

# Biography and Society



XX ISA World Congress of Sociology  
June 25-July 1, 2023, Melbