. Ticks are species seldom valued in their own right, therefore forcing us to confront the limits of our empathy and the biases embedded in human-centric perspectives. Drawing on Alicja Staniszewska's ethnographic fieldwork conducted in the years 2022–2024 in Finland, this paper reflects on the ethical dilemmas of multispecies research and the methodological innovations needed to address them. We argue that acknowledging a more-than-human agency requires ethical reflection throughout the whole research process. So, how can we develop approaches that consider the complexity of interspecies relations while respecting the value of all life forms, even those we find challenging to coexist with? We will consider methodologies of sensory forest walks and interviews to analyse the responses to them that demand rethinking and care. This paper contributes to broader discussions on the ethics of multispecies research and ponders how researchers can respond to the challenges of an interdependent world. The presentation expands on a co-authored article.

Luca Battisti, Marco Devecchi, *University of Turin*

The involvement of non-human stakeholders in the co-design of NbS at Hanbury Bot

The contribution presents an approach and strategy for the integration of nonhuman stakeholders, e.g. plants, into the collaborative and participative processes of designing and implementing Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in Natura 2000 areas. Focusing on the Hanbury Botanic Garden in Ventimiglia, Italy, the case study uses semi-structured interviews with stakeholders involved in the development and management of the kitchen garden. With a particular focus on the promotion of tourism, the research investigates how the involvement of non-human stakeholders affects the sustainability, effectiveness and acceptance of NbS. The findings highlight the importance of engaging the community and using participatory methods to ensure the long-term success of NbS. This includes involving local communities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government agencies in the planning and implementation of NbS, while attempting to include the plant perspective in the decision-making process. Furthermore, the study highlights the need for a comprehensive approach to NbS, involving different stakeholders and levels of governance, in order to effectively address the complex challenges of Natura 2000 sites.

Aija Siiriäinen, Hanna-Mari Ikonen; *University of Jyväskylä*

Multispecies embodiments and interactions in outdoor dog sport training

This presentation explores multispecies embodiments and significance of dog agency in formation of human physical activity with related affections in organized dog sport called 'working dog search' (WDS). WDS mimics dog-assisted search and rescue situations for missing persons in diverse natural landscapes. 'WDS' requires dogs and handlers to actively co-operate and interact with each other in changing situations and environments. The study focuses on dogs' agency: how a dog enacts and communicates through bodily gestures and sensations and how this is interconnected with learning and human activity and sensations over the course of training. The study utilizes multispecies (auto)ethnographies. Data collection is conducted through author's continuous presence, participation and observation in WDS training sessions of five dog-handler pairs (incl. author). The data consists of video and photo footage, authors' diary notes reflecting immediate sensations, observations and recollections of encounters, and interviews with the handlers. The research setting is designed with the aim to enable methodologically ethical engagement and implications. The author is attuned to her personal positioning and relationship with human and dog participants, and to the affectivity of her co-presence and participation as a researcher in human-animal encounters. The author's familiarity with participants seeks observed situations to be more natural and less stressful for animals, enhancing also credibility of interpretations. The study is expected to illustrate animal caretaking, manifestations of (dog) motivation, and (conflicting) deeds/aims in training WDS, thus deepening our understanding of a) dog sports, particularly the motivations and well-being of dogs and handlers, and b) the formation of non-human agency and the entanglements of human/non-human lives. This presentation is based on ongoing research by PhD student Aija Siiriäinen and associate professor Hanna-Mari Ikonen at Faculty of Sports, University of Jyväskylä, and PhD (soc.sc.) Samu Pehkonen at University of Tampere.

Corinna Casi, *University of Jyväskylä, University of Lapland*

More-than-Human agency: ecofeminist and feminist posthuman perspectives

Ecofeminist literature (Warren 2000; Plumwood 1996; Haraway 1998) have reflected and criticize the view concerning the passivity of nature, meaning looking at and interacting with nature and natural entities as they are passive objects, or as resources to be exploited and used. Scholars such as Donna Haraway (1998), for instance, suggested looking at nature in other ways and giving agency to natural entities. In fact, non-human agents can play a pivotal role in challenging and rethinking binary, patriarchal, and traditional approaches in the human-nature relationship based on colonial power structures. This dual logic (nature/human, subject/object, etc.) promotes a particular vision of the dominant human as lively and agentic, while other humans (women; people of color; children; elderly; poor, disable, Indigenous people, etc.) and nonhuman entities as unagentic, inert, and passive, which therefore can be explored and exploited (Nicciolini and Ringrose 2019). Who has agency? What are new and creative ways in which agency can be portrayed? Attempting to reply to these questions and rethinking agency, I take a decolonial and feminist posthuman perspective where I challenge traditional "man" ways of knowing (Braidotti 2018) in which women and Indigenous, are commonly tied to the devaluated and subordinate side (Hinton and Treusch 2015) opening the possibility for nonhuman agency. I frame my inquire within Arctic Indigenous knowledge, which highlights that humans and non-human entities are part of a vibrant relational system, based on interconnected responsibilities. Finally, I will reflect upon the type of justice

implications such more-than-human agency brings about.

Debra Solomon, *University of Amsterdam*

Reimagining Urban Greenspace Management through More-than-Human Collaboration – Radical Observation as a Care Practice

This paper examines the ethical and methodological dimensions of multispecies urbanism through the lens of Radical Observation (RO), a practice of relational co-creation that foregrounds multispecies concerns in urban greenspace stewardship. Drawing on an emerging collaboration with the garden managers of the MAO Museum of Architecture and Design in Ljubljana, this research explores how RO facilitates comparisons between human and non-human agency in the design and implementation of a phased mowing regime. By transforming conventional lawns into biodiverse meadows, this initiative critiques and reconfigures the power asymmetries embedded in urban ecosystem management practices. Central to this study is the role of comparison in shaping ethical engagement. RO illuminates the contrasts between human-centric and more-than-human modes of stewardship, uncovering relational dynamics and hierarchies that often obscure the agency of non-human actors. Through iterative practices of teaching and learning, this collaboration underscores the reciprocal labor required to navigate these dynamics while confronting the colonial legacies of resource control that inform urban greenspace governance. By reflecting on the ethical and epistemological implications of multispecies comparisons, this paper contributes to ongoing dialogues about how more-than-human ethnographies can transform both research practices and pedagogical approaches. It offers RO as a model for integrating comparative methodologies that foster interspecies care, accountability, and inclusivity in urban contexts.

Panel 24: Mediated portrayals of communities in the context of the war in Ukraine

Jukka Jouhki, Suvi Mononen

War often strengthens images, conceptions, and experiences of nations and international communities involved in or affected by the conflict. Citizens may feel more united with their nations, and national, international and other collective identities may become stronger, while views of outsiders might become more exclusionary. Divisions between “Us” and “Them” might deepen, and mediated narratives reflect these divisions. This panel explores how different communities are portrayed and compared in media coverage of the war in Ukraine. It examines how states, societies, cultures, alliances, transnational organizations, or “civilizations” involved or perceived to be involved in the war are characterized, (re)defined, or (re/de)valued in the media. For example, what kinds of “West” and “non-West,” “Us” and “Them,” or pro-Ukraine and anti-Ukraine groups emerge through media coverage? Additionally, what global or local ideological, (geo)political, ethical, cultural, and other comparisons, hierarchies, and dichotomies of populations, nations, and communities are (re)produced in the media? How are the responsibilities, roles, and essences of different communities involved or not involved in the war portrayed and compared? The panel adopts a flexible media anthropological approach and welcomes empirical or empirically informed papers from social and cultural anthropology, as well as related disciplines such as journalism, linguistics, media studies, philosophy, political science, sociology, and cultural studies. Participants should focus on how media represents, produces, and constructs reality, and reproduces images of communities.

Jukka Jouhki, *Tampere University*

Narratives of the West in Finnish news in the context of the war in Ukraine

The Finnish news narratives of war in Ukraine emphasize the West's role in supporting Ukraine's fight for independence and existence. This perspective views the conflict as a struggle not only for Ukraine but for all Western nations. The West, though conceptually vague, is portrayed as a unified geopolitical entity. It appears that the war has reinforced Western unity and simplified public discourse, presenting the West as a homogeneous community. This narrative is rooted in both empirical political reality and a form of Occidentalism, which emphasizes the West's unique cultural and political existence. Occidentalism, similar to Orientalism, frames the West as a distinct entity. This paper explores three forms of Occidentalism: exclusive, generalizing, and substantive. These forms shape how the West is perceived and discussed in public discourse. The paper discusses how deconstructing unnecessary Western-centric narratives might promote a more accurate and inclusive understanding of global dynamics, especially during crises.

Ilkhom Khalimzoda, *University of Jyväskylä*

The impact of social media groups on news interpretation

Mass media is often referred as the fourth pillar of democracy, acting as a watchdog. However, social media might be changing this role. Traditionally, gatekeeping in media was about editorial choices on what gets published. With social media, gatekeeping extends to post-publication, where audiences shape and reinterpret news. This study explores how large social media groups, like Russian-speaking Facebook groups with around 50,000 members, function as regional media outlets. These groups post and moderate content, control comments, and manage membership without accountability. We investigate how these groups engage in post-publication gatekeeping, examining the roles of audiences and moderators. Our focus is on the narratives promoted or challenged within these groups, and how they influence the conversation. This research aims to uncover forms of "othering," such as creating divisions like "us versus them" or "Russia versus the West." By analyzing these dynamics, we hope to understand how these groups construct reality and influence public perception through mediated news articles.

Anna Matyska, *University of Warsaw*

Diasporic frames of war: mediating transnational engagement for Ukraine

War in Ukraine has prompted Ukrainian diasporas across the globe to engage on behalf of their war-torn homeland, including pleading for help from their countries of residence/second homelands. Social media has become a crucial mediator of this diasporic engagement. This article explores how two diasporic Ukrainian organizations, "Euromaidan" in Poland and the "Israeli Friends of Ukraine" in Israel, frame the war on their social media channels on Instagram and Facebook to mediate and encourage action. My analysis is based on the year-long observation of the channels between January 2024 and January 2025. It is supported by the ongoing fieldwork composed of interviews and participant observation of the Ukrainian diaspora in Poland and interviews with Israeli Ukrainians conducted in Israel in the first half of 2024. My aim is to look comparatively at the social media activities of these two organizations, exploring their similarities and differences, but also to look critically at how they themselves engage in "the politics of comparison" (Idris 2016, Stoler 2001, Anderson 2016) to further their cause. The politics of comparison implies that comparison is embedded

in power relations through, for instance, stressing certain differences while obscuring others. Accordingly, both organizations frame the war as a transnationally extended zone of suffering, but they also stress parallels with political-historical conditions in their countries of residence that create contradictory narratives between the organizations. This includes the opposing framing of the war in Gaza as a comparative “conflict frame” (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000) for the Ukrainian war.

Teemu Oivo, *University of Eastern Finland*

Collective self-images: Russian-language online discussions on life in Finland

The conceptual definition of Finland’s ‘Russians’ is complex, as they are both united and divided by factors such as residential history in different countries, their relationship to the Soviet Union, culture, memory, media use, citizenship, external recognition, and self-identification. Language is arguably the most prominent identifier, highlighting the group’s significance as Finland’s largest unofficial language minority. However, grouping diverse peoples, from Russians to Ukrainians, together in public and academic discourse simply due to their language is criticised as well. The image of Russian-ness in Finland carries a historic burden. Following Russia’s aggression towards Ukraine in 2014, and especially from 2022 onwards, people’s social bonds and mobility to Russia, citizenship, and even language have increasingly become part of popular national security discussions. Generally, times of insecurity have brought questions of national identity to the forefront, while Finland is arguably more multicultural than ever. This presentation examines the collective self-images represented in Russian-language online discussion groups focused on life in Finland. The study is conducted via unobtrusive auto-netnography between 2023 and 2024. The discussions reveal both explicit conversations and implicit implications about how participants perceive their imagined audience, how representative this audience is of Russians or more broadly Russian speakers in Finland, and how they discuss the often-conflicting images of themselves in Finnish journalistic media.

John Postill, *RMIT University*

The anti-woke schism over the war in Ukraine: a comparison of four hybrid media personas

In recent years, a highly diverse ‘anti-woke movement’ (Johansen 2023, 2024, Postill 2024) has shaped the culture wars and media representations of countries across the Western hemisphere and beyond. Led by powerful media figures such as Donald Trump, Elon Musk, Jordan Peterson, Bret Weinstein, Sam Harris, Javier Milei, and Agustin Laje, in early 2022 this loose movement found itself divided over the war in Ukraine. While some prominent anti-woke fully sided with Ukraine, others offered more sceptical and/or conspiracist takes on the Western elites’ designs towards Russia. In this paper I draw from long-term online ethnographic research to explain why the Ukraine issue failed to unite the anti-woke movement despite appearing to be a textbook case of an authoritarian attack on the liberal West. I do this by comparing the making of four hybridly mediated personas on Ukraine by as many anti-woke content creators, namely the persona of a conspiracy theorist (Bret Weinstein), a prophet of doom (Jordan Peterson), a cultural translator (Konstantin Kisin), and a liberal democrat (Cathy Young). I argue that far from living in a monolithic right-wing filter bubble, these diverse figures/personas are skilled at navigating the hybrid, multimodal media system made up of both old and new media (Chadwick 2017) – not least when they critique ‘the media narrative’ on the Ukraine war.

Panel 27: Experience, Affect, Belief, Care

Toomas Gross, *University of Helsinki*

This panel examines, from different perspectives, the topics of experience, affect, belief, and care as they unfold in liminal, in-between spaces—whether in extreme bodily states, ethnographic research, religious practices, literary imaginaries, or posthumous social worlds. Drawing on comparative ethnographic and analytical approaches, the five presentations explore how individuals navigate self-transcendence, spiritual and epistemological uncertainty, ethical models, and enduring ties to the dead, and how they negotiate transformation, belonging, and meaning at the thresholds of the known and the unknown.

Toomas Gross, *University of Helsinki***Ultrarunning and the sensations at the “edge of experience”**

Although ultrarunning almost inevitably involves subjecting one's body to self-inflicted pain and suffering, it has also been described as a pleasurable, meditative and even spiritual endeavor (e.g., Austin 2007; Jones 2004; Koski 2015). Ultrarunners occasionally report sensations that anthropologists of religion (e.g., Luhmann) would place at “the edge of experience.” These include the more conventional experiences of “flow” and “runner's high,” but also visions, hearing voices, and moments of self-transcendence. Drawing on the example of recreational ultrarunners in Estonia and ethnographic data from semi-structured interviews, blog analysis, and participant observation at various ultrarunning events, this paper examines how runners reflect on and make sense of such experiences, as well as the vocabulary they use to describe “the edge of experience” sensations. Building on Taylor's (2007) concept of “fullness” and Luhmann's (2020) approach to “kindling the presence of invisible others,” I argue that runners reframe these experiences – often deemed “almost mystical” – as a particularly meaningful and valuable part of ultrarunning. These experiences are claimed to lead to a unique state of consciousness and contribute to a broadened, deepened, and more “authentic” way of being in and experiencing the world. At the core of this state is an engagement with one's own body and the running environment in novel ways.

Alberto Groisman, *UFSC-Brazil***Ethnographic Itineraries: the Anthropology in Trance**

We live in a world made up of beings, places and itineraries that are both ordinary and extraordinary. We can consider ethnographic elaboration to be extraordinary, because it is provisional, intense and liminal. Ethnography ends and/or consolidates an itinerary, the one we reify by calling it ‘research’. In fact, doing research, and especially field research, is a time in which other extraordinary states of being are superimposed on everyday life, involving us in dilemmas, challenges, uncertainties and tensions. These are trance states that perhaps shape the epistemological health of anthropology. In literature, trance places beings in an unstable and transitional position, as well as an overwhelming one, because it puts the person in contact with invisible forces, which some call ‘spiritual’, others call ‘symbolic’, all communicatively challenging. Experts say that it is up to personal choice or disposition to consider trance a form of knowledge. More recently, especially with the intensification of socio-political relations with other research participants, a critique of the classic distancing from methodological conventionalism, and from an academicist/colonialist ideology emerged.

It has led to a deepening of epistemological questions as well, which has taken up more space among anthropologists. This could be a contemporary teaching task in the field of anthropology: to take the ethnographic experience as analogous to a mediumistic trance. The aim of this work is to reflect on the moment anthropology is going through - and even on its epistemological health. In particular, whether there is room in contemporary academia for the content and consistency of ethnographic elaborations that effectively address knowledge of deep experiences, as well as the substance and praxis of anthropological research.

Samuel Huard, *University of Toronto*

What Would Marguerite Have Done? Comparison and Exemplarity Among the Sisters of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame.

Comparison is at the hearth of Catholicism. Without the recurring comparative thrust that encourage believers to evaluate their life against the models provided by Jesus and the saints that followed him, the church would have no cohesion nor direction. This is particularly evident in the case of religious orders which, in addition to common figures like Jesus and Mary, also strive to follow in the footsteps of their founder. Drawing examples from the year-long ethnographic fieldwork that I conducted with the Congrégation de Notre-Dame in Quebec and in Honduras, I show how this work of comparison is used by the sisters both to forge local and transnational community bonds and to critically interpret their present in order to change it. In this case, comparison appears as a reflexive and embodied tool of community formation and transformation that allows for the connection of people through space and time. Here, models like the one provided by Saint Marguerite Bourgeoys, the order's foundress, serve as anchors and sails; they moor and push forward, through movements that both go deeper into the exemplar and expand it to new situations. Contributing to the anthropologies of Catholicism and of exemplarity, which have both generated inspiring new scholarship in the last decade, this paper proposes an analysis of various moments and exercises through which the sisters and their lay associates use comparison in order to build a dynamic community able to participate, in its own way, in the project of building God's Kingdom.

Shafag Dadashova, *ADA University*

Gendered Narratives of Coexistence

This paper explores how Azerbaijani literature from the post-Soviet era reflects and constructs coexistence through gendered narratives of in-betweenness, focusing on the negotiation of national and individual identities. Drawing on the works of Azerbaijani authors who navigate between Soviet legacies and emergent post-Soviet modernities, I examine how gendered subjectivities are positioned in relation to changing socio-political landscapes. The concept of "comparison" emerges in these texts as both an implicit practice and a literary strategy, wherein authors juxtapose traditional gender roles with new ideals of agency and selfhood. Through the lens of gender theory and postcolonial critique, I analyze the comparative frameworks that underpin these narratives, particularly how women's identities are caught between historical patriarchal structures and contemporary aspirations for equality and autonomy. This paper argues that these literary practices not only illustrate the challenges of coexistence but also generate spaces for in-betweenness where dialogue, transformation, and resistance unfold. In connecting literary analysis to broader anthropological discussions of comparison, I propose that the dynamic coexistence of contrasting ideologies within these texts serves as a microcosm of the broader tensions and harmonies in post-Soviet Azerbaijani society. By engaging with everyday practices of comparison embedded in the lived experiences

of authors and their characters, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of coexistence as an ongoing negotiation of identity and belonging.

Yiannis Papadakis, *University of Cyprus*

Comparative Deathscapes: Urban Cemeteries in Cyprus, Denmark and Japan

'Don't know if I am in the Pound grave, or the Fifteen Shilling grave. Fuck them anyway if they plonked me in the Ten Shilling plot...' So goes the first sentence of the satiric Irish novel *The Dirty Dust* by Mairtin O' Cadhain first published in 1949. The gossip discussions among the dead in an Irish cemetery, including who would want to be close to whom, who would rather be further away and who is cared for or abandoned, provides a vivid illustration of the central themes of this presentation. Drawing from fieldwork in societies with different types of sociopolitical and care systems, this is an attempt to reflect comparatively on posthumous identities along with the kinds of choices, emerging inequalities, exclusions and erasures these entail. The focus here is on common and ordinary burial practices in cemeteries of three capital cities (Nicosia, Copenhagen and Tokyo) touching on key anthropological issues including class, gender, migration, inequality, and the shifting boundaries between humans and animals. This kind of comparison, it is argued, can yield critical insights on the concept of necrosociality (Kim 2016), on topographies of cruelty (Mbembe 2003) and ultimately on the very concept of the cemetery (Rugg 2000).

Panel 29: Rethinking Infrastructure through Comparative Lenses: Climate, Environment and Cultures in Transformation

Ria-Maria Adams, *University of Vienna, University of Lapland*

In this session, we explore infrastructure not merely as physical systems, but as dynamic socio-political and cultural processes that shape and are shaped by local and global transformations. From citizen-led soil testing in Vienna to the contested rewilding and redevelopment of urban wastelands in Tallinn, we highlight how everyday practices and grassroots interventions can foster ecological care and socio-environmental transition. We interrogate historical infrastructures of collecting and categorizing in early modern Europe through the lens of the *Kunstammer*, raising questions of the legacy and institutionalization of cultural knowledge. We also turn to discussions of global climate governance and financial flows, examining how Chinese civil society actors reinterpret global climate mandates through localized narratives and practices. Finally, we consider strategic Arctic airports as infrastructural sites where tourism, military operations, and local life intersect within shared spaces. Together, these presentations discuss, how different infrastructures shape the past, the present and future, and how they are grounded in local actions made visible through ethnographic case studies.

Ria-Maria Adams, *University of Vienna, University of Lapland*

Accessing the "Inaccessible": The Role of Airports for Arctic Local Communities

Often imagined as remote and isolated, the Arctic is becoming more accessible and connected. In this presentation, we explore the local effects, promises and fears related to the increased accessibility that existing and planned Arctic airports provide communities. We do so by comparing three unique Arctic towns: Longyearbyen, extremely remote yet well-connected through its airport; Rovaniemi, a central Arctic hub with an international airport and other transport infrastructures; and Tasiilaq, a region that currently does not (yet) have a good

transport infrastructure. While the two former towns are well-established Arctic tourism destinations, the latter aspires to increase accessibility and tourist numbers by building an airport. By comparing these different case studies, we seek to answer the question: What is the role of existing and planned airports for local Arctic communities? We draw on three individual ethnographic studies and perform what we call a “collaborative secondary analysis”, building on „soft comparison“, as formulated by Mathews and Izquierdo (2009). This allows us to compare the role airports play / are anticipated to play in everyday life and community development, as well as the hopes and fears connected to increased accessibility of remote Arctic communities.

Fenja Leonie Sophie Freiin Grote, *Erasmus Mundus: "Transition, Innovation and Sustainability Environments"*
Touching the Soil: Urban Interventions for Sustainable Transition

This thesis explores the transformative potential of Citizen Science in Soil (CSS) for fostering a liveable sustainable urban future. Rooted in care and environmental ethics and aiming to contribute to Socio-ecological Transformation (SET), the study employs a situational grounded analysis approach. Deep literature research helps to identify important factors and provides fundamental knowledge about the subject of investigation. Through a real-world case study of a public soil testing project conducted in Meidling, Vienna, utilizing the Open Soil Atlas (OSA) methods, the research analyses the societal impact of CSS. The final situational map visualises the outcomes of the study in context to the SET. Therein the most important factors of the case study and its interrelations are represented. The study finds that CSS has a direct impact on citizens in the four categories of excitement and curiosity, education, engagement, and empowerment. With this, it serves as an adaptable experimental intervention that can

Karina Vabson, *Estonian Academy of Arts*

Monument to the wasteland: rapid transformation of urban nature environments

This case study examines a part of Putukaväil, or the Pollinators' Corridor, a 15-kilometre stretch in Northern Tallinn, a former Soviet railway, with a 1.5-kilometre segment that is being repurposed as a tramway while causing some arguments that busier, more densely populated areas should take precedence. Moreover, this intervention contradicts pollinator research from 2019 recommending minimal human activity to preserve local species habitats. Before being named the Pollinators' Corridor, the area already functioned as an informal space for locals, pedestrians, cyclists, and community engaged with its wild, wasteland-like nature. The surrounding area of Putukaväil that is also bordered by Soviet-era garages, is home to marginalized working-class groups whose unframed, but inherently sustainable practices – such as reusing materials and tending informal gardens – fostered environmental care and community ties.

Luisa Vögele, *University of Tübingen (Germany), CRC 1391*

The Kunstkammer - Between private collecting and cultural inheritance

The Kunstkammer (Cabinet of Curiosities) of the Dukes and Duchesses of Württemberg (Germany) unites a wide variety of objects from different contexts under the ambition of collecting the macrocosmos in microcosmo. Despite its start as a private collection, it must be regarded as an institutionalised entity, which served just as much as a representation of the Duchy as of the Duke himself. Originating in the late 16th century, the collection's legacy persists to the present day – as regional cultural inheritance in the Württemberg State

Museum. I examine the collecting, organising and cataloguing practices of various actors – as plural authors of the collection – at the point of transition from the 18th to the 19th century. Intending to break up the male dominated narrative of a euro-centric collection, I especially focus on female actors in the collection, as well as the object group of the so called ‘exotics’. These are described in the inventories as objects of daily use and compared to the known local daily life of the collectors and curators. These ‘exotic’ objects were always partly secluded from the rest of the collection and are finally given to a specialised ethnographic collection in the late 19th century. I ask if this specialisation in the establishment of modern museums rather helps to constitute an ‘otherness’ of non-European objects than an understanding of similarities. And if revisiting the Kunstkammer might not only be a chance to reflect on its ongoing legacy but also to reconsider a somewhat more diverse collection practice.

Taru Salmenkari, *University of Helsinki*

Local dimensions in global climate action: Chinese civil society organizations

Climate change is a global problem that requires local action and national commitment all over the world. This presentation begins with an anthropologist who analyzes glocalization in climate work by Chinese civil society organizations (CSO) participating in the UN Climate Change Conference COP29. Watching COP29 side events and press conferences held by Chinese CSO, the anthropologist notices how policy advocacy strategies derived from Chinese political culture are used on the global arena. Chinese civil society participants likewise distinguish the global and the local, but they talk about localization of global agendas as bentuhua (becoming [rooted in] local soil) and globalization as telling Chinese stories (gushi) to the world or showing to others how things are done in China. A third angle to glocalization present in the COP29 side events resembles the common NGOs slogan “think global, act local.” NGOs from China grapple with turning global climate threat and climate science into local action in communities. The fourth angle is identifiable among the Chinese business associations that promote global financial standards to direct private investment to low-carbon industrial production and to climate mitigation in developing countries. The local kicks back as local regulations and data gaps, which need to be calculated into the global models used by the financial institutions. This paper studies a specific type of organizations from one country on a single international arena to analyze various ways to understand glocalization, a process in which globalization and localization intertwine.

Panel 33: Religious ecologies compared: Ethnographic case studies from Africa

Timo Kallinen, Tea Virtanen, Jenni Mölkänen; *University of Eastern Finland*

Modern secular culture approaches religions as alternatives from which individuals can choose. In a pluralistic society, religions appear to people as ideas, doctrines, and beliefs that individuals must be able to justify, and which can at any time be subjected to critical scrutiny. Thus, religions are required to be “sensible” or “consistent”. In modern culture comparisons between religions are made on grounds of various forms of rationality, one of which is ecological. For example, the monotheistic scriptural religions’ view of a hierarchical relationship between humans and nature is often pinpointed as the root cause of the contemporary environmental crisis. Consequently, they are juxtaposed with the religions of indigenous peoples, whose spiritual attachment to land is portrayed as a model for the modern world’s re-thinking of its own relationship with nature. Hence, for instance, the spread of so-

called world religions to Africa has been seen as having shifted the behaviour of the continent's inhabitants in an unecological direction. However, such comparisons are simplistic, as people's relationship with their environment cannot be reduced to their religions. Religious norms do not automatically translate into corresponding conduct and theological teachings must be recontextualized in the specific cultural settings where they are introduced. The proposed panel consists of three presentations addressing religion and environment in different parts of Africa. These presentations focus on various religious traditions (Christianity, Islam, and indigenous religions) and, through analysis of ethnographic data, aim to demonstrate how the environmental relationships of religious groups are shaped historically by a variety of factors.

Timo Kallinen, *University of Eastern Finland*

Religion, ecology, and economy in Ghana: shifting comparative frame

The new awareness about the environmental crisis has been coupled with a resurgence of traditional religion in Ghana. Formerly, the Christian missionaries operating in the area encouraged African converts to abandon their spiritual beliefs concerning the environment so that effective extraction of natural resources could take place. Consequently, taboos concerning nature could be transgressed without fear of punishment. However, recently traditional ideas about the environment have been revived as a part of a conservationist ideology. Government agencies and NGOs have launched ecotourism projects, where the sacredness of natural formations (e.g. lakes, forests) or animals (e.g. monkeys, crocodiles) has a central place. Thus, traditional religion has been able to assume an "ecologically friendly" modern identity. My paper explores how this has affected positions and relations of local religious groups, and how people perceive the relationship between religion and economic development.

Tea Virtanen, *University of Eastern Finland*

Cattle Ecologies: Cows, Spirits, and Climate Troubles in Cameroon

In recent years, the Mbororo pastoralists in Cameroon have witnessed how climatic changes hamper their prospects of cattle raising. Simultaneously, their lives flow on in a web of socio-cosmic relations also considered a potential challenge for their and their Zebu cattle's well-being. While discussing this predicament, my paper employs the concept of 'total cattle ecology', referring to an assemblage of ideas, practices, and specific beings and relations involved, that are entwined in the close bond between the Mbororo and their cattle. I look at different cattle-related ecologies — whether physical-environmental, socio-cosmological or strictly related to Islamic religion — in the face of the current climatic-environmental predicament and show that these ecologies are never fixed but should be examined as parts of the total cattle ecology within which the efficacy of diverse protective, regenerative, curative, and preventive practices rests upon their synergetic interconnections.

Jenni Mölkänen, *University of Eastern Finland*

Living in/with comparison: Christian and ancestral relations in rural Madagascar

In northeastern Madagascar, rural farmers belong to different Christian denominations and have continued to practice their ancestral customs and living with different kinds of spirits. Christian denominations have contested these customs by using theological and secular arguments, for example asking for rational economic behavior and not to spend money on dead people. However, rural farmers maintain their social relations to their families, clans and fellow-villagers who are essential in providing care and nurture, and enable the farmers' access

to land, and work required on rice fields. While local Christians highlight tolerance towards not-Christians, people practicing ancestral customs emphasize egalitarian principle of 'each their own way'. The paper emphasizes the necessity of examining place- or context-based, socially and historically produced and evolved relations and practices, and notifies what, in this case, rural farmers do in/with constant comparison.

Wednesday

Film

10:00-12:00

Another Summer

104mins, 2024, David Edwards, Alzbeta Kovandova-Bartonickova - Studium 1 (F3020)

A film by refugees about refugees – the directors of Another Summer provided training and equipment to a group of Afghan and Ukrainian first-time filmmakers who had taken refuge in different European countries after the Taliban takeover in 2021 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The filmmakers were divided into teams and sent to seven cities in Europe and Turkey. Their task was to record the stories of people like themselves who had fled violence and repression, capture what it nowadays means to be a refugee and gather unseen footage from their past lives.

10:30-12:00

Panel details

Panel 1: Cross-disciplinary comparison and the shaping of anthropological knowledge – Part 1

Raluca-Bianca Roman, Jonathan Lanman

Interdisciplinarity and cross-disciplinarity have become buzzwords both within academic institutions and among stakeholders, from universities struggling with public or private funding to grant organisations supporting research projects within the humanities and social sciences. Yet, numerous barriers keep anthropologists from engaging with other disciplines, including the policing of disciplinary boundaries, internal disciplinary debates, and epistemological and methodological disagreements concerning the creation of anthropological "knowledge." This panel intends to provoke a rethinking of the value of comparison, beyond the "subject" of anthropological knowledge and to the discipline itself. We invite submissions from a range of scholars, including but not limited to anthropologists who work in inter-disciplinary departments or engage with methods that cross disciplinary boundaries, social scientists who approach comparison anthropologically, and researchers conducting cross-disciplinary studies of anthropological themes. To this end, we welcome proposals about the benefits and challenges of interdisciplinary exchange and collaboration

that takes both disciplinary comparison (e.g. goals, methods, ethics and outputs) and the potential benefits of interdisciplinary collaboration seriously. What is the contribution of anthropological knowledge in an ever-increasing cross disciplinary environment (or discourse)? What can anthropology gain by entering into a conversation with human, social and physical sciences? How might such disciplinary comparison improve our efforts at anthropological comparison? What, ultimately, is the future of comparative thinking in anthropology?

Harvey Whitehouse, *University of Oxford*
Against Interpretive Exclusivism

Interpretive exclusivism is the dogma that we can only understand cultural systems by interpreting them, thereby ruling out causal explanations of cultural phenomena using scientific methods, for example based on measurement, comparison, and experiment. In this presentation, I argue that the costs of interpretive exclusivism are heavy and the benefits illusory. I make the case instead for an interactionist approach in which interpretive and scientific approaches work together on an equal footing. Although such approaches are neither easy nor cheap, I argue that they are necessary to improve the intellectual ambition, comparative breadth, and practical relevance of anthropology as a discipline. In all these ways, incorporating rather than excluding scientific methods would improve the long-term prospects of anthropology as a flourishing field of research and teaching

Jonathan Lanman, *Queen's University Belfast*
The Causes of Atheism: Bridging Psychological and Anthropological Research

A substantial and growing body of research uses quantitative methods to investigate the general causal factors working to produce atheism, agnosticism and other forms of non-belief across contexts. In addition, a substantial and growing body of research uses qualitative methods to investigate particular case studies and the relevance of context and meaning in how atheism, agnosticism manifest for individuals and groups. Unfortunately, these two bodies of research are not often brought together, as researchers often make the mistaken assumption that qualitative research and causal analysis are in some way incompatible. Some quantitative researchers, for example, see qualitative research as helpful for description, but not causal analysis. Some qualitative researchers, for example, see causal analysis as inappropriate for the study of human thought and action. This paper will demonstrate how our causal understanding of atheism, agnosticism, and other forms of non-belief can be enriched by combining quantitative and qualitative data. Utilising the notion of 'causal processes' developed by Joseph Maxwell and others to bridge quantitative and qualitative research, the paper will document the methodology used in the Explaining Atheism programme to trace how general causal factors are manifesting (or not) in particular cases, and how the contexts and meanings emergent in the qualitative analysis help us postulate generalisable interaction effects and produce a more holistic causal understanding of our supposed variables, and of atheism more generally.

Mohaddeseh Ziyachi, *Durham University*
The contribution of cognitive anthropology to psychotherapy

Psychological well-being and mental health have been important research topics in medical anthropology. Multi-cultural psychology also acknowledges the role of culture (as the core concept of anthropology) in mental health treatment, particularly for migrant clients and

ethnic minorities. This presentation will explore how the 'cultural models' approach from cognitive anthropology could contribute to mental health practice by going beyond multiculturalism. The 'cultural models' approach provides a new conceptual and methodological framework for engaging with migrant clients' underlying schemas and expectations in talking therapy. To support this idea, I will reflect on my research study on the experiences of twenty-five refugees and asylum seekers (living in North East England and Northern Ireland) with mental health care in the UK. This study exemplifies how the cultural models approach would help therapists to comprehend the meanings of a certain traumatic experience, such as FGM or unemployment, for the client based on the client's specific schemas, experiences, and circumstances rather than their ethnic or cultural background as implied by multicultural psychology. The research demonstrates how clients' schemas of the appropriate treatments, as well as their schemas of the therapy process and frameworks, influence their expectations and evaluations of services. The findings suggest that the 'cultural models' approach would significantly contribute to building therapeutic alliances and providing relevant and appropriate treatments for migrant clients, particularly for unrecognised pre- and post-migration traumatic experiences.

Maija-Eliina Sequeira, *University of Helsinki*

The role of compromise in interdisciplinary research

In this presentation I will share and discuss the diverse epistemological and methodological challenges that arose in the process of planning, conducting, analysing, and publishing an interdisciplinary research project. My PhD research was explicitly inter- (or trans-) disciplinary, combining anthropological and psychological approaches, as well as comparative across two very different social contexts in Helsinki, Finland and Santa Marta, Colombia. The contrasting assumptions and taken-for-granted knowledge that underpin these two disciplines became particularly explicit at certain points of the research process, such as when trying to fulfill the requirements of two seemingly incompatible frameworks for research ethics or in justifying the use of psychological terms for the skeptical peer reviewers of anthropology journals. I will present several such examples and discuss some solutions, while also considering how these were analogous to the challenge of comparing cross-culturally. Ultimately, the research presented serves as an interesting case study for examining how disciplinary boundaries can (only?) be crossed through careful compromise and a willingness to accept the validity and value to be found in other forms of knowledge-building. It also shows how interdisciplinary research forces us to be more explicit about the strengths and limitations of the epistemological and methodological choices being made, including those inherent to our 'own' disciplines.

Panel 9: Compensation and repair: Comparison and the measuring of incommensurable wrongs – Part 1

Katja Uusihakala, Saana Hansen, Hanna Rask

This panel examines comparison of the incommensurable in political processes of repair and reconciliation. To ameliorate historical injustices, reconciliation efforts often employ a combination of symbolic means and reparative practices, including public apologies, truth commissions and monetary compensation, thereby enhancing their effects. Financial compensations may further function as publicly documented reminders of the wrong and its attempted redress, operating as instruments of collective memory. Yet, the commensuration

of things of a different order remains morally fraught, particularly when it comes to commodification of objects perceived as invaluable and incommensurable (Maurer 2006). However, even when both victims and representatives of institutions or states issuing retributions may share an understanding that money can never be commensurable with harms suffered, it is still sought by victims and offered as potent remedy offering validation and vindication in the aftermath of wrongs. What criteria then are used in such comparisons? Which forms of suffering and loss are measured and monetized and which are left silenced? Which entities are considered eligible for compensation and what are their impacts on social change? This panel calls for scholars to explore the paradox of incommensurability in reparative politics. We invite papers that examine instances where the incommensurability and irreplaceability of the wrong with money are powerfully underscored – for example, children's forced removals from their families in the name of postcolonial modernization or colonial assimilation, appropriations of land, environmental injustices, such as toxic exposures or resource extraction, systemic harm, and human rights offences.

Constanza Tizzoni, *Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile*

The State's Role in Stray Bullet Deaths in Santiago, Chile: A Case Study

Over the past decade, 308 children in Chile have died from stray bullets, tragedies concentrated in low-income neighborhoods where drug trafficking and violence have intensified. These deaths reflect deep structural inequalities and the absence of clear protocols for support and redress, and highlight the limitations of a weakened state in Chile's neoliberal context. This paper analyzes the case of a family from La Pintana, a vulnerable neighborhood in Santiago, who lost an eight-month-old child to a stray bullet in 2019. Through an ongoing ethnographic observation, I explore how state responses are markedly uneven and largely determined by factors such as media visibility. The construction of the child as an "ideal victim" (Christie, 2013) facilitated swift state intervention in this case, even though the trial has yet to identify a culprit. At the same time, the family faces an ambivalent relationship with the state, marked by the fear that a public demand for justice could result in the loss of benefits granted after the tragedy, such as a housing allowance. As the mother expressed: "As soon as the house is registered in my name, I will be the first to stand in front of the courthouse with a sign of protest". This analysis demonstrates the urgent need for protocols that address both these tragedies and the structural conditions that produce them. It also reflects on how the uncertain relationship between families and the state limits the possibilities for justice and reparation in contexts of structural inequality.

Osvaldo Falcão, *Tampere University*

Trauma, Reparations and Provenance: Including Communities in museums

Colonial and ethnographic museums face two urgent challenges: overcoming trauma and including communities in reparation policies. As concrete symbols of colonial injustices, these institutions continue to resist changes in their provenance practices and the language used to describe objects, perpetuating historical trauma and contributing to the erasure of the memories and material cultures of the affected groups. This proposal argues for the necessity of new practices that include communities, particularly in provenance research and the reformulation of object descriptions and narratives. These are essential to rebuilding collective memories and cultural identities. Museums must go beyond diplomatic relations and actively engage with the groups that gave rise to their collections. This not only involves re-signifying objects but also provides a concrete form of compensation for historical trauma. The paper

contends that collaborative practices in provenance research and reparations can transform museum memory policies, ensuring that communities occupy a central role in their narratives. By deconstructing colonial languages and creating participatory processes, museums can become agents of historical justice and cultural inclusion. It concludes that advancing these practices is a necessary step to decolonizing museums and addressing the legacies of inequality.

Timo Kaartinen, *University of Helsinki*
Commemoration as a moment of truth

This paper discusses the political and moral implications of commemorating events in the remote past. The 400-year anniversary of the Dutch massacre of the original inhabitants of the eastern Indonesian Banda Islands in 2021 was an occasion for reflecting on Dutch responsibility for violence against the people of colonies in the former Netherlands East Indies. While the Dutch government has issued public apologies for more recent violence during Indonesia's independence war in 1947, persons and groups have also called for righting the injustice suffered by the precolonial Bandanese community. The question discussed in the paper is what it means to reveal, admit or deny the truth of such events. I address it by exploring how different agents in Indonesia and the Netherlands construct and maintain the gap between colonial events and the present, with a concluding reflection about what makes past events morally compelling and what spatial and temporal qualities are attributed to them to make them commensurable with present norms, ideas, and practices of recognition and responsibility.

Panel 11: Ethnography of importance? Studying 'minor matters' in times of destruction – Part 1

Tiina Järvi, **Dalia Zein**

The past years have been framed by excessive atrocities and life-altering destruction. The genocidal violence in Gaza, the extensive bombardment of Lebanon, and the widespread attacks against civilians in Sudan are but a few of many events of political violence. Many of these also have consequences on the environment and thus can intersect with climate-related humanitarian disasters, such as the forest fires in southern Lebanon caused by Israel's use of white phosphorous. When a place unravelling in such destruction is one's fieldsite, the consequences are manifold. It can inhibit the practice of ethnography and cause emotional distress but also on an epistemological and political level it can raise comparisons on what type of knowledge is deemed relevant. For ethnographers working in the field, a radical change in the conditions on the ground might create self-doubt. Is it okay to continue exploring the small everyday matters when there are bigger, seemingly timelier and more relevant, forces at play? How does the violent zeitgeist define what is deemed 'research-worthy'? How do we, as ethnographers, react to the events unfolding? How does it direct our research interests? And how do we as researchers make sense – to ourselves, to the field, and to the discipline – of the relevance of persisting in studying the 'minor matters'? In the frame of the above-mentioned considerations, we hope to initiate a conversation on where the boundary lies between adapting to the ever-changing situation and accepting research as an inherently long-term practice. Is there an ethnography of importance at play?

Evelina Sironen, *University of Jyväskylä*

Ethnographic Fieldwork in Times of Uncertainty in Lebanon

Just a few weeks after the fieldwork for my doctoral research, “Social Work Against Occupation and Oppression in Palestinian Refugee Camps in Lebanon”, began in September 2023, the economic collapse and related crises experienced in Lebanon since 2019 were further deepened by the conflict and bombardment. My six-month-long fieldwork was conducted with the groups deeply affected by both the current and previous crises: communities living in Palestinian refugee camps or nearby areas in Lebanon. This escalation on the ground in Lebanon, alongside Israel's genocidal violence in Gaza and the growing Israeli settler violence in the West Bank, profoundly affected not only the people I worked with but also myself and my research design. Moreover, these circumstances required critical ethical reflections as I chose to remain and conduct fieldwork despite the risks posed by the precarious situation in the region. In this presentation, I will explore the following questions: How can we conduct ethically sound ethnographic research in a time of increasing uncertainty and destruction? And how do the mundane aspects of everyday life connect to broader struggles against systemic oppression and political violence?

Anthony Rizk, *University of Sherbrooke*

From inconspicuous microbes to (bio)financial histories of crisis in Lebanon

Taking a cue from Hannah Landecker's theory of the “biology of history” (2016) – how microbial genomes are repositories of human social, economic and political events and processes – this paper will present preliminary work on what can be called microbiofinance: how financial systems can be inscribed in microbial life. I draw on archival data from the Annual Reports of the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) in the 1950s-70s, the period preceding the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990) to show how hospital administrators, physicians, infection control officers, nurses, sanitation workers and healthcare workers responded to outbreaks of hospital-acquired infections in recurrent periods of hospital-wide austerity and financial crisis. This research is a response to why the social study of microbes matters within the larger story of Lebanon's economic collapse' between 2019 and 2024. This research is meant to historicize narratives of crisis and collapse and, in so doing, contribute to their de-essentialization. In this vein, I hope this work will show how microbes can be repositories of larger-scale (bio)financial histories. Centring these ‘microbial stories,’ I hope to explore how larger cataclysmic stories (crisis, collapse, disaster) are and can be told through the otherwise inconspicuous and miniature: microbial lives.

Xin Qu, *University of Oxford*

Minor writers, minor anthropology

‘It'd be better if you talk to a major author. Sadly, I'm just a minor writer’. The anthropological training did not prepare me for this heartbreaking statement in my fieldwork. My interlocuter, an aspiring creative writer, considered herself too minor to be ‘research-worthy’ to me. ‘What you research (viz., creative writing and creative writers) is minor matters, whereas what concerns us is usually big issues (viz., social orders and political conflicts)’. A political scientist made a poignant comparison between his project and mine. Both strike me how my intellectual trajectory is double minored as on the one hand I study ‘minor’ writers while I work on a ‘minor’ research topic to the other. The two unexpected sidelights from my two-year fieldwork on internet literature in China usher the lens of ‘the minor’ in my theorising. Inspired by Lila Abu-

Lughod's Veiled Sentiments and Hentyle Yapp's Minor China, I consider my research 'minor anthropology'. For Abu-Lughod (2016), poetry is not necessarily inferior to politics; rather, it actually has been made 'minor' by the long-term intellectual configuration of reinforcing particular interests while slighting others. A major power like China, as Hentyle Yapp (2021, p. 5) proposes, can be parsed through 'minor' issues since 'minor' stories mirror 'the epistemological assumptions and ontological conditions' by which 'major' structures live and on which they depend. Beyond that, through the lens of 'the minor', I expect to make both 'minor' writers in my fieldwork and the niche field of literary anthropology in my discipline heard and hearable.

Panel 12: Comparative Tropes of Virality in Environmental Activism

Lukas Fort, Birgit Bräuchler

In the age of 'viral reality' (Postill 2014), digital media virality has become a powerful tool in activism. Whereas the literature often looks at social unrest, protest and elections, this panel aims to explore the intersection of virality and environmental activism, focusing on how 'virality' is constructed, disseminated and understood across various cultural and environmental contexts. Going beyond the mere counting of comments and likes, it examines recurring tropes – themes, metaphors, narratives, etc. – deployed in environmental campaigns to foster amplification and impact. By analysing these tropes, we aim to diversify the notion of virality, contributing to ongoing debates about the effectiveness of digital media campaigns in terms of policy and behavioural changes. The panel will unpack the cultural and symbolic dimensions, as well as the digital media affordances, that drive and amplify efforts in diverse forms and contexts of environmental activism. It also seeks comparative perspectives on how 'viral' tropes differ across regions, movements and ideologies. How do environmental movements across the globe use the notion of virality differently? What role do numbers and alternative ways to show impact play? What local nuances shape virality in environmental campaigns, and how do 'viral' efforts (fail to) translate into policy change? This panel invites contributions that critically engage with forms, impact and ethical implications of 'viral' environmental activism, exploring both its potential and limitations in shaping policy, public opinion, and collective actions. We prioritise contributions that develop and contribute to our analytical ideas and bring them into conversation with concrete empirical cases.

Lukas Fort / Birgit Bräuchler, *University of Copenhagen*

Virality in environmental activism in Indonesia

Content that 'goes viral' captures the attention of a large audience and is widely shared and reproduced through social media. This paper explores the potential and limitations of virality in environmental activism in Indonesia, where environmental degradation and digital connectivity have accelerated over the last years. Drawing on Postill's (2014) diversification of the notion of virality within activist campaigns, we look at the complexities of virality and explore how it is but one element in broader ecosystems of environmental activism that is not only about immediacy and speed, but also about fostering deliberative processes that generate longer-term and more sustainable engagement. Digital media engagement in environmental activism can take very different forms with very different temporal implications and different understandings of impact and success. Speed and virality sit very differently in the social ecosystem of environmental activism than perseverance and trust. To build our argument we

are drawing on a number of case studies, in particular Pandawara, a group of five friends initiating a viral campaign against waste pollution; the criminalisation of environmental activists; and action against nickel mining. Looking at the complexity of virality and speed as illustrated in these examples, we argue, provides us a fuller picture of viral environments and environmental activism, where viral campaigns operate on multiple scales and levels. Virality not only needs to be seen in a specific socio-political context, but also as something embedded in larger media ecologies of activism, of which virality is a part.

Florencia García-Rapp, *Janina Hahne, University of Valladolid*

UN-appointed climate ambassadors on Spanish TikTok - engagement and legitimacy

In this work-in-progress, we qualitatively analyze 300 TikTok videos and 10.000 comments in Spanish to interpret digital practices and discourses, as well as assess the influence of eco-activists. This study is part of a wider EU Horizon Europe consortium project on emotions and climate change (CIDAPE). From a media anthropology perspective, we examine and interpret the development and success of a campaign launched by the UN and TikTok, consisting of appointing official "climate ambassadors" who produce content as eco-influencers on the platform. Are these officially appointed creators seen as less legitimized than "self-made" eco-influencers? How do audiences, users, and citizens, who are the same people, react to them? By looking at textual debates around issues such as the Agenda 2030, conscious-consumption, meat-less diets, mobility, and recycling, we aim to better explain how people understand sustainability in their everyday lives and up to what extent their perceptions are impacted by digital content creators.

Richard MacDonald, *Goldsmiths, University of London*

Ancient Woodland, High-Speed Rail (HS2) and the Legibility of Justifications

My contribution to the panel examines a case of counter-productive virality relating to the environmental opposition to high-speed rail in the UK. The case for a new high-speed rail line to connect London and the North of England via Birmingham (HS2) was built, in part, on the role the network would play in a future low carbon transport system. For opponents, however, the local environmental costs in terms of lost and damaged landscapes and habitats, and the detrimental impacts on biodiversity far outweighed any potential benefits. A claim circulating on both legacy media and social media platforms in late 2019, pushed by an alliance of conservation NGOs, that 108 ancient woodlands would be damaged and destroyed by HS2 was a contentious lightning rod in this fractured landscape of environmental opinion, a focus for supporters and opponents alike. Tracing the emergence of this viral claim, the paper argues that as the 108 ancient woodlands claim became an object of viral controversy, the justifying arguments advanced by HS2 opponents were increasingly obscured. One symptom of this diminished legibility of justifications was the dismissal of the claim that 108 woodlands would be damaged and destroyed as a lie, with those supportive of the claim characterised as liars, self-interested NIMBYs or bad faith actors, shills. The sensational virality of the claim that 108 ancient woodlands would be destroyed, readily dismissed as misinformation, came to eclipse the sustained decade-long critique of neoliberal conservation, and its construction of offsettable nature offered by opponents of HS2 Ltd.

Arkaprava Chattopadhyay, *SRM University Sikkim*

The Confluence of Lepcha Animism and the Internet in Sikkim, India

Also referred to as the 'Mutanchi Rongkup', literally meaning the 'beloved offspring of nature', the Lepchas are an animistic indigenous tribe living in the Himalayan region of Sikkim, India. The Rongyon and Teesta rivers which outline the Dzongu (tribal reservation) region of Sikkim are sacred to the Lepcha community, holding consecrated waters central to their worship. Thus, the state government's initiatives to build hydro-power projects on these rivers were met with major protests, ever since initiated in 2007. Tracing the Internet-based projections of the Lepchas since 2020 in communicating their dissent in this regard, the study not only evaluates the effectiveness of framing their nature-aligned animistic narratives as an apparatus for conveying dissent and resistance against the environmental threats – but specifically how the innovative utilisation of Internet-based digital platforms have considerably earned them the support of people and organisations from across the world, rather than only their regional neighbours as was earlier the case. Deriving a theoretical framework pertaining to 'eco-culturalism' and 'digital religion', this study engages in a digital ethnography focusing on the Lepcha content creators, their digital approach, the resultant virulence of their contention achieved, and the resultant dissemination of the Lepcha community's traditional animistic myths and folklore amongst the masses. From a broader context, the study underscores the phenomenon of confluence, between the traditional philosophy of a forest-dwelling animistic tribal community, and 'technology', leading to a contemporary social shaping of their everyday life altogether.

Panel 14: Queer Grief

Antu Sorainen, Paul Boyce

Grief provokes yearnings to make sense of one's experience. A common yet vital way of doing this is to seek self-understanding of loss in relation to similar experiences of others. This may be either in direct conversation, but also via engagement with the writing and other forms of expression that others have employed to express their grieving processes. In this sense, grief accents queer and anthropological understandings of dividual personhood. Such a perspective attends to the conceiving of persons as relation entities, as opposed to singularly imagined selves. Grief may be understood as both disrupting and revealing dividual understandings of persons: an attachment being broken by loss or bereavement (be this to a person, a place, the eco sphere or belligerent governments) simultaneously evokes enduring relations with persons and other entities otherwise experienced as dead, and hence intrinsically bound to the endurance of life. Against this background, we invite submissions that open-out intersecting perspectives on queer life, desire, death and mourning. Among other junctures, issues explored in the papers could pertain to: • disrupting life and death as if imagined as securely separate domains • invoking interruptions between human and non-human relations and contexts • attending to associated affects regarding who and what counts as a 'grieveable' in queer life-worlds, politics and storying • eco grief as a queer issue • the productivity of queer grief. An effect, we hope, is that the panel papers will add to understandings of grief as relational while querying ways in which grieving may be (mis)recognised, (mis)categorized or (de)legitimized.

Sanna Mustasaari, *University of Eastern Finland, Family Law*
Aesthetics of (queer?) grief in escaping (hetero?) moments

Memories from those days come to me in flashes: We're in the morgue, my mother and I arrange pink carnations around my daughter's face (my mother's idea, she's good at letting go). Or: We're in the park, and my six-year-old says: "Olga's sister is Hilda. Aurora's sister is Emilia. Seela's sister is Elsa. My sister is dead. But she was kind and beautiful." In this paper, I write about grief's relations through the experiences of one family. After my child, a young trans woman, took her life three years ago, a new era began in my life. Suddenly, grief claimed its place and space. With grief came a desperate need to understand my child and her experience, myself and my own experience, and my utter failure to understand her – and us. As I reflected on the challenges of understanding my daughter's trans experience in a cis-normative society, I slowly became aware of how little I knew or had been prepared to know of the different forms of grief in my family. A ripple effect of my personal grief, extending to generations before and after me, I wanted to know more about how grief has been encountered or lived in my family, what has made it possible, recognized or rejected. It seems that one entry to grief is through beauty. We make the deceased beautiful in physical and mental images and through various acts of remembering. But, looking back, I also recognize silenced attempts at grief and mourning, rejected aesthetics of grief perhaps? What, if anything, did this have to do with the tendency of emphasizing the cis- and heteronormative aspects and moments in our family history? In this attempt to understand grief through the microhistory of one family, I draw on personal memories, diary entries, and other documents, but also novels and other artistic works.

Paul Boyce, *University of Sussex*
Dividual Death

In this piece I explore co-writing with an author through the cipher memories and enduring life, his having died seven years ago. Together we wonder and wander across divides between life and death. I partly perceive these border- crossings from a Tantric standpoint, connected to my prior ethnographic work in West Bengal, India, and my on-going connections to that context (which disrupt imagined boundaries between research-site and life-world). In pursuing these distinct but interconnected domains of experience, I think about the concept of 'dividual death'. Perhaps most associated with Marilyn Strathern, although developed in relation and other anthropologists, 'dividualism' conceives of worldly experiencing beyond singularly imagined selves. Strathern has extended this concept to consider ways in which person do not die, because always already residing in other selves, objects and places, beyond the (dead) body or imagined singular person (in a putatively Euro-American sense). My paper refracts such a perspective as I recollect my co-author's journeying to and from death, this being bound up with a time when I was working on a manuscript about Strathern's work in relation to its queer epistemological resonances. I seek to think with my co-other as I get to know him anew through our shared writing, after his death. Our work together points to the potential of grief as an epistemological framework, revealing new relational matrices across 'life and death worlds'. The interleaving of texts, contexts, losses and connections explored in the paper open out standpoints on the therapeutic potential of (queer) anthropology.

Antu Sorainen, *University of Helsinki*

On queer diaries, and the spiral histories of grief

My paper seeks to discuss the time and ethics of grieving through historical queer diaries. The presentation is based on two historical diaries – one by my teenage grand-aunt Nike from 1917-1922, and the other of her widow, Helmi from 1940-1942, after Nike died on the Winter War bombings. The teenage Nike writes about her protoqueer grief, in society that faces revolution and civil war while her inner desire gets no response (no categories, no community, no concepts). The 46-48yo old Helmi writes about her secret grief after her spouse suddenly dies, and there is no societal response, categories or concepts for her queer mourning. My analysis is about spiral history and memory: while I read these diaries, I noticed an entry about my 10 old father who returned as a “war kid” (many Finnish children were sent to ‘safe’ countries when Russia attacked Finland in 1939) from Denmark in 1940, and Helmi went to meet him in the harbour. Helmi writes about the child’s eyes filled with terror, and how my father (the child) would never meet his dear godmother Nike again. My father loved me, perhaps because of his love and loss of his queer godmother Nike, but he was also a person who often yelled. Personally, I have lived in many difficult lesbian relationships where unpredictability and yelling were not uncommon. When I read Nike’s and Helmi’s diaries, my spiral grief for Nike and Helmi, my father and my own relationship history meet: how is my grief historical, and how to deal with it as a researcher and a person. What makes my personal relationship history mine and only mine, and to which degree it never perhaps was personal or individual?

Olga Lidia Saavedra Montes de Oca, *Independent*

A portrait of grief

This paper is about memories and emotions related to the loss of a seemingly queer body. A portrait of grief through which I intend to reflect on the loss of my friend Pollito. A depiction of my own grieving process which in my opinion remained a queer grief. Here the Cuban family is the specific context in which the experience of grieving was and is still happening. And a trans body is the subject of grief. The aim is to analyse the ways in which a binary interpretation of the body affects grief. And is it changed by the new contexts of social media and of COVID 19?

Clara Sanzenbacher, *University of Vienna*

Separatist Mourning - Care Practices at a Lesbian Cemetery Project in Berlin

Drawing from fieldwork in November and December of 2024, this article examines the coping and sense-making strategies of death and grief by elderly (separatist) feminist lesbians in a lesbian cemetery project in Berlin, Germany. I introduce the case of “separatist mourning” into the discursive field of queer grief, manifesting in (care) practices of memory construction, collective commemoration, boundary making and archiving as collective mourning practices for deceased partners, friends and companions from the separatist lesbian movement in West-Germany dating back to the 1970s. The emergence of separatist mourning marks a recent development in the institutionalised collective practices of political lesbian separatism. Coping not only with the women’s individual aging but with the aging (and ostracisation) of a movement. Translating overarching lesbian separatist themes of decentring the patriarchy and heteronormativity, creating spaces for lesbian remembrance and inner-community visibility into their engagement with death and grief. The lesbian cemetery section as a separatist

project, created for those the organisers deem lesbians, excludes among others, heterosexual, bisexual women and trans lesbians, especially trans women. Separatist mourning practices, informed by lesbian (separatist) feminist politics (though not all self-identify as separatist feminists), form the lesbian cemetery project into a political and social hub and hotbed for (mostly elder) lesbians from the lesbian separatist feminist movement and social network in (West-)Germany and Berlin.

Panel 21: Mobilizing Repair and Hope in the making of Green Futures – Part 1

Anu Lounela, Michaela Haug

Anthropological studies of planetary transitions, green futures initiatives and environmental restoration efforts have become increasingly prominent in recent years, suggesting a shift in interest from suffering and damage to approaches that address issues of hope and future-making. Meanwhile, green futures initiatives - such as climate change mitigation, green energy promotion and environmental restoration - are increasingly understood as mobilising people and affecting more-than-human landscapes, connecting and disconnecting agents, landscapes and places across nations, producing intriguing similarities and differences, overlapping models and specific socio-material constellations. This panel examines mobilisations of hope, repair and green future (in the broadest sense) from an anthropological perspective, exploring how they are understood by different individual and collective actors, and what comparisons emerge. It asks how notions of repair, hope and particular futures are given meaning in complex environmental and political situations and conditions. Comparison provides a fruitful entry point for exploring different meanings and relations of repair and hope at different scales and in different places and landscapes. We welcome papers from any ethnographic context, although the panel organisers both work in a Bornean context. Papers might ask, for example, what it means to say that the environment is broken and in need of repair. How are different notions of hope and repair translated and transformed through different encounters? What kinds of politics can we find behind activities of repair and breakage? What values are defined as important for particular projects of green future-making?

Anu Lounela, *University of Helsinki*

Repairing wetlands and wetland living: Hopes and ruptures in Central Kalimantan

This paper explores the politics and promises of wetland restoration infrastructure and how they interact with repair as it is invested with hopes and meanings by local people. The 'politics of repair' here refers to the policies, plans and designs put forward by experts, state officials and politicians that shape the restoration infrastructure aimed at returning drained wetlands to their 'original state' within the framework of the green economy. It seeks to understand how these politics of repair interact with the ways in which local people invest meaning in repairing the environment and relational socio-material landscapes. Drawing on the anthropology of infrastructure and materiality as well as recent research on hope and repair, the paper asks what it means for local people to hope for a better life and environment when repair and resource projects simultaneously generate new sites of resource production and restoration, creating messy, overlapping and contested landscapes. Key questions include: Who defines environmental repair and brokenness at different scales? How do politics of repair articulate with local notions of repair produced through everyday life in drained wetlands? What does

hope mean to local people, particularly in the context of repairing a 'broken environment'?

Mira Kähkönen, *Australian National University*

Un/making futures: Rivers, ruination and lived realities of repair in Cambodia

This paper analyses the everyday struggles and attempts to restitch livelihoods amidst the damage wrought by extractive infrastructure projects, with the aim of highlighting the complex temporalities of ruination and repair at stake. The contribution draws on and seeks to bridge social infrastructure studies with the emerging political ecology of repair. The focus is on a community situated in the northeast of Cambodia, downstream of a cascade of dams in Vietnam and upstream of the Lower Sesan 2 (LS2) dam, the largest hydropower dam in Cambodia and a “display window project” of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative. Despite the seriously injurious effects of the LS2 project, the community was not considered eligible for compensation. The case offers an opportunity to expand attention from large-scale, top-down reparative interventions to more spontaneous, on-the-ground aspirations and efforts at recuperation. Findings from initial fieldwork indicate the surprising resourcefulness of affected people and local authorities in restoring livelihoods, for example through communal land arrangements. At the same time, these efforts at repair are currently threatened by new extractive infrastructure projects, partly enabled by the previous ones. This invites reflection on the temporalities implied in narratives of repair, which often unfold linearly. By analysing how people rebuild their lives not only in the aftermath of destruction but also amidst new forms of infrastructural violence, coupled with environmental volatilities co-produced by climate change and infrastructuring, the paper highlights the nonlinearity, partiality, and ongoing nature of the studied repair efforts.

Roosa Rytkönen, *University of Birmingham*

Contesting Repair: Expert Debate on Peatland Restoration in Estonia

Nature restoration is increasingly pursued as a solution to the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss in global environmental discourse. This paper addresses questions of green transitions and ecological repair through exploring contestations around peatland rewetting in Estonia. It focuses on a somewhat overlooked aspect: how restoration involves comparisons and contestations around the value of different ecosystems and their future changes. In Estonia, a large share of peatlands has historically been drained for the intensification of forestry. Consequently, scientific and public debates around restoration often pitch the prospective value of the peatland ecosystems to be rewetted against the value of existing forest ecosystems, which have developed since drainage. While the debate has been exacerbated by the economic significance and vested interests of the forest industry, it also involves deliberations around ecological value, especially as the vast majority of rewetting projects have taken place in protected areas, which are impacted by drainage but are not void of biodiversity. Climate arguments further complicate these controversies and are used to justify contradicting agendas. Drawing from interviews with experts of various backgrounds (peatland and forest ecologists, silviculturists, restoration practitioners), this paper tackles the different understandings of green transitions and future-making that peatland rewetting provokes. What “nature” needs repair? What does repair entail considering the uncertain outcomes of restoration over different timescales in a world shaped by climate crisis? To what extent are different experts entitled to make judgments about what is “best for nature”?

Semedi Pujo, *Universitas Gadjah Mada*

Water Buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*) and Rehabilitation of the ex-PL

The peat swamps along the alluvial basin of the Barito and Kahayan Rivers in Central Kalimantan are home to water buffalo, which farmers keep for their livelihoods. Detailed data on this has not been sufficiently collected. Still, the water buffalo (hadangan in the farmers' terms) potentially play a key role in maintaining the swamp ecosystem by eating grasses and plants that, if left unchecked, would turn the swamp into the land. A similar role can be witnessed in the rearing of cattle and sheep in Europe, which prevents the conversion of grasslands to forests. The next aspect to consider is the political ecology of buffalo husbandry in relation to the distribution of its ownership and access to foraging areas among farmers. With these two aspects in mind, this study explores the relationship between humans and livestock in swamp areas and the potential of this relationship in rehabilitating swamp areas damaged by the one-million-hectare rice fields project in Central Kalimantan.

Panel 26: Exploring activism for social and climate justice through digital, sensory, and hybrid ethnographies

Elisenda Ardèvol, Gemma San Cornelio, Ona Anglada, Sandra Martorell; *Universitat Oberta de Catalunya*

This panel explores social and environmental citizen-led activism through the lens of different ethnographic approaches and realities, focusing on how digital platforms and sensory experiences shape activists' commitment. Our discussion will cover a range of topics, from viral activism on digital platforms to the sensory experiences of the protesters. The comparative aim is twofold. On the one hand, we want to discuss how digital platforms affordances and sensory experiences shape collective action and engagement with climate, gender and democracy claims. On the other hand, by comparing methodological perspectives, we seek to enhance the toolkit for understanding activism in contemporary contexts.

Elisenda Ardèvol, Gemma San Cornelio, Ona Anglada, Sandra Martorell; *Universitat Oberta de Catalunya*

Viral Environmentalism: The dilemmas of eco-activism creators on TikTok

This paper presents ongoing research on environmental activism on TikTok, a platform widely used by young audiences for disseminating diverse content, including environmental activism. TikTok distinguishes itself from other social media platforms by facilitating and orienting creators' content towards specific formats (audio and video templates, trends, etc.), thereby creating a distinctive aesthetic. These cultural forms are replicated in ways that can be understood through viral (massive dissemination) and memetic logic (formal qualities and popular remix). While all social media platforms promote their own aesthetics, such as Instagram's square formats and filters, TikTok has been characterized by 'circumscribed creativity,' referring to the technological and creative limits imposed by the platform.

The study draws on a digital ethnographic approach, based on the following of 60 accounts local citizen-led environmental and climate activists and 12 in-depth interviews with content creators from Spain, Mexico, Brazil, and Panama. In our presentation, we will describe relevant characteristics of TikTok and compare them with other social media platforms like Instagram, from the perspective of the TikTokers. The interviewees highlight the tension between their creative expression and the constraints imposed by the platform, contrasting virality with community building. We argue that by adapting to TikTok's rules and engaging in viral and memetic dynamics, environmental activists are expanding the visual cultures of climate

change social movement. However, this adaptation raises critical questions about the sustainability of such viral driven activism, as it may risk prioritizing platform-driven trends over genuine community building and long-term impact."

Tuğba Şimşek, Istanbul, İstinye University

Viral Digital Activism on the Istanbul Convention: A Social Media Analysis of Ekşi Sözlük

"Ekşi Sözlük, a participatory internet dictionary and discussion platform, has been a significant player in shaping Turkish internet culture since 1999. While initially a dictionary, it has evolved into a platform for diverse discussions, often characterized by complex and ironic language. This study aims to examine how discussions surrounding the Istanbul Convention, a crucial treaty addressing violence against women, have unfolded on Ekşi Sözlük and its impact on Turkish digital public opinion. Social media campaigns have been instrumental in advancing women's rights in Turkey. The Istanbul Convention remains a highly debated topic within these campaigns. This research delves into the dynamics of digital activism centered around the hashtags #istanbulsozlesmesi, #istanbulsozlesmesiyasatir, and #istanbulsozlesmesiihanettir, with a particular focus on the reactions and discussions on platforms like Ekşi Sözlük. The study will employ both quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the spread of these hashtags, user interactions, and their political and social implications. Additionally, it will examine the target audience, discourse, and visual materials used in these campaigns to understand the role of digital activism in women's rights advocacy and the nature of counter-discourses. The study will draw on network theory to analyze the social network structure formed by hashtags, user interactions, and information dissemination patterns. It will investigate how information and opinions spread, memes are created, and communities polarize, particularly on platforms like Ekşi Sözlük. Theories like the STEPPS model and memetics will be used to explain the virality of hashtags and their dissemination. The study will also explore the emotional reactions, information dissemination, and decision-making processes of online communities on platforms like Ekşi Sözlük to understand how campaigns gain support or opposition. Framing theory will be employed to analyze the frames used in Ekşi Sözlük discussions related to the Istanbul Convention (e.g., women's rights, men's rights, state policies, freedoms) and their impact on public opinion. Additionally, theories like new social movements and the expansion of the political will be utilized to understand the role of social media in women's rights advocacy and the organization of opposing views. The research will address questions such as:

How have digital activism campaigns around the #istanbulsozlesmesi hashtag resonated on platforms like Ekşi Sözlük? What perspectives do Ekşi Sözlük users bring to these discussions? How do the discourses on the platform contribute to a counter-narrative against women's rights advocacy? What role have virality mechanisms on platforms like Ekşi Sözlük played in the spread of these campaigns and the strengthening of counter-discourses? Both quantitative and qualitative methods will be employed in this study. Quantitative methods, such as content analysis and social media text mining, will be used to collect and analyze relevant titles and comments from Ekşi Sözlük. Qualitative methods, such as in-depth content analysis, will be used to examine themes, language, and arguments within the platform's discussions. This research aims to provide a deeper understanding of how the Istanbul Convention debates have unfolded on social media platforms like Ekşi Sözlük, the impact of digital activism on these debates, and the nature of counter-discourses. The findings will contribute to the knowledge of civil society organizations, policymakers, academics, and those interested in internet

culture."

Majid Imani, *Tampere university*

A Hybrid Ethnography of Generation Z in Iran: Transforming the Society

The Woman Life Freedom movement in Iran provides a unique context to examine how traditional ethnographic methods can be expanded through sensory and digital approaches. Despite the harsh responses to their activism in offline spaces, Gen Z in Iran extends their resistance into digital realms, utilizing platforms such as TikTok, X and Instagram to amplify their voices. While the role of social media in supporting social movements is widely recognized, the methodological implications of capturing such digital phenomena for anthropological knowledge remain under explored. This paper explores the methodological gains achieved by incorporating digital method alongside classical participant observation in studying the socio-political transformation of Iranian society. It examines how digital platforms serve as spaces for identity experimentation and collective resistance in an oppressive environment, where the division between online and offline lives is highly significant. Drawing on fieldwork conducted in Iran, (2022- 2024), three online life story interviews, and digital ethnography of Gen Z content on TikTok, Instagram and X, this research applies thematic analysis to investigate the interplay between online activism and offline action. The paper further reflects on how visuals and interactive content—ranging from protest imagery to participatory hashtags—offers new sensory dimensions to ethnographic practice. It argues that digital ethnography enriches our understanding of contemporary social movement particularly in context where conventional ethnographic access is limited.

Alberto Gerosa Volonte, *Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK)*

Smells Like Tear Gas: a Sensory Ethnography of the Hong Kong 2019 Protest

Through one year of participant observation on and off the streets of Hong Kong, this paper creatively engages local activists to articulate their affects performatively. 2019, the first year of fieldwork focuses on the sensorial side of traumatic encounters with teargas and police violence, particularly its smell and how it has been used to affect the whole city through conflicts in almost each neighborhood. 2020-21, the second and third years of fieldwork eengage the memory of those traumas through focus groups and participatory scriptwriting sessions: as in a funnel structure, these memories are dug, addressed, and empowered. Ultimately the work recalls protesters' sensorial experiences, how they shaped their political stance, how to best unleash their propulsive potential for change. This work constituted the basis of my phd thesis, defended successfully in 2022, and is currently being transformed into two outputs. The first is the manuscript of a forthcoming publication, the second is a participatory sci-fi film providing an allegory of the protest.

Cody Skahan, *University of Oxford*

Geoengineering the Climate: Repair or Ruin?

Naming a wide set of technologies, different methods of "geoengineering" have been proposed as possible "solutions" to environmental issues. Because of the associations of "geoengineering" with chemtrails or other conspiracies, the legacy of experiments with ocean alkalinity enhancement, and techno-fix "control" scenarios, alternative terms such as climate repair or intervention have been coined. Used by youth activists and Cambridge researchers alike, repair and intervention mobilize different views of the environment and assert certain normative claims about what a healthy or stable climate should look like. In their conversation

about geoengineering, the sociologist Holly Jean Buck and Indigenous scholar Kyle Powys Whyte, on the other hand, are extremely critical of these normative claims, pointing out that conceptions of stability and hopeful futurity are actually dystopias for some Indigenous Peoples. The emergence of geoengineering as a proposed solution also suggests the possibility of humans tuning the environment according to their own desires, or for the flourishing of other more-than-humans, causing new opportunities for hope at the same time as new reasons to fear. Drawing on fieldwork in Iceland and conversations/interviews with others, I explore the different visions for the future and hopes of activists in the Arctic when it comes to geoengineering, influenced by their cultural contexts and conceptions of the environment. However, that does not mean that these groups are antagonistic to one another, and so I seek to draw out the hopeful possibilities for collaboration or collective action despite enduring differences, inspirations, and understandings of justice.

Panel 28: In-between: Identity, Mobility, and Belonging

Olga Cielemecka, University of Eastern Finland

This panel explores identity, mobility, and belonging within the complex landscapes of migration, border regimes, and cultural plurality. It critically examines the affective and socio-political dimensions of belonging across various migration settings, from Turkish communities in Finland to refugee resettlement in Norway and school dynamics in Chile. The panel also interrogates how borderland environments are weaponized for anti-migrant politics and Muslim women's experiences in Europe. Together, these contributions highlight how migration and inclusion/exclusion reshape individual and collective identities and ways of making oneself at home in the world.

Olga Cielemecka, University of Eastern Finland

Bordering natures and forest doubles.

Weaponization of natural environment for anti-migrant politics in the Polish-Belarusian border crisis. Polish filmmaker Szymon Ruczynski's animated short 'There are people in the forest' takes viewers to the Polish-Belarusian borderland to speak of the ongoing humanitarian crisis that transpired in 2021 when groups of migrants and asylum seekers clandestinely traversed the area on their route to Europe. The camera zooms out revealing a dense and ample wilderness area and, between the trees, hidden in the thicket are people on the move – walking, hiding, shivering from cold, getting into cars, being pushed-back. This paper focuses on the doubling of the borderland space – on the one hand, we have a border-adjacent heritage forest that serves as a biodiversity hub and a significant wildlife corridor and is protected under national and European nature protection schemes. On the other, it is also a securitized hostile environment whose natural features have been weaponized against border transgressors (De Léon 2015; Czerny et al. 2022; Hameršak and Pleše 2021). In contrast to how the heritage forest is curated to provide nature experiences for visitors and nature enthusiasts, managing wildness as a tool for anti-migrant politics produces a vastly different effect within the same place. When principles of nature conservation and border management goals are at odds with each other, what (which bodies, mobilities and ecologies) is being granted protection? Teasing out the themes of doubling, contrasting and comparing, this paper analyses the process in which the functions and forms of the natural environment are 'doubled'

to produce a technology of bordering out deportable others.

Ali Bedir, *Mardin Artuklu University*

Finnish Turks

This study focuses on the Turkish community in Finland. The Turkish community in Finland is a community with a relatively small Turkish population within Europe and compared to other neighbouring countries. In the context of Benedict Anderson's concept of 'distant nationalism', this study seeks to answer the questions of how this community interacts with each other and with Finnish society, what activities and tactics they use to overcome their homesickness (Turkey), and how much of their daily life is constituted by being or remaining Turkish through in-depth interviews with 8 male and 7 female Turkish participants. Through a socio-cultural lens, it examines how Turkish immigrants and their descendants reconcile their sense of belonging, heritage and cultural practices within the Finnish social framework. The research highlights the challenges of preserving Turkish identity while adapting to Finnish social norms, including language, traditions and values. It also explores the intergenerational dynamics that shape identity, such as the role of family, community and external societal perceptions. The findings highlight the fluidity and hybridity of identity, showing how individuals create a unique sense of self that bridges two cultural landscapes. Ultimately, this paper contributes to broader debates about migration, multiculturalism and the evolving nature of ethnic identity in transnational contexts.

Andrea Cortes, *The University of O'Higgins*

School coexistence with migrant children in Chile: hierarchies and identities

How do Chilean children and migrant children live together in a border region in northern Chile? How do migration and the arrival of migrant children in Chilean schools shape Chilean identities? These are some of the key questions addressed in this paper. This ethnographic study examines Iquique, a city in northern Chile, and sheds light on the complex, contradictory, and evolving ways teachers and children construct national identifications and forms of belonging. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork, this study explores how teachers and school staff constituted and mobilized "national values"—Chileanness—and how these were connected to a local identity in northern Chile. I argue that both local and national identities are intertwined and rooted in the country's colonial heritage, playing a central role in the everyday construction of difference. The paper highlights that my participants' local identity, a potent yet contested concept, combines shared but conflicting meanings. It is deeply tied to a sense of belonging to the local territory, which provides my participants with a unique perspective for understanding and framing migration and difference. In this regard, my participants relate to migrants through comparisons, hierarchies, and distinctions. Often, the presence of children from diverse cultural backgrounds prompts them to emphasize their differences, while at other times, they seek points of connection rooted in a shared mestizo identity.

Astrid Espegren, *NTNU*

The Spiral of Refugeehood: Examining Resettlement to Norway as a Durable Solution

Selection for resettlement, a privilege afforded to only a small fraction of refugees in need of a durable solution, does not necessarily end their vulnerability. This study examines the resettlement journey through interviews with public officials who interact with refugees both pre- and post-resettlement. From selection procedures to integration policies, resettlement

refugees face numerous obstacles that hinder their path to stability and inclusion. The resettlement process offers limited legal protection and involves multiple actors, leaving refugees in a precarious position. Once resettled, they encounter increasingly stringent requirements for permanent residency within a fragmented and complex bureaucratic system. These challenges are particularly pronounced for refugees with limited formal education, whose pre-resettlement experiences continue to shape their lives post-relocation. Our findings highlight the complexity of resettlement as a durable solution, especially for individuals unable to meet the demands of national integration and naturalization legislation. While refugeehood is often framed as a recurring cycle, we propose the concept of a "refugee spiral" to capture the persistent precarity that remains despite changes in context. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of refugee resettlement and national integration schemes. It emphasizes the need for policies and support structures that address the inherent challenges of the resettlement journey, ensuring that refugees have a real opportunity to achieve stability and inclusion in their host societies.

Reyhane-sadat Gerami, *University of Tehran*

An investigation on identity challenges Faced by Muslim women immigrants in Europe

The growing Muslim diaspora in European countries, within a predominantly secular context, and the emergence of various conflicts and challenges as a result of Muslims' presence in these countries have sparked significant concerns in the field of social sciences. Concurrently, the process of self-identification among Muslim immigrant women in Europe, as well as the potential challenges they face regarding their religious identity, are crucial issues to address. Numerous studies have been conducted on this topic. This study employs a qualitative meta-analysis approach to examine research conducted between 2010 and 2023 on the religious identity challenges of Muslim women in the diaspora in Europe. Six religious identity challenges were identified, encompassing the host society's negative attitudes and behaviors, the imposition of specific lifestyles on Muslim women, the uneven progression of Muslim immigrant women, intra-community scrutiny and prejudice, the clash between Islamic and European lifestyles, and the experience of double marginalization. In response to these challenges, Muslim women have adopted four key strategies: personalizing their religious identity, engaging in membership and participation within Islamic centers, embracing multidimensional and flexible identities, and endorsing a discourse of pure Islam. Indeed, this study demonstrates that Muslim immigrant women in European societies confront mutual pressures from both the host and their own communities, and they try to manage these pressures and achieve a sense of balance in their everyday lives by employing a variety of strategies.

Film

Wednesday 14:00-15:30

Arkadaşloç - Nobody's Problem

78mins, 2023, Nilay Kılınç - Studium 1 (F3020)

A multi-award-winning documentary tracing the story of Özi, a Turkish-Kurdish-Alevi “migrant” who was deported from Germany to Turkey. The documentary portrays his self-transformation from being the poster child of failed integration to becoming a family-oriented business owner in the tourist city of Antalya. Based on social anthropologist Nilay Kılınç’s doctoral research, the documentary provides an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon of ‘return’ migration and its more extreme form, deportation, with a particular focus on second-generation Turkish-German migrants.

Panel details

Panel 1: Cross-disciplinary comparison and the shaping of anthropological knowledge – Part 2

Raluca-Bianca Roman, Jonathan Lanman

Interdisciplinarity and cross-disciplinarity have become buzzwords both within academic institutions and among stakeholders, from universities struggling with public or private funding to grant organisations supporting research projects within the humanities and social sciences. Yet, numerous barriers keep anthropologists from engaging with other disciplines, including the policing of disciplinary boundaries, internal disciplinary debates, and epistemological and methodological disagreements concerning the creation of anthropological “knowledge.” This panel intends to provoke a rethinking of the value of comparison, beyond the “subject” of anthropological knowledge and to the discipline itself. We invite submissions from a range of scholars, including but not limited to anthropologists who work in inter-disciplinary departments or engage with methods that cross disciplinary boundaries, social scientists who approach comparison anthropologically, and researchers conducting cross-disciplinary studies of anthropological themes. To this end, we welcome proposals about the benefits and challenges of interdisciplinary exchange and collaboration that takes both disciplinary comparison (e.g. goals, methods, ethics and outputs) and the potential benefits of interdisciplinary collaboration seriously. What is the contribution of anthropological knowledge in an ever-increasing cross disciplinary environment (or discourse)? What can anthropology gain by entering into a conversation with human, social and physical sciences? How might such disciplinary comparison improve our efforts at anthropological comparison? What, ultimately, is the future of comparative thinking in anthropology?

Anna Hollis, *Queen's University Belfast*

Interpreting Emotions: AI and Autism through an Interdisciplinary Lens

Interdisciplinary comparison for early-career researchers poses both challenges and opportunities for anthropological knowledge. Differences in epistemological paradigms,

methodological approaches, and ethical frameworks often reveal tensions that shape the ways in which research is conceptualised, conducted and accepted by the wider academic field. This paper addresses these issues through the lens of my PhD research, which examines how artificial intelligence interprets emotions in conversational chatbots interacting with autistic adults. Truly interdisciplinary in nature – as my research straddles both anthropology and psychology – this project has highlighted the nuances of cross-discipline research of two fields with seemingly complimentary yet distinct perspectives on emotion, cognition and technology. By employing a mixed-methods approach—combining quantitative analysis of interactions in lab-based settings with ethnographic encounters exploring the lived experiences of autistic adults—I investigate how emotional (mis)understandings, whether with humans or AI, impact their worldviews and daily lives. In straddling the discourse of both disciplines, my work grapples with significant questions: how can I balance pluralistic and individualistic perspectives in representing autistic participants? Should I adopt a medical model of disability (prevalent in psychological research) or a social model (as most commonly championed seen in anthropology)? And how can I responsibly navigate disciplinary tensions while ensuring my findings remain accessible and meaningful across fields? My approach to these epistemological dilemmas is often to explicitly define my research paradigms, however this does not altogether stop cross-disciplinary comparison. I argue that these tensions, while challenging, offer valuable opportunities to rethink the creation of both anthropological and psychological knowledge of emerging technologies and phenomena.

Anca Enache/Aino Saarinen, *University of Helsinki*

Reflections on Collaborations Across Disciplinary and Life Boundaries

The focus of this paper is a feminist research process aimed to produce knowledge through the cooperation between migrant Roma women participants, a political scientist and an anthropologist. The project “In Our Own Voices” combined narratives and fieldwork-based photography to approach the motivations, struggles, violences, resistance, friendships and alliances in the lives of diverse Roma migrant women. The paper will provide reflexive accounts on our collaboration across disciplines, and how comparison (s) shaped our methodology, our interactions and discussions and therefore the new insights and knowledge. The paper speaks to the possibility of cross-disciplinary collaborative practices as means of political acts, and of recognizing and making visible the interactions and intersubjective relationships embedded in research. Collaborative practices across disciplinary and life boundaries influence the texture of research relationships, and therefore the knowledge produced about social life.

Raluca Roman, *Queen's University Belfast*

Comparing methods and (hi)stories of Roma mobilisation in Finland and Romania

Based on long-term fieldwork among Roma in Finland and Romania and combined with subsequent archival research on Roma mobilisation in the two countries, this paper explores the ways in which understanding historical comparison is a necessary pathway in understanding the process of shaping particular visions of the past, present and future of marginalised communities. By exploring archival material concerning the discourse of early 20th-century Roma activism in the two countries, alongside its present-day manifestations, this paper highlights the necessity to re-think history (and the historical method) as both constructive and constructed, embedded within the larger framework of the national, political and social contexts that produced it. Furthermore, far from being artefacts or repositories of

ultimate truths, archival stories (letters, periodicals, manifestos) are not only shaped by their own context but illustrate specific visions of the future within Roma communities, and thus enable us to think of the value of comparison, beyond disciplinary boundaries. The key argument of this paper is that looking at the comparative method, beyond anthropology, creates a new pathway through which one can understand concepts such as 'nationalism', 'activism' and 'temporality', while placing them in a geo-political and historical framework. Moreover, historical traces (and the lessons of history) provide important sources for anthropologists' understanding of the experience of present-day fieldwork while, at the same time, their absences and silences are revelatory in the stories it left behind. Finally, this paper will also highlight the necessity for opening anthropological practice, methods and thinking to an inter-disciplinary realm, wherein the lessons of archival research are crucial in the shaping of anthropological knowledge.

Panel 8: Collaborative Ethnography, Power, and Imagination

Maarit Forde, Amílcar Sanatan

Collaborative ethnographic methods may help to balance power relations between anthropologists and their interlocutors, as decisions about research design, methods, analysis, and publication can be made together. Ethical collaboration has become a catchphrase in recent efforts to decolonise our disciplinary practice, but developing meaningful and truly ethical, mutually beneficial collaborative approaches to anthropological fieldwork and publishing is seldom a straightforward process. When successful, the shared labour and careful listening of collaborative work can widen our ethnographic imaginations and lead to unexplored possibilities. This panel contributes to ongoing discussions about collaborative ethnography (for example Fuh 2019; Jarillo et al. 2020; Kalinga 2019; The Fire and River Collective 2021). We welcome papers and multimodal presentations on collaborative projects and more or less successful experiments with collaborative methods, both during and after fieldwork. These may include arts-based and multimodal ways of working together - for example by making music, performance ethnography, or photovoice - or various forms of co-research with more conventional social scientific methods. We are particularly interested in South-South collaborations, where anthropologists living and working in different societies in the Global South explore and create methodology for working together; but we are happy to include presentations on other contexts and regions as well. While the theoretical and methodological approaches of the presentations may vary, we'd encourage all contributors to critically consider the ethical, feminist, or decolonizing potential of ethnographic collaboration.

Florence Ncube, *University of Helsinki*

Everyday Ethnographic Praxis in the Urban Margins: A Case Study of Mufakose

This paper explores the everyday practices and experiences of township vendors plying their trade in Harare's CBD. Drawing on ideas of chambered knowledge, I examine the practices and meanings associated with the vendors' experience of living in dire straits. This helps us understand how subaltern knowledge is central to the production of fieldwork evidence through collaborative research with the vendors as community ethnographers. I analyse the convergences and tensions between utilising the situated interlocutors and conventional fieldwork 'best practices' as sources of knowledge. I argue that community ethnographers

inadvertently produce credible experiential, methodological and theoretical insights and evidence to academic research. The paper concludes that achieving intersubjectivity and fostering the productive fluidity of power relations between the researcher and community ethnographers are fundamental tropes of collaborative ethnography. This paper is drawn from five months' ethnographic fieldwork in Harare's Mufakose and Western Triangle townships and Harare's CBD. I used deep hang outs, in-depth interviews, life histories, focus group discussions, photovoice, and enviro-video voice methods to collect data. Analysis of data draws on insights from Irlbeck's chambered knowledge.

Amílcar Sanatan, *University of Helsinki*

Anthro-Poetry: Decolonial Art and Community-based Ethnography in Urban Trinidad

Spoken word is a literary and performance art form rooted in Caribbean oral traditions and poetics. Decolonial frameworks in anthropological research aim to disrupt, subvert, challenge, and transform historical and contiguous power inequalities. Through ethnographic fieldwork, researchers confront unequal social relations in communities as well as contend with the epistemic limitations of the discipline of anthropology itself. In this paper, I discuss the complexity of representation and affective relationships in urban yard spaces based on a community-organised spoken word initiative in East Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. Additionally, the paper explores the pedagogical opportunities and challenges related to ethnographic poetry and representations of 'voice' to describe marginalised spaces in urban Trinidad and spoken word.

Petra Autio, *The Finnish Roma Association*

"Nothing about Us without Us": Collaboration in a Survey on Elderly Finnish Roma

The principle "Nothing about Us without Us", originating from the context of disabilities, is often used also by Roma activists to refer to the necessary Roma participation in policy making and knowledge production. In this paper I discuss a survey on the service needs of elderly Roma, done in the Finnish Roma Association by one non-Roma together with two Roma workers. I begin by describing the historical and socio-economic context as well as power relations regarding Roma in Finland, which have influenced the way many Roma view studies and research on them. I introduce the work done by the Finnish Roma Association and the context of the survey. I then describe the survey and the co-operation. I discuss the ethical justifications and implications of the collaboration in the different stages of the study, from planning to publication. I aim to critically examine to what extent does the Roma-non-Roma collaboration succeed in deconstructing power relations. While not academic ethnographic research, the implementation of the study is an example of how the "nothing about us without us" idea can benefit research both from an ethical and a practical point of view. However, it is equally important to consider the shortcomings, and how the collaboration could be improved in future studies and research. In so doing, this paper hopes to participate in the discussion about collaborative ethnography as well as the ongoing discussion about ethical guidelines for research on Roma in Finland.

Katie McQuaid, *University of Leeds*

Trans Superheroes: Collaborative Ethnography Towards Disaster Justice

This paper reflects on our recent project 'Trans Superhero Perubahan Iklim' (Transgender Superheroes for Climate) in Jakarta, Indonesia. It draws on comics, a boardgame, fashion, social activism and collaborative ethnography to critically reflect on how we work with artists,

communities, activists and practitioners to better understand the gender–age–urban interface of climate change. It critically explores our approach to combining ethnographic and applied arts methodologies in co-designing strategies for building more inclusive and climate-resilient cities. This work calls for new approaches through which (climate) researchers can better take on systemic injustice and (gendered) power structures, name and challenge how power operates to other and exclude people from climate action (and knowledge production), and nurture new inclusive possibilities for embracing a plurality of epistemologies, embodied diversities, collectivity and counter colonialism in our collaborative ethnography.

Panel 9: Compensation and repair: Comparison and the measuring of incommensurable wrongs – Part 2

Katja Uusihakala, Saana Hansen, Hanna Rask

This panel examines comparison of the incommensurable in political processes of repair and reconciliation. To ameliorate historical injustices, reconciliation efforts often employ a combination of symbolic means and reparative practices, including public apologies, truth commissions and monetary compensation, thereby enhancing their effects. Financial compensations may further function as publicly documented reminders of the wrong and its attempted redress, operating as instruments of collective memory. Yet, the commensuration of things of a different order remains morally fraught, particularly when it comes to commodification of objects perceived as invaluable and incommensurable (Maurer 2006). However, even when both victims and representatives of institutions or states issuing retributions may share an understanding that money can never be commensurable with harms suffered, it is still sought by victims and offered as potent remedy offering validation and vindication in the aftermath of wrongs. What criteria then are used in such comparisons? Which forms of suffering and loss are measured and monetized and which are left silenced? Which entities are considered eligible for compensation and what are their impacts on social change? This panel calls for scholars to explore the paradox of incommensurability in reparative politics. We invite papers that examine instances where the incommensurability and irreplaceability of the wrong with money are powerfully underscored – for example, children's forced removals from their families in the name of postcolonial modernization or colonial assimilation, appropriations of land, environmental injustices, such as toxic exposures or resource extraction, systemic harm, and human rights offences.

Victoria Klinkert, *St Gallen/Sussex*

The political economy of reparative justice – The case of the Brattle Report

Transatlantic chattel slavery (TCS), the plantation and colonial extractivism ushered in a new world order. As the birthplace of racial capitalism (Robinson, Wynter), they are responsible for a global legacy of a deeply oppressive intersectional racialised inequality; which continues to be lived materially, physically, psychologically and spiritually. Having long been classified as a crime against humanity, it is only in recent years that CARICOM's 10-point reparation plan has catalysed the UN and the ICJ to speak out in favour for reparations for TCS. As part of this drive, the Brattle Group's Report on Reparations for TCS (2023), provided an in-depth analysis of quantifiable and non-quantifiable harms of the period of enslavement as well as the post-enslavement period, quantifying reparations compensation at US\$ 100 trillion - US\$ 131 trillion. In this presentation I will analyse the report and its findings in an attempt to explore some fundamental questions pertaining to the political economy of reparative justice. How do

we tackle the deep paradoxes of the incommensurability of slavery? Is it possible to reckon with crimes against humanity in a quantifiable way? How do we salvage the Human (Wynter)? And, how do we address past wrongs within a system that it has created?

Alessia Filippo, *Universität Bayreuth*

Repair or Perpetuation? Challenges of Monetary Compensation in Historical Wrongs

In the ongoing process of reconciliation in Australia, truth-telling commissions such as the Yoorrook Justice Commission in Victoria offer hope for advancing Aboriginal rights and ensuring their representation in social and political discussions. However, events such as the outcome of the 2023 Australian Indigenous Voice referendum and the accompanying societal sentiment demonstrate that retributions often serve as one of the few immediate remedies available for repair. Yet, what happens when monetary compensation itself is called into question? Drawing on my ethnographic research in the social community of Horsham, Victoria, I argue that reparative practices, such as monetary compensation provided to individual Aboriginal people and/or Aboriginal organisations, complicate efforts to counter racism while perpetuating persistent misunderstandings about the needs and contributions of First Nations communities among the non-Indigenous population. Rather than being recognised as a form of material restitution that acknowledges injustice and attempts to address it, financial compensation frequently provokes contention among non-Indigenous citizens over who funds these measures and who is deemed eligible to receive them. This dynamic reinforces the perception of Aboriginal Australians and non-Aboriginal Australians as polarised identities, deepening divisions over questions of identity and entitlement. This research highlights the complexity of reparative discussions. It demonstrates that monetary compensation is not only insufficient to repair historical wrongs but also risks creating new forms of financial dependency that fail to directly improve the well-being of Aboriginal communities or meaningfully address the injustices of the past.

Hanna Rask, *University of Helsinki*

Compensation, systemic reform and timing of redress

This paper focuses on temporal dimensions of two different forms of reparation - namely compensation and systemic reform – in the context of an ongoing systemic harm intertwined with an earlier history of systemic violations targeted at Indigenous kin relations by settler colonial state. The paper examines the case of a human rights complaint filed by two First Nation organizations against the Government of Canada in 2007 for discrimination of First Nation children in the child welfare system. In its initial ruling on the case in 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found the underfunding of preventive child welfare services on reserves to contribute to disproportionate removals of First Nation children from their homes and communities. In following rulings, the Tribunal ordered the government to implement a systemic reform of its funding framework. In 2019, it further ordered the government to financially compensate children removed from their homes or left without essential services as a result of the said discrimination, as well as caregivers of such children. Looking at arguments of the different parties of the case regarding this compensation order, the paper explores the significance of timing and temporality in debates over acceptable redress for such incommensurable wrongs. The government sought to have the compensation order overturned on the grounds that no individual compensation could be paid for systemic harm without assessing its individual impact. The claimants, however, argued that – while important and valuable for coming generations – the future systemic reform alone would not

provide redress for those already impacted by the discriminatory funding policy. These debates, I suggest, thus offer a case for interrogating temporal limitations and possibilities of different forms of reparation in addressing long-term systemic harms of ongoing nature.

Katja Uusihakala, *University of Helsinki*

Compensation and the measuring of harm in processes of repair and reconciliation for children's forced migration

This paper examines the measuring of harm and loss in postcolonial processes of repair and reconciliation for children's forced displacement. The ethnographic cases examined concern postwar child migration schemes, which emigrated white British children to Southern Rhodesia and Australia between 1946 and 1970. Targeting contemporary redress schemes related to these migration projects, the paper asks how invaluable things, such as children's displacement, are compensated and monetized: how is money used as the medium for calculating suffering caused by the harm? Commensuration of things of different order is morally fraught particularly when it comes to commodification and calculation of "invaluable" objects, such as children. However, while both victims and state representatives offering retributions often agree that money can never compensate for what was lost, money is still sought by victims and offered as a potent remedy for such wrongs. Examining this paradox, and the social effects of money in reconciliation, the paper examines the significance of compensations as publicly documented recognitions and reminders of historical wrongs, and thus as instruments for collective memory. Importantly, the paper also draws attention to the flip side of compensation in politics of repair: its refusal and irreconciliation. Compensation may be viewed as a token indicating the victim's agreement to closure and moving on, while the effects of the harm or of structural inequalities endure. Money might be rejected for its insufficiency to correct the harm as well as for its palliative and silencing political effect, which emphasizes the restitution's potential to hurt rather than heal.

Panel 11: Ethnography of importance? Studying 'minor matters' in times of destruction – Part 2

Tiina Järvi, **Dalia Zein**

The past years have been framed by excessive atrocities and life-altering destruction. The genocidal violence in Gaza, the extensive bombardment of Lebanon, and the widespread attacks against civilians in Sudan are but a few of many events of political violence. Many of these also have consequences on the environment and thus can intersect with climate-related humanitarian disasters, such as the forest fires in southern Lebanon caused by Israel's use of white phosphorous. When a place unravelling in such destruction is one's fieldsite, the consequences are manifold. It can inhibit the practice of ethnography and cause emotional distress but also on an epistemological and political level it can raise comparisons on what type of knowledge is deemed relevant. For ethnographers working in the field, a radical change in the conditions on the ground might create self-doubt. Is it okay to continue exploring the small everyday matters when there are bigger, seemingly timelier and more relevant, forces at play? How does the violent zeitgeist define what is deemed 'research-worthy'? How do we, as ethnographers, react to the events unfolding? How does it direct our research interests? And how do we as researchers make sense – to ourselves, to the field, and to the discipline – of the relevance of persisting in studying the 'minor matters'? In the frame of the above-mentioned considerations, we hope to initiate a conversation on where the boundary lies between adapting to the ever-changing situation and accepting research as an inherently

long-term practice. Is there an ethnography of importance at play?

Anonymous presenters

Ethnographic Refusal in Violence-Driven Representations of Russian Indigenous

In light of the ongoing Russian war in Ukraine and disproportionate conscription of Indigenous peoples of Russia (Vyushkova and Sherkhonov 2023), activists of various marginalised backgrounds have started framing their grievances against Russian coloniality and long-standing oppression (Namzhil and Tuktash 2024). Consequently, Indigenous peoples of Russia were caught under the spotlight from numerous journalistic, media and academic inquiries. However necessary and welcomed some of the inquiries are, this paper would like to ask a critical question: what other knowledge about Indigenous peoples of Russia is being produced at the given moment? How much of what we know about the Indigenous peoples of Russia is what sells in the Western academia (e.g., conflation of Buddhism and Shamanism of Buriads or Paganism and Christianity of Udmurts)? Does it add to the epistemic injustice in forms of extractivistic ethnographic practices, who decides which matters are 'major' or 'minor' and who benefits from the knowledge produced? As Indigenous researchers, we would like to explore the ethical and methodological challenges of studying marginalised groups in the moments of conflict by employing decolonial thinking and reflecting on our experience of doing participant-action research. Additionally, we propose to look into Audra Simpson's concept of "ethnographic refusal" (2007) to scrutinize our own experience and positionality to elicit considerations of ethical and political risks related to such type of studies, both for the communities as well as for the researchers. Namzhil, K., & Tuktash, A. (2024). Defining Inclusivity, Defying Ethnonationalism: Empirical Study of Decolonial Activism Among (Non) Russian Anti-War Initiatives. *Russian Imperialism and Decolonisation*, 22(319), 6. Simpson, A. (2007). On ethnographic refusal: Indigeneity, 'voice' and colonial citizenship. *Junctures: the journal for thematic dialogue*, (9). Vyushkova, M., & Sherkhonov, E. (2023). Russia's Ethnic Minority Casualties of the 2022 Invasion of Ukraine. *Inner Asia*.

Antonina Kizlova, Igor Sikorsky; *National Technical University of Ukraine, Kyiv Polytechnic Inst.*

"Minor" Historical Studies: the Autoethnographic Perspective from Wartime Ukraine

In times of war, the role of historical research and documentation becomes both challenging and crucial. The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine that began on February 24, 2022, has not only brought unprecedented destruction and human suffering but has also created a complex environment for scholars studying history. Historical sites, archives, and cultural institutions face systematic destruction, while researchers themselves often become both observers and participants in historical events they study. The aim of this autoethnographic paper is to reflect upon the personal and professional experiences of conducting historical research in Ukraine during the full-scale Russian invasion, examining the intersections between scholarly work and lived experience of war, while considering the importance of studying seemingly «minor» historical topics during the resistance against an aggressor state. The study reveals several key findings about conducting historical research during wartime: the practical challenges of accessing archives and historical sites are compounded by the emotional toll of witnessing the destruction of cultural heritage; researchers face internal conflicts between focusing on immediate war documentation versus the other historical projects, so it is crucial to maintain a balance between emotional engagement and methodological rigor when approaching specific research themes; studying «minor» historical topics can serve as an act of resistance against attempts to erase Ukrainian history and culture.

It's possible to argue that maintaining diverse historical research during wartime contributes to cultural resilience and preservation of national memory and identity. These findings can guide the development of strategies for protecting historical research under extreme circumstances.

Kathryn Cassidy; Svitlana Odyne; *Northumbria University*

Alter-geopolitical Lives after the 2022 Russian Invasion of Ukraine

The displacement of people from Ukraine since February 2022 prompted supportive responses from communities across Europe, who sought to secure the lives of those fleeing. In this paper, based on ethnographic fieldwork carried out in Romania, Poland and the UK between April 2023 and December 2024, we argue the importance of geopolitical analyses of the displacement from Ukraine that centre everyday life and, thus, provide alternative accounts of securitisation that situate the role of the state within the work going on in communities. For us, an alter-geopolitical approach attunes us to how people are coming together to create securities in everyday life, focusing on 'peace(s) across places, including the place of the body' (Koopman, 2011: 275). Alter-geopolitical acts that involve keeping even one body safe are attempts to 'build alternative, non-violent securities' (ibid: 277). 'Alter-geopolitics does not work to keep 'us' safe by keeping 'them' out, but rather works to keep a larger us safe by building connections with former them' [...]not just to stay alive and be safe, but to live well, to live with dignity and justice' (ibid: 280). Therefore, in adopting such an approach, we need to research 'from all sides' at the same time as questioning the established systems of knowledge and discursive violence inherent in the production of knowledge (Jaggar and Bordo, 1992). The conceptualisation challenges not only the material (economic and military) power of states and global institutions but also representations imposed by elites and creates lived alternatives (Routledge, 2019).

Panel 15: Interdisciplinary approach to the study of queering grief

Elina Einiö, Antu Sorainen

The panel focuses on how Big Data meets a tiny story: Interdisciplinary approach to the study of queering family relations and grief (e.g., death/divorce). The proposed interdisciplinary panel discussion is chaired by Elina Einiö (Faculty of Social Sciences: Demography, earlier work on the demography of parenthood, divorce, and widowhood and their interconnections with well-being and health (proposed ERC field: Life Science) and Antu Sorainen (Faculty of Arts: Gender Studies, earlier work on legal history, queer kinship, and queer grief). We look to include papers e.g. - but not inclusive - on: - Gendered lives of same-Sex couples and their children - Queering family relations and its consequences for health and well-being. This focus will integrate the best methodological practices and theoretical perspectives from both demography and gender studies to better understand changing family relations and grief e.g., medical and societal consequences of spousal death and divorce in queer kinships over time.

Noy Katsman, Chen Misgav

Queer-Feminist Spaces of Failure: Israelis and Palestinians Facing the Ethno-Nat

This paper aims to explore the ethnonational grief of Israeli and Palestinian queer and trans activists, trying to overcome the bloody and protracted conflict by creating a new, queer, and feminist space of solidarity and care. The ethnography of a queer feminine self-organized

community in Israel/Palestine named “Mitkansot” (gathering together in Hebrew) is based on autoethnography as a group participant (the first author), depth interviews, and discourse analysis of the community’s documents. Radical fairies and similar groups in Europe inspired the group foundation and activism, together with local issues important to its participants. The group was founded with a radical utopian vision, while the spaces of gathering and activism were intended to transcend Israeli nationality and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, the consistent presence of the national body, particularly after the 7th of October, emphasized the failure to contain both the Israeli national grief and queer radical space, followed by the leaving of Palestinian participants, which their grief wasn’t recognized. The research highlights the importance of local characteristics in political work and the difficulties unique to the Israel/Palestine area, specifically in bi-national shared spaces. We propose interpreting the gap between the vision and the reality as a “queer failure” (Halberstam, 2011), highlighting the strength of local social and national structures, rendering the failure inevitable.

Antu Sorainen, *University of Helsinki*

Qualitative queer research on grief, relationships and ageing

The 2024 Family Barometer by the Finnish Population Research Association Väestöliitto focused on relationships. It catered also for the ageing population, up to 79 years old. According to the Barometer, about every tenth of +60yo women do not want a couple relationship and regards non-couplehood relationship situation as best for themselves. At the same time, only 3 % of the men of the same age cohort agrees with this. More than every 3rd of the +60yo women live outside or without a couple form because the last relationship ended with the partner’s death. At the same time, most men die in the wedlock while most women die widowers. Väestöliitto does not bring queer aspects to this Barometer outcome. Based on my own multi-method study on queer inheritance and kinship, my paper seeks to discuss whether we needed separate qualitative research on queer relationships to create more accurate understanding of the ageing people’s relationships, or whether we should seek to reform such quantitative questionnaires, and if so, how? This question is central for our understandings of the scale and implications of queer grieving in society and on the individual level. How could we gather and analyse more accurate information of the relationships and grief in the +60yo queer population? On what kind of ideas and categories is our understanding and research on ‘population’ based? I would like to discuss in which ways the population science and qualitative research could genuinely meet in studying queer lives, and how to meet the question of what matters (what do we think or believe is ‘population’, and how come).

Richard Rawlings, *Northumbria University*

The Stubborn Vitality of Queer Grief

Queerness resists assumptions that impoverish marginal lives, such as opposite-sex monogamous marriage and child-rearing. Historically, the HIV crisis has resisted the reductive understanding of grief following death. By resisting the silencing of non-normative grief (such as the 1985 AIDS Activist slogan ‘Silence = Death’), some necessary queer mobilisations of loss support future livelihoods (such as increased access to antiretroviral therapies). I hope to discuss the above provocation via autoethnography, television, and incidental comments from participants in two doctoral studies. Via autoethnography, I question firstly how my memory of two distinct cancer deaths might queer normative categories of gender, death, activism, and cancer. Via fleeting yet intimate gay encounters, I then consider the importance of

mis/remembered, impactful and ‘weak’ social ties. Via television’s portrayals of queer hedonism, I consider how the didactic and life-giving possibilities of destructive behaviours. Via research, I describe how a ‘scavenger method’ of participant recruitment revealed persistent online traces of attempted queer silencings and resistances. This leads to consideration of how queer social lives, deaths and losses slipped into informant responses. Together, I hope such tenuous and bold comparisons will support discussion firstly of the potential for queer grief to develop cross-disciplinary academic insights. Secondly, I wonder how scholars might centre queer stories of loss as salient to wider projects of life.

Elina Einiö, *University of Helsinki*

Divorce and sickness absence: women of same-sex and different-sex couples

Several studies from Nordic countries have shown that women in same-sex couples are more likely to experience divorce than their peers in different-sex marriages. Nevertheless, surprisingly limited evidence is available on changes in the wellbeing of women before and after divorce, based on whether they were married to men or women. Such findings could enhance our understanding of the intersections of family and gender norms and how they influence wellbeing over the life course. Using population-based data of divorcing women of same-sex and different-sex couples, the present study assessed changes in women’s wellbeing –as measured by sickness absence – for three years before and after divorce. The study employed longitudinal data for Finland and repeated-measures logistic regression analyses. The preliminary findings indicate that women face elevated levels of sickness absence in the year of divorce, regardless of whether they were married to men or women, suggesting that the loss experienced in divorce is neither easier nor more difficult when divorce is more likely to occur.

Sara McHaffie, *Northumbria University*

Neuroqueer Demographics, disidentification and resistance to being quantified

Grief at not knowing about neurodivergent identity until later in life as well as losses such as time, energy, opportunity and self-knowledge is examined. This has wider application among (neuro)queer populations, and other marginalised communities experiencing epistemic injustice, broadening understanding of who might be represented in quantitative big data. Demographic research presents challenges as participants resist being put in a box, leading to discomfort, attrition, or dishonesty. There is an ethical imperative to avoid participant discomfort, which could disproportionately impact on marginalised participants who experience greater epistemic injustice. Autistic people are exposed to harmful researcher attitudes telegraphed through question wording. This leads to apprehensions from participants such as a worry that research will be used to further eugenic goals. However, quantitative research is important in policy and funding spheres, to ensure support for marginalised people e.g. (neuro)queer people. Neuroqueering involves living with awareness of neurodivergent and queer identities, and consciousness of their interaction. This often manifests as neuroqueer people expressing ourselves queerly and contrarily, which inhibits participation in traditional quantitative research. Reflecting on my research with autistic women, I had difficulty in eliciting responses to demographic data gathering and developed “practises of intersectional inclusion” (Egner 2019), avoiding harm to participants. This enables depth of analysis of qualitative data which can aid understanding of aspects of grief as described by a population whose lives are often not seen as livable nor grievable (Butler 2006). I argue for participatory approaches to study design which inform marginalised communities of potential benefits of

quantitative research.

Panel 21: Mobilizing Repair and Hope in the making of Green Futures – Part 2

Anu Lounela, Michaela Haug

Anthropological studies of planetary transitions, green futures initiatives and environmental restoration efforts have become increasingly prominent in recent years, suggesting a shift in interest from suffering and damage to approaches that address issues of hope and future-making. Meanwhile, green futures initiatives - such as climate change mitigation, green energy promotion and environmental restoration - are increasingly understood as mobilising people and affecting more-than-human landscapes, connecting and disconnecting agents, landscapes and places across nations, producing intriguing similarities and differences, overlapping models and specific socio-material constellations. This panel examines mobilisations of hope, repair and green future (in the broadest sense) from an anthropological perspective, exploring how they are understood by different individual and collective actors, and what comparisons emerge. It asks how notions of repair, hope and particular futures are given meaning in complex environmental and political situations and conditions. Comparison provides a fruitful entry point for exploring different meanings and relations of repair and hope at different scales and in different places and landscapes. We welcome papers from any ethnographic context, although the panel organisers both work in a Bornean context. Papers might ask, for example, what it means to say that the environment is broken and in need of repair. How are different notions of hope and repair translated and transformed through different encounters? What kinds of politics can we find behind activities of repair and breakage? What values are defined as important for particular projects of green future-making?

Francisco Martínez, *University of Murcia*

The Problem is Bigger than the Hole: Dark Externalities of Mining in Estonia

This paper reconsiders the possibility of reparative, non-extractive futures by paying ethnographic attention to mine shafts. Most often, the emergence of a hole is seen as a way to end a time and an order; however, in Eastern Estonia, holes keep appearing as a post-break continuation. Residents often refer to sinkholes as a negative externality of industrial activity, a harmful side effect that was not part of the original plan and design. Approaching holes as an unintended result of mining suggests that it is possible to detach these harmful consequences from the original activity. However, digging is a constitutive part of mining, rather than an unfortunate consequence to be deplored or redeemed afterward. The ecological damage caused by mining and the correlated social void have become ordinary in the region, acquiring an internal dynamic of their own while undermining the authority of public infrastructure. Sinkholes are responsible for generating uncertainty and disconnections, but they also remind us of a century of extractivist modernizations. The disintegration of recognizable material forms affects the ecological memory of the region, yet also produces societal risks and questions the prevailing economic model. These material voids contain their own forces and stand as a forensic testimony of ecological exhaustion and prolonged infrastructural abuses. Today, extractive activities continue in this sacrificed area, demanding careful un-design and further unmaking. The paper ends by paying attention to how people strive to reconstitute post-broken surroundings, describing a series of practices of public kindness that question an extractivist, industrial approach to the territory. The embodied

encounter with holes fosters collective responsibility, upsets modern planning, and evokes internal realms of consciousness.

Sana Chavoshian, *Käte Hamburger Center Cultural Practices of Reparation*

A Mesopotamian Re(s)pair: Making the green wall along the Iran-Iraq marshland

What is the role of photosynthesis in making native and indigenous reparation politics? How does dust-wind unsettle the nature/culture binary and undergird the emergence of new atmospheric collectives? This paper places dust-wind at the centre of an ethnographic engagement with multi-species encounters and affective resonances that shape around green future making over the dried beds of Mesopotamian Marshlands across the war-torn borderlands of Iran and Iraq. While in Iraq reviving the marshlands was an internationally funded project with multiple European initiatives engaged after the fall of the Ba’ath regime, the conservation of the Iranian side of the marshlands are undertaken under restraining economic sanctions. For Arabs of the marshes on both sides of the border however, war and sanctions are environments of living. I explore processes of respiration and regeneration of hope as nodes of “doing” with enduring toxic contaminations and hazardous atmospheres in and around the marshes. I show how the contours of greening from plantation to rehabilitation and revival elude particular habitual knowledge and sensory practices. Social life here grows in the ruptures and wreckage of structurally violent worlds, where militarised biospheres yield planetary ecological effects.

Michaela Haug, *University of Freiburg*

How should future forests look like

My paper considers the diverse and sometimes even contradictory visions of the future that underlie current forest use changes and related socio-economic transformations in East Kalimantan, Indonesia, and that drive them in very different directions. This includes the visions of nature conservation organisations and government agencies. However, the focus lies on the aspirations of the rural indigenous population. Conceptually, I draw on recent research on hope and other positive notions to demonstrate that this emerging “bright anthropology” is an important counterbalance to the long prevalent focus on “dark anthropology”. Studying the aspirations that people have for future forests and how these inform their actions in the present reveals a great heterogeneity. Individual and collective actors cherish diverse and sometimes conflicting hopes and they have different means available to put them into practice. I argue that paying attention to these diverse hopes and their entanglement within existing power relations and inequalities offers a viable way to bring “dark” and “bright” anthropology into dialogue.

Panel 30: Navigating border divisions, (post?)colonial practices and citizenship regimes Florian Stammer

Arctic Centre, University of Lapland

This panel focuses on the ways how borders that are drawn and re-drawn by colonial and post-colonial processes, continue to influence inhabitants’ everyday life, practices, work and identities on both sides. Papers interrogate a wealth of ethnographic evidence from Europe the Middle East and Asia to clarify how relations persist, culturally embedded practices survive, perceptions of cultural unity and division reproduce, and citizenship regimes become experienced on the ground on either side of borders that divide and unite simultaneously. This

invites us to rethink notions of the relationality of borders as a whole.

Florian Stammer & Aytalina Ivanova; *Arctic Centre, University of Lapland*
Collaborative ethnography in “post-fieldwork” relations with partners in Siberia

This presentation explores the opportunities for sustaining relations with long-term research partners in Siberia after the Ukraine war led to the closure of the field for western anthropologists. Rather than contemplating about the terrible effects of the war, we try to explore what opportunities lie in the new ways co-creating ‘field data’ jointly between Siberians and international researchers that the situation dictates us. Several vignettes of collaboration shall illustrate such opportunities, for each of which we shall discuss ethical implications. The first case is a long-term collaboration for the making of a documentary film with nomadic Nenets youth. The second case is Siberians participating in indigenous-to-indigenous exchanges across the Arctic, where the anthropologists role becomes redefined as ‘mere’ facilitators of getting their research partners to collaborate among themselves. The presentation discusses the theoretical implications of such settings for our understanding of human cultural and social diversity on this planet, as well as the potential of such collaboration to infuse anthropology with a different emic perspective.

Atila Kılınc, *Istanbul Technical University and Istanbul Bilgi University*
Ethnography of Exclusion: Tensions in the Cultural Survival of Turkey's Rum Mino

This study examines the tensions and comparative dynamics related to the isolation and cultural deterioration of the Rum minority in the Republic of Turkey. This study utilizes anthropological methodologies and sensory tools to analyze how state processes and regulated media systematically targeted the Rum population, eroding their feeling of belonging, language, and connection to their motherland. The research situates these initiatives within the overarching goals of the Democratic Party government, especially in the aftermath of the Istanbul Incident of September 6–7, 1955. These incidents are examined as representative of the state's stance on minority rights, illustrating tactics of displacement, coerced conformity, and attempts to reconstitute indigenous identity. The research utilizes fieldwork comprising participant observation, ethnographic interviews, and focus groups to examine essential ideas of native-ness, displacement, and normalization processes occurring before and during these critical occurrences. The research critically analyzes how cultural and political processes influence minority experiences by combining three theoretical frameworks: rethinking identity, the formation of new consciousness in displacement, and the dynamics of acquiescence in normalization. This research's principal point is the methodological dismissal of historically charged terms like diaspora, non-Muslim, and non-native, to preserve the purity of the ethnographic context. This method emphasizes the necessity of eschewing fixed historical classifications, prioritizing real experiences and sensory involvement. The research provides detailed insights into the historical and cultural backdrop of the Rum minority in Turkey, shaped by the dynamics of marginalization and resistance.

Fabio Calzolari, *Mae Fah Luang University*
THE YOON GAME Investigating South Koreans' Perspectives of Martial Law

On December 3, 2024, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol declared martial law, suspending democratic rights for the first time since 1987. While accusing the opposition of obstructing governance, his actions blurred the ideological boundaries between democracy and authoritarianism, deepening divisions between citizens and the state. They also brought about

memories of the country's brutal dictatorial past. Inspired by the events, this paper documents the opinions of nine adult South Koreans who lamented Yoon's behaviour and nine who praised it. The enquiry is built upon Interpretative Phenomenology, and the arguments are influenced by Giorgio Agamben's space of exception theory. For Yoon's detractors, martial law was caused by competing nationalisms- whether the country should become more liberal or conservative – and by the statesman's fear of being found guilty of corruption. For them, he suspended the law to protect his power, making himself resemble the very North Korean regime he used as a rationale for declaring martial law. For Yoon's supporters, the leader tried to save the nation from communist encroachment and the collapse of traditional values. These people drew parallels with the US MAGA movement and the Trump presidency. The outcomes also demonstrate how the zero-sum game between the two groups risks lacerating one of the most stable societies in Asia, by transforming fellow citizens into "others" to defeat at any cost, thus erecting new borders across society.

Ibrahim Ince, *University of Oxford*

An Ethnography of Everyday Adaptations to the Dividing Line in Cyprus

My ethnographic research focuses on the protracted dividing line in Cyprus and its complex manifestation in the UN-supervised Pyla village and the British-administered Pergamos village, engaging with themes such as kinship, gossip and surveillance, post-colonialism and infrastructure, temporality and adaptation. Moving away from Nicosia, often referred to as 'the last divided capital' and the primary site for border studies in Cyprus, I aim to offer more intimate insights into how this border manifests and is experienced beyond its urban epicentre. I investigate how border life and village life intersect; how kinship ties and social relations are affected by and affect the border. I compare the two neighbouring villages, Pyla and Pergamos, which are arguably the most contested areas on the island where multiple authorities interact. For the residents of these villages, constantly negotiating with the authorities, waiting in line at the checkpoints to get to their homes, and facing bureaucratic challenges to cross goods have all become mundane parts of their daily lives. By delineating their experiences, I raise broader questions about the normalisation and adaptation to the challenging conditions of borders, a phenomenon that is often overlooked in Cyprus and border studies.

Theodoros Kourous, *Cyprus University of Technology*

Inside Outsiders: Tactical Citizenships and Cultural Intimacy in Cypriot Statecraft

This paper explores the paradoxical relationship that Cypriot citizens maintain with the state, positioning themselves as both "insiders" who navigate and understand bureaucratic structures intimately and "outsiders" who critique and resist these same systems. Drawing on the concept of tactical citizenship, this article explores how citizens use culturally embedded strategies – such as personal relations, appropriation of public resources, or humor and irony – to navigate their relations with an often opaque and arbitrary state. These tactics belie a form of cultural intimacy within which Cypriots enact a shared knowledge of the state's inner workings while distancing themselves from that authority through subtle acts of subversion. It reconfigures citizenship not as a fixed set of rights and obligations but as an adaptive, lived practice under the influence of a mix of closeness and critique. A study of this "inside outsider" dynamic sheds light on how citizens actively reshape their relationship with state power. It also brings out the complicated space within which compliance and resistance, familiarity and alienation coexist. Through this lens, citizenship becomes a creative response to the structures in place

by the state, highlighting the fluid and complex nature of belonging and political engagement.

Panel 31: Well-being, Ideology, Economy, Work

Pia Hagqvist, Oulu University

This panel explores societal changes and individual experiences. It critiques the focus on academic excellence, highlights the importance of social processes like academic friendships and examines Slovenians' mental health within post-socialist shifts. The studies compare Soviet-era discourse with Finnish startup culture, critiquing capitalism, and explore how comparisons in political, economic, and social systems marginalize individuals, labeling them as redundant. The final study defines international nursing education culture in Finland and Italy.

Pia Hagqvist, Oulu University

All the time between- Ethnographic study of International nursing students

Comparison of International nursing students in Italy and Finland is the focus of my ethnographic study. I am particularly interested in comparing the everyday educational cultures that students create, inhabit and share with coexistence with the national students and the teaching faculty. In my study, educational culture binds all the students together, but the separating factor is immigration status. Educational cultures are vividly rich, complex, multilayered and constantly on the move adapting to the culturally and linguistically diverse learning environments. The theme arising from the collected data is the feeling of being between two cultures- and cultural identities, being rootless, challenged by the emotion of not-belonging to the host culture, but still pushing themselves to adapt, to integrate. Feeling between also means constantly evolving change for students in their lives, experiencing feelings of pressure from the university, society, from family and peers. What is between the students, we can define it as educational culture, that is organizational, driven by the purpose to educate health care professionals to the needs of society. This culture is comparing the students, being competitive and time framed. Between the students, what else is there? Attitudes, prejudice, empathy, friendliness, collegiality, shared ambition, shared experiences, plans for future, plans for working as a nurse, small groups sharing diverse values and goals, same cultural identities-or age, same language, economic, political or religious backgrounds. Students define that they are constantly between work - and studies, pressing their resilience to the limit, all the time between.

Henna Juusola, Tampere University

Beyond comparison of academic Excellence and Misery: Lived Realities of Academics

In academic discourse emphasizing competition and quantification, academic work is often framed through the comparison of academic performance, with attention focused on excellence, such as those who succeed well in academic funding competitions, or on misery, where, for example, funding applications do not yield the desired results. Our collaborative autoethnographic approach (Breault, 2016) challenges this perspective and highlights the academic lived lives from the perspective of "ordinariness"; how scholars approach academic life on a daily basis is not always about excellence or misery. Instead, as Connell (2019) states, intellectual work has a collective characteristic, as no single researcher's individual project or finding alone represents the state of knowledge, even though this characteristic is not often

visible. In this presentation, we approach this collective characteristic of academic work by emphasizing the social processes, such as academic friendships and collegiality, that are seen as significant factors enabling creativity and the generation of new knowledge in our own work. We also provide an overview of collaborative autoethnography, where our research focuses on activities occurring in our own workplace.

Jasmina Polovic

Negotiating Morality through the Lens of Slovenian Personhood

My contribution to the conference is grounded in a 4-year fieldwork and counseling work as a psychological and psychiatric anthropologist with Slovenians diagnosed with newly emerging mental disorders within a postsocialist context. As the social change from socialism to capitalism introduced certain practices and social institutions that are in discontinuity with Slovenian culture and criminalize the ones that are locally perceived as right and just, Slovenians find themselves in disabling, yet existentially important situations. Such contexts seem to have spiked the rates of particular psychiatric diagnoses, such as adjustment disorder, depression and anxiety disorder, and clinically recognized Western idioms of distress, such as burnout, displaying distinct illness narratives and embodiment of distress that are inherently connected not only to core local values but also to the local notion of personhood. My presentation talks about the ways Slovenians negotiate life in a changed social reality wherein such negotiation happens most strongly at the boundaries of local cosmology when faced with the capitalistic organization of the Slovenian “everyday”, evoking moral dimensions of personhood. Such dimensions serve as a comparison between local notions of normality and pathology on one hand and as so-called “breaking points” in psychological functionality on the other.

Sakari Mesimäki, *University of Cambridge*

Doing with discourse in the Soviet Union and Startup Finland

Many Finnish startup and investment professionals express remarkably critical views about the sustainability of capitalism and the credibility of popular techno-optimist discourses—even as they remain committed to the values of neoliberal entrepreneurialism and participate in the public reproduction of its hype-filled discourses. How should one make sense of this seeming contradiction? In this paper I compare this disposition of some of my startup interlocutors to that of the Soviet citizens in the work of Andrei Yurchak (2005). I argue that popular startup discourses are characterized by a similar ‘performative shift’ shift as Yurchak observes regarding the official discourses in the late Soviet Union. In both contexts, the constative and performative dimensions of dominant discourses have become unmoored. Subjects relate to the constative meanings of dominant discourses in diverse ways including indifference and cynicism, even as they reproduce it to take advantage of its performative effects. These effects are nonetheless often applied to ends informed by commitment to the same ideologies as represented by dominant discourses—be this socialism or entrepreneurship. Based on this comparison, I critique explanatory models offered by ‘capitalist realism’ or ‘enlightened false consciousness’ as based on unreasonable expectations about how critical understanding should impact how people relate to the systems within which they live. I argue that ‘capitalist realism’ and the question of people’s commitment to and reproduction of ideologies generally is a profoundly practical matter shaped by the opportunities available for concrete agency. This has implications for the impact anthropologists should expect of their critiques.

Tzofit Ofengenden, *Tulane University*

Superfluous People: Comparison, Exclusion, and the Politics of Redundancy

This paper explores how the comparative logics of modern political, economic, and social systems produce superfluous people—individuals and groups rendered redundant through practices of exclusion and marginalization. While comparison often serves as a method of finding commonalities or contrasts, it can also function as a mechanism for classification, hierarchization, and dispossession. Drawing on ethnographic and historical examples, I examine how comparisons of labor, value, and productivity define certain populations as unnecessary, unproductive, or “excessive.” The comparison between valuable and superfluous people operates across domains: global labor markets compare workers based on productivity, rendering some obsolete; political systems contrast deserving and undeserving populations, justifying exclusionary policies; and ecological debates weigh human utility against resource sustainability, reframing people as surplus to planetary survival. These processes essentialize differences and construct hierarchies that erase complex histories and realities, reducing people to their perceived economic or social worth. I argue that this comparative practice produces not just exclusion but a profound ontological condition of redundancy—where individuals exist at the margins of systems that fail to recognize their humanity. How do those deemed “superfluous” navigate and resist such comparisons? What alternative modes of relationality and value emerge when people contest their classification as surplus? By interrogating comparison as both a practice and an ideology, this paper highlights its role in creating systemic disposability while also pointing to the potential for critical comparison as a tool of resistance. In doing so, it invites us to reflect on how the anthropology of comparison can challenge the politics of redundancy and reclaim space for those rendered superfluous.



FAS 2025 FILM PROGRAMME

Comparisons & Collaborations

We are delighted to invite you to the **FAS 2025 Film Programme**, a three-day curated selection of ethnographic films that explore how commonality and difference are negotiated and represented through the moving image. Taking place from **Monday, June 16 to Wednesday, June 18**, this year's programme brings together filmmakers and anthropologists whose work sparks vital conversations on collaboration, representation, and the many roles' anthropologists play—as filmmakers, critics, interlocutors, and facilitators of fieldwork narratives.

Each screening is an invitation to reflect on the textures of lived experience and the delicate dynamics of ethnographic engagement. From gardens on the outskirts of Santiago de Chile, to the mountainous traditions of Crete, from deportation in Germany-Turkey migration to fermentation rituals in Assam Northeast India, these films traverse geographic, political, and sensory terrains. They ask: how do we tell stories of others and ourselves? Who gets to frame a narrative, and for whom?

Curated by **Carlo Cubero**, **Avi Betz-Heinemann**, and **Sointu Toiskallio**, the programme features both emerging and established voices in visual anthropology. We hope you will join us not just to watch these films, but to engage in the conversations they provoke. Welcome to a festival of ethnographic film!

| Time | Monday Jun-16 | Tuesday Jun-17 | Wednesday Jun-18 |
|-------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| 10:00-12:00 | The Hospitable Gaze | Hanging Out, Our Little Garden | Another Summer |
| 12:30-14:00 | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch |
| 14:00-15:30 | Flotacija | Walking with Fermenters | Arkadaşloch |
| 15:30-16:00 | Coffee | Coffee | Coffee |

[Return to main conference programme](#)

Important Notes:

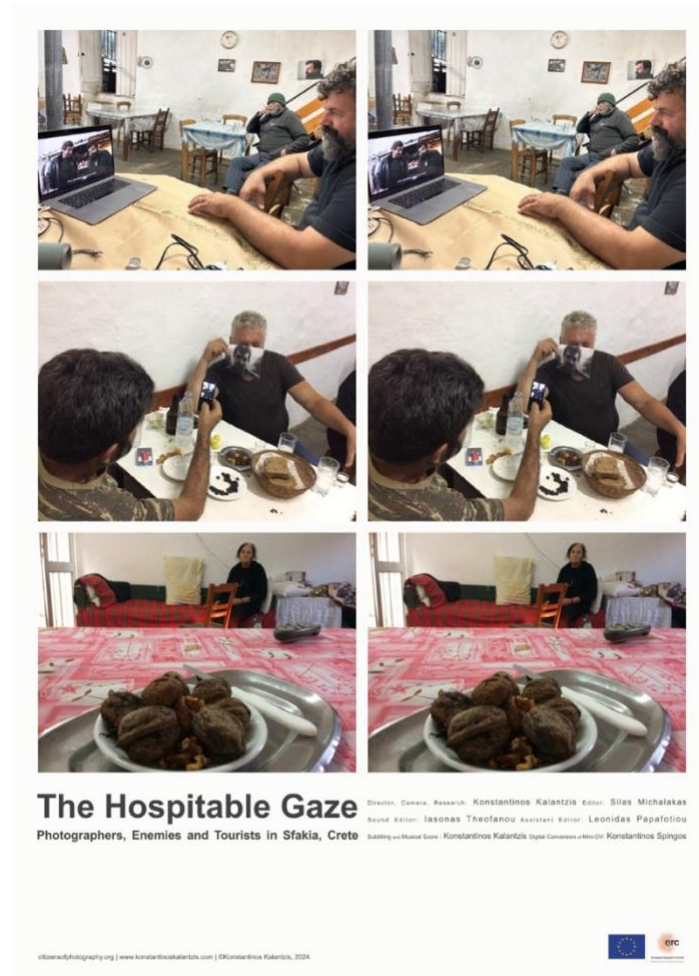
- The film programme starts at 10:00, which is 30 minutes earlier in the morning than the rest of the conference programme.
- The films are programmed at the same time as panels so that you can move between films and panels with ease depending on what you prefer.

- Each film screening is followed by a 15min period for discussion with a filmmaker.
- There are two separate films screening in Tuesday morning slot. There will be a 15min discussion directly after each film.

Monday 10:00 - 12:00

The Hospitable Gaze

97mins, 2024, Konstantinos Kalantzis

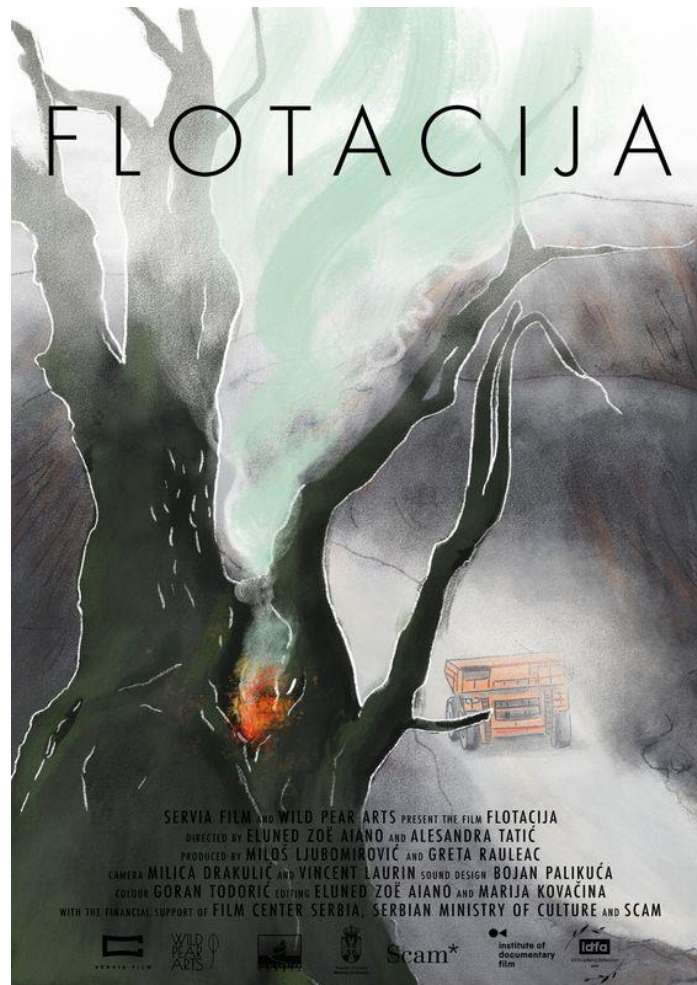


An ethnographic film that distills two decades of research in Crete's mountainous region of Sfakia, celebrated for its rugged traditionalism, while also stereotyped for its fierce illegality. Through photography, the film delves into the social imaginary concerning Others—tourists, and locals, hosts and guests, perpetrators and victims, ethnographer and his interlocutors—while examining the medium's power to reconstruct the past and illuminate the fragility and intimacy of the ethnographic encounter. The film makes the case that negotiations of boundaries of insideness and enmity are largely dependent on the force and the affordances of visual culture.

Monday 14:00 - 15:30

Flotacija

77mins, 2023, Eluned Zoë Aiano, Alesandra Tatić



In Eastern Serbia, in a town with a dual identity divided between magic and industry, a family whose destiny is intrinsically linked with both does their best to ensure the survival of their traditions and their future generations. Desa is the widow of the union leader who is trying to continue his legacy by ensuring the rights of fellow mine-worker families. Meanwhile, her brother Dragan Marković is the last in a line of dragon hunters, but it's hard to continue now - even the dragons are being driven away. This film follows a particular family as they try to navigate both.

Tuesday 10:00 - 10:40

Hanging Out

19mins, 2023, Mari Korpela



Temporary labour migration of skilled professionals is increasing in various parts of the world. Often, such expatriates are accompanied by their children but very little is known of their views and experiences. In her ethnographic research project, Korpela investigated the views and experiences of such children and youth in Finland. During her fieldwork, she filmed a group of 14-year-old boys on their free time in a Finnish town. The film is a reflexive story of this collaborative film project.

Tuesday 10:40 - 12:00

Our Little Garden (International Premiere)

59mins, 2024, Sointu Toiskallio



19-year-old Alonso dreams of one day being self-sufficient. 76-year-old Ana María likes to keep her mind active by learning and enjoying plants with all her senses. Heriberto has recovered from cancer and wants to cleanse his body. In the hustle of Santiago de Chile's megacity, gardeners of different ages have found a respite, a connection to the soil and a community in a garden on the edge of the capital city.

Tuesday - 14:00-15:30

Walking with Fermenters

68mins, 2025, Kazu Ahmed, Meri Teperi, Salla Sariola

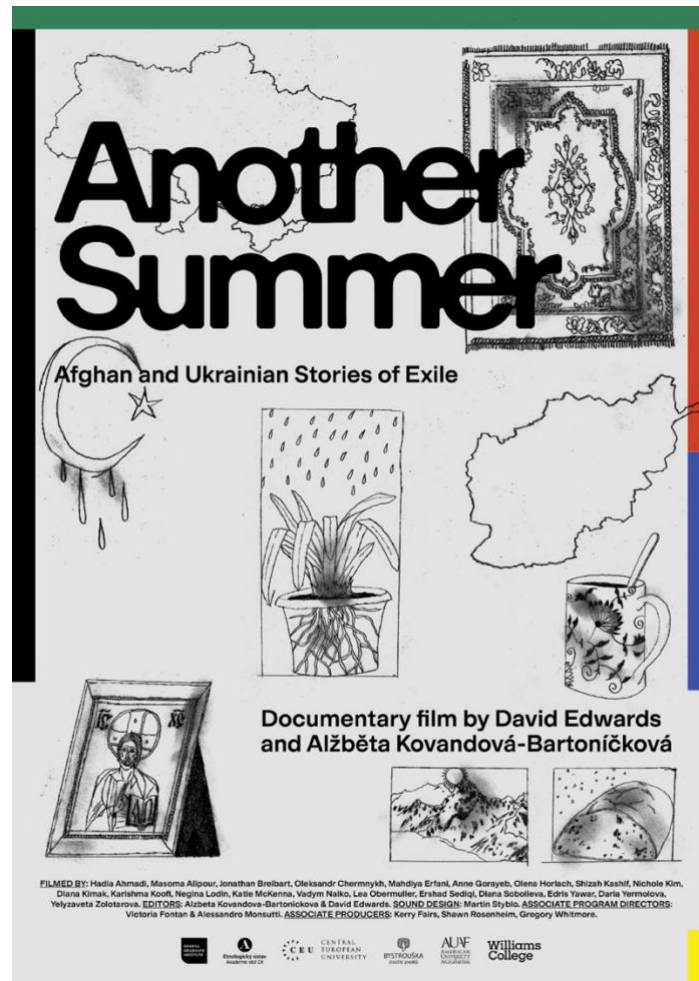


A documentary journey that takes the viewer through traditional practices of foraging and fermenting for rice beer/wine in Assam, India's northeast. As the camera follows three households and their arrangements to brew rice beer, we are told of tradition, legends, and cosmologies associated with this process – from foraging for herbs to squeezing out the rice nectar for consumption. Heritages that have now become targets of interest by commercial beer makers, as well as microbiologists, turning them into something to protect, rather than shared.

Wednesday - 10:00-12:00

Another Summer

104mins, 2024, David Edwards, Alzbeta Kovandova-Bartonickova



A film by refugees about refugees – the directors of Another Summer provided training and equipment to a group of Afghan and Ukrainian first-time filmmakers who had taken refuge in different European countries after the Taliban takeover in 2021 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The filmmakers were divided into teams and sent to seven cities in Europe and Turkey. Their task was to record the stories of people like themselves who had fled violence and repression, capture what it nowadays means to be a refugee and gather unseen footage from their past lives.

Wednesday - 14:00-15:30

Arkadaşloch - Nobody's Problem

78mins, 2023, Nilay Kılınç



The story of a Turkish-Kurdish-Alevi “migrant” Özi who was deported from Germany to Turkey. This film depicts his self-transformation from being the poster child of failed integration to becoming a family-oriented business owner in the tourism city of Antalya. Based on social anthropologist Nilay Kılınç’s doctoral research the documentary offers a closer look at the ‘return’ migration phenomena and its more extreme case, deportation, with a specific focus on the second-generation Turkish-German migrants.

BOOK LAUNCHES

We are celebrating recently published books by some of our conference participants on Wednesday during the lunch break (12:30-14:00, [Aula Rectoria](#)). All are welcome!

An Anthropology of Crosslocations

Green, S., Lähteenaho, S., Douzina-Bakalaki, P., Rommel, C., Viscomi, J., Soto Bermant, L., & Scalco, P.

Helsinki University Press, 2024.

<https://doi.org/10.33134/HUP-23>

Imperial Investments: Legacies of Displacement in British Child Migration to Southern Rhodesia

Katja Uusihakala

Springer Nature, 2025.

<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/978-3-031-80344-4.pdf>

Hard Work Producing places, relations and value on a Papua New Guinea resource frontier

Tuomas Tammisto

Helsinki University Press, 2025

<https://doi.org/10.33134/HUP-29>

Missing persons, political landscapes and cultural practices: Violent absences, haunting presences

Laura Huttunen

Manchester University Press, 2025

<https://manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk/9781526177032/>

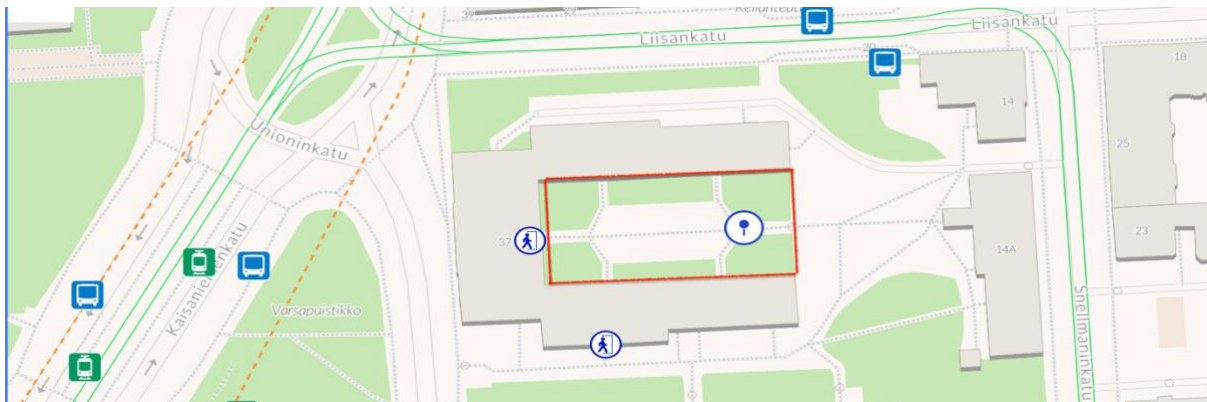
THE COURTYARD PARTY

Tuesday 17th June, 18:00 - Snellmania, Unioninkatu 37

The Courtyard Party is a celebration of Anthropological Comparisons, beyond the confines of standard conference practice. Featuring, but not limited to music from Bubblegum Theory, AnthroBlogi celebrations, and an “open mic” event.

The “open mic” portion is an opportunity to express yourself—through comedy, music, dance, poetry, or any other performance that resonates with the theme of comparisons (or not!). Whether you have a humorous take on fieldwork, a song inspired by a particularly harsh reviewer, a dance celebrating your favourite ancestral anthropologist, or a poem capturing the existential dread of precarious academic employment—we welcome it all.

We hope this event will offer a fun and creative break from the traditional conference format, giving you a chance to enjoy great food, drinks, and conversation in a relaxed and inspiring atmosphere. For more information, contact stefan.millar@helsinki.fi



PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Arriving in Finland

If you are not sure whether you need a visa to enter Finland, please check the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs guidelines](#). If you need a letter to apply for a visa, you can request one at the following email address: fas25@confedent.fi

Public transport

From the airport, you can easily reach the Helsinki city center by train or bus. If you cannot find the train station or the bus station, please ask at the information desk (Open 24 hours) located in the arrival hall. You can buy a [single ticket](#) onboard with your debit or credit card (Visa or Mastercard). First, you must [select the travel zone](#). The travel zone from the airport to the city center includes travel zones A, B, and C, so you will select ABC on the display of the card reader (see image below). The card reader does not print a ticket, your debit/credit card serves as your ticket, which you present to ticket inspectors.



You can use the **HSL app** to buy tickets, find routes and stay up to date with any service changes. You can download the HSL app from your app store for free. You can pay for your tickets by bank card (VISA, VISA Electron, Mastercard and Amex) [within](#) the app. Also, you must buy [and activate](#) your in-app ticket [before](#) you board a bus, train or tram, or enter the Metro platform area. The app might be incompatible with some foreign bank cards, so please input your card details before travelling to check your card is accepted. For more instructions and tips, visit the following web page: www.hsl.fi/en/travelling/visitors Please note that you can also buy a paper ticket from the ticket machines on the train platform at the airport. Ticket machines are available at all train and metro stations. However, ticket machines might not be available at bus and tram stops.

Electricity plugs and sockets



In Finland the most common plug types are types C and type F. Plug type C is the plug which has two round pins and type F is the plug which has two round pins with two earth clips on the side. Finland operates on a 230V supply voltage and 50Hz.

Emergency contacts

In case of an emergency, call 112. If you need urgent medical assistance, you can call the Medical Helpline at the following number: 116 117. The Medical Helpline is available 24/7 and it is free of charge.

Wi-Fi

If you are a member of the EduRoam network, you can access EduRoam with your credentials, or you might have to download the GetEduroam application first. In any case, on university premises you can access the local guest network (SSID: HelsinkiUniGuest, password: uniguest) and then visit this web page for detailed instruction: <https://helpdesk.it.helsinki.fi/en/logging-and-connections/networks/wireless-networks-university-helsinki>

Registration desk & Information Point

The Registration desk & Information Point is in the Aula Rectoria on the Second Floor of the Main Building.

Luggage and coatroom

Most rooms have coat racks. There is no dedicated luggage room.

Food and beverages

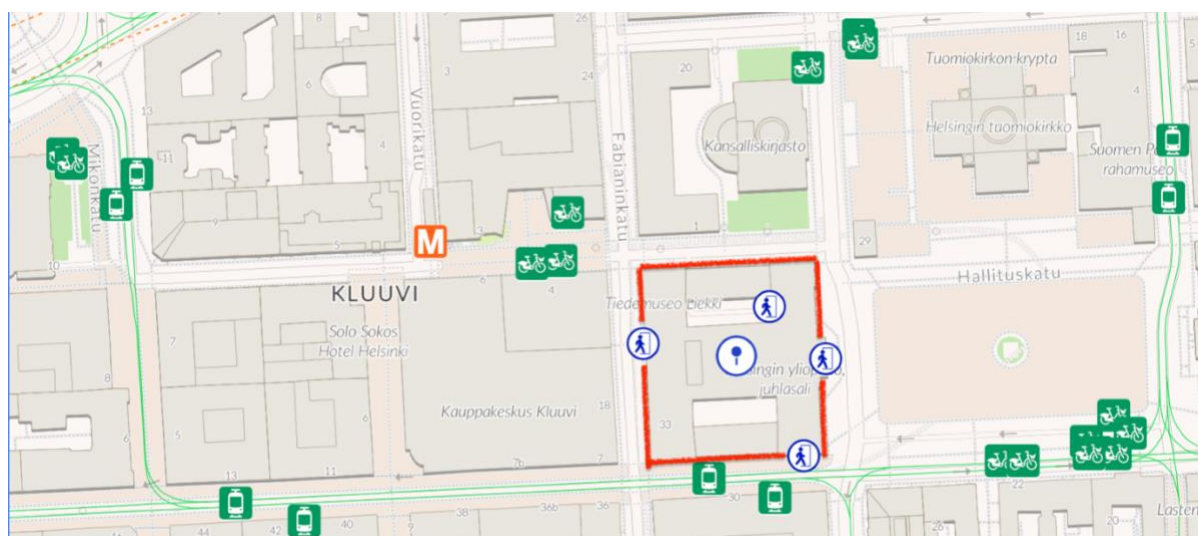
The location of all the lunches and coffees will be in [Aula Rectoria](#). Lunch breaks are provided by Sodexo and scheduled each day from 12:30 to 14:00. Coffee breaks are scheduled each day from 15:30 to 16:00. Welcome drinks and snacks will be provided at the Welcoming Reception, which will be held in the Agora (Main Building, First floor) at 18:00 on June 16th.

Maps & Directions



All the panel sessions as well as the movie screenings of the 2025 FAS Conference take place in the Main Building of the University of Helsinki, in **Fabianinkatu 33** (Picture above). The Main Building has four floors and a basement.

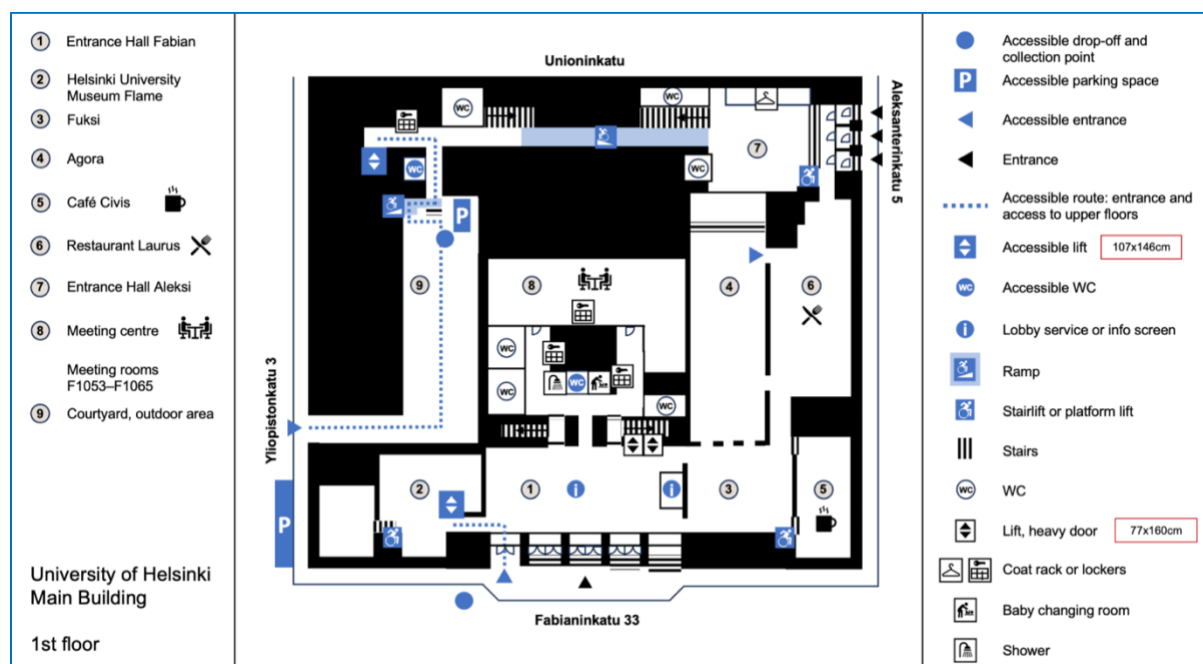
Main venue



The Agora is located on the First floor of the Main Building. The [Aula Rectoria](#) and the Auditorium (F2044) are located on the Second Floor of the Main Building. Rooms F3003, F3004, F3005, F3006, F3010 and F3017, as well as the facilities named Studium 1 to 5 are on the Third Floor of the Main Building. Please note that the Studium 1-5 facilities are room-coded: F3020, F3022b, F3022c, F3023b, F3023c. Room U4075 is located on the Fourth Floor of the Main Building. Maps of each floor, including accessibility options, WC, lockers, etc., are provided below.

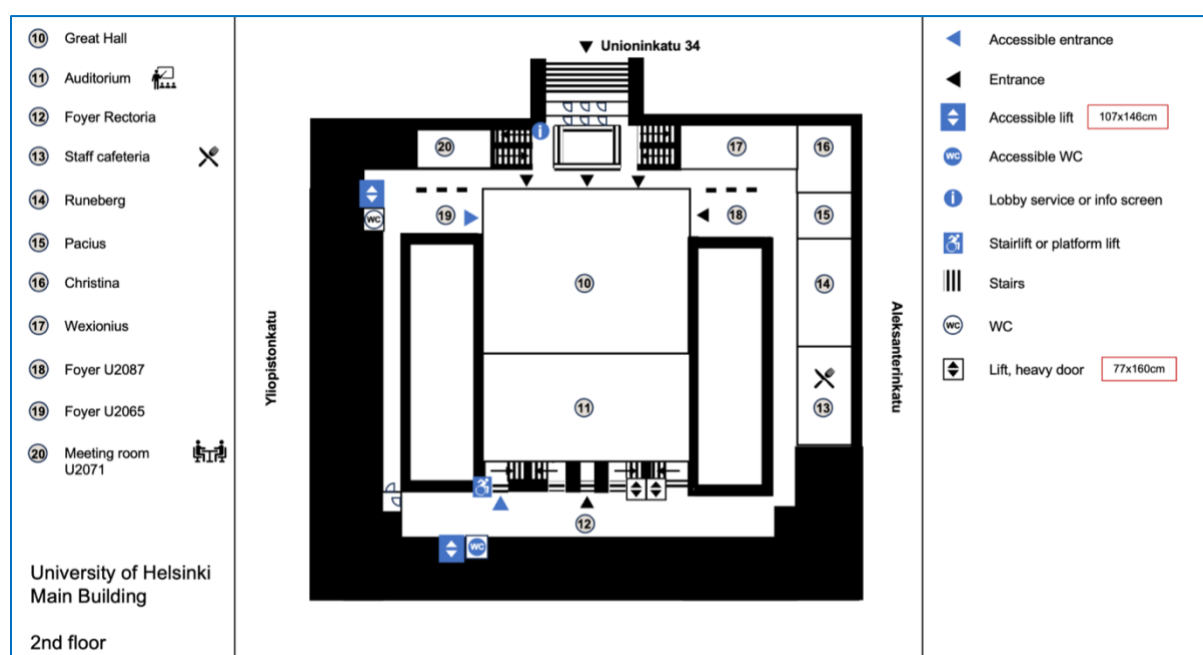
First Floor

Please note: In Finland, the first floor corresponds to that which in some other countries is typically called “the ground floor”.



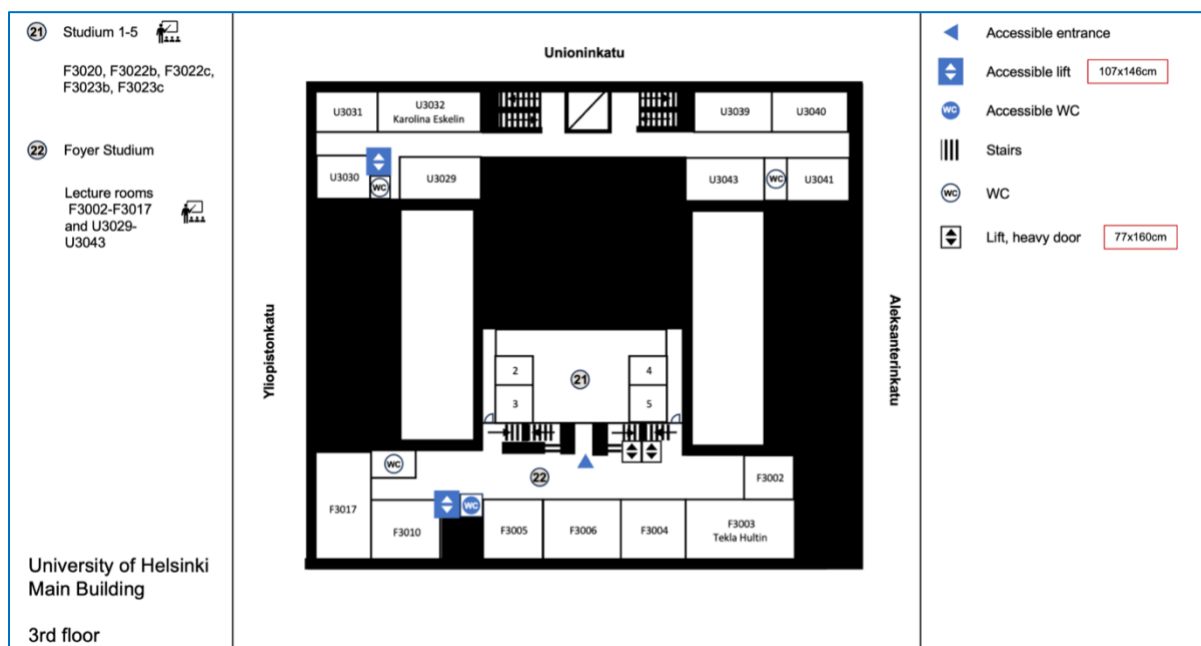
Second floor

Please note: Coherently with the above, the second floor in Finland corresponds to that which in some other countries is typically called “the first floor”.



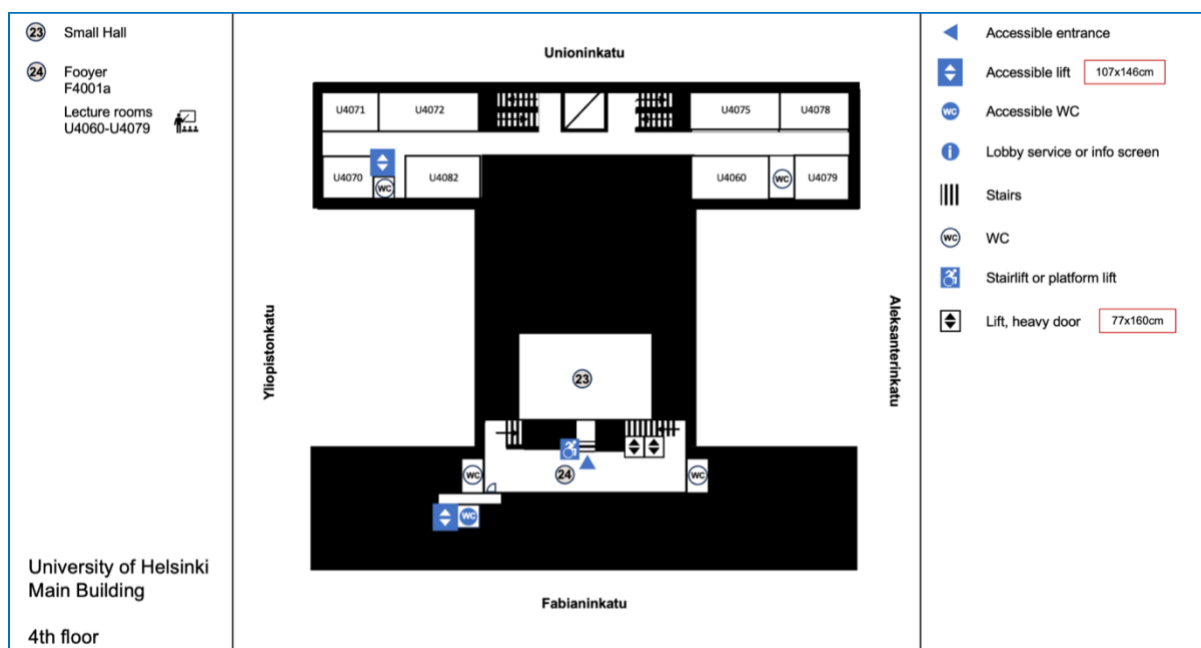
Third floor

Please note: Studium 1-5 facilities are room-coded: F3020, F3022b, F3022c, F3023b, F3023c.



Fourth floor

Please note: Room 4065 is easier to locate if you access the Main Building from Unioninkatu. If you access from Fabianinkatu, you might easily get lost because you will have to navigate through a series of unintuitive turns to find the room. If you are not sure how to locate the room, we suggest you become familiar with the location in advance.



Certificate of attendance

If you need an official certificate of attendance, you can request one at the following email address: comparisons-25-conference@helsinki.fi

Hashtags

If you wish to use social media, we recommend using the hashtag **#comparisons25** on BlueSky. Feel free to use the same hashtag on other social media of your preference too.

Updates

Any updates will be sent to the email address provided by participants.

How to opt out of photographs/other media?

If you do not wish to appear in photographs/other media, you should ask individuals not to include you. Panel organizers should ask at the beginning of their sessions whether participants wish to opt out of photographs/other media. Please respect people's preferences.

Drinking

To stay hydrated throughout the conference, you can refill your bottles from water taps. Tap water is 100% safe according to the Helsinki Region Environmental Services Authority and the City of Helsinki's Environmental Services. As for alcoholic beverages, please note that supermarkets and kiosks sell beers, ciders, and low alcohol wines with less than 8.0% ABV during opening times until 21:00. Stronger products, like wines and spirits, are exclusively available at state-owned Alko outlets (open weekdays 9-20 and Saturdays 9-18).

General tips about the City

Helsinki is a dream city for walking, as distances are short and there is always something new to discover just around the corner.

All FAS25 panel sessions take place in the Main Building of the University of Helsinki that is located in Senate Square, which, together with its surroundings, make up the oldest part of central Helsinki. Senate Square (*Finnish: Senaatintori*), located in the heart of Helsinki, presents Carl Ludvig Engel's architecture with science, politics, and religion related landmarks and buildings surrounding the square. In addition to the Main Building, you will also find the Helsinki Cathedral, the Government Palace, and the Sederholm House, the oldest building of central Helsinki dating from 1757.

Located at the South Harbour at one end of the Esplanade Park, near Senate Square, the Market Square is Helsinki's most famous market, with a ferry connection to Suomenlinna Fortress island, which is also a perfect day trip destination in the summer.

The Sibelius Monument (*Finnish: Sibelius-monumentti*) by Eila Hiltunen is dedicated to the Finnish composer Jean Sibelius. The monument is located in Sibelius Park (Finnish: Sibeliuspuisto) in the Töölö district of Helsinki, and is one you have to see and experience for yourself. When in Töölö, take a walk along Merikannontie and stop for an ice cream at Helsingin Jäätelötehdas (Helsinki Ice Cream Factory), the oldest still operating ice cream manufacturer in Finland – the most summery thing you can do in Helsinki.

Quick tips

[Amos Rex Art Museum, Mannerheimintie 22-24](#)

“The Amos Rex art museum combines the past, present and future. The subterranean museum facility right in the center of Helsinki is an experience itself.”

[Allas Sea Pool, Katajanokanlaituri 2 a](#)

“Allas Pool is a lively meeting place that combines urban culture, relaxing by the water and live music.”

[Ateneum Art Museum, Kaivokatu 2](#)

“The home of Finnish art and part of the National Gallery. Finland's premier art museum showcases beloved works as well as acclaimed exhibitions from Finland and abroad.”

[Teurastamo, Työpajankatu 2](#)

“Teurastamo (literally ‘abattoir’) is a quaint centre of urban and culinary culture in Kalasatama, Helsinki. This former abattoir currently houses a wide variety of fascinating restaurants and unique small-scale production facilities: an ice cream factory, a bakery, a distillery, a coffee roastery, an art gallery and shops.”

Child friendly tips

Play

If you are looking for a place for your kids to play, you might consider the following:

Free of charge

- [Helsinki Central Library Oodi](#) (indoors & outdoors)
- [Playgrounds and family houses set up by the City of Helsinki, available in several locations](#) (indoors & outdoors)
- Play stations and children rooms inside shopping malls

Chargeable

- [Linnanmäki Amusement Park](#) (outdoors)
- [HopLop](#) (indoors)
- [Korkee](#) (outdoors)

Rest

If you are looking for a place for your kids to rest, you might consider the following:

Free of charge

- [Helsinki City Museum \(indoors\)](#)
- Libraries in Helsinki (indoors), multiple locations, [more info](#).
- [Seurasaari Open-Air Museum](#) (outdoors)

Chargeable

- [Finnish Museum of Natural History](#), (indoors)
- [Exhibition Centre WeeGee](#), Espoo (indoors)
- [Finnish Science Centre Heureka](#), Vantaa (indoors)

Food and beverages

If you are looking for a child-friendly place to eat, you might consider the following:

- [Pastelaria Brasil - Coffee & Bakery](#), Liisankatu 29 A
- [Food & Co](#), Oodi
- [La Torrefazione](#), Kamppi
- [Puffy Mini Pancakes café](#), Annantalo

LIST OF PANELS

| Number | Title |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Cross-disciplinary comparison and the shaping of anthropological knowledge |
| 2 | Knowing Nature to care for it: ecological action in the making |
| 3 | Global and Public Health |
| 4 | Tensions and Comparisons: participant observation and sensory methods |
| 5 | Love at its Limits: Thresholds and Internal Comparison |
| 6 | Negative Capability and Productive Uncertainty in Crises of Closure |
| 7 | A Roundtable on Participatory Action Ethnography |
| 8 | Collaborative Ethnography, Power, and Imagination |
| 9 | Compensation and repair: Comparison and the measuring of incommensurable wrongs |
| 10 | Disturbed Intimacies: Unmaking and remaking kinship through disappearance |
| 11 | Ethnography of importance? Studying 'minor matters' in times of destruction |
| 12 | Comparative Tropes of Virality in Environmental Activism |
| 13 | Imagining Resettlement: Disillusionment and the Paradox of Comparison |
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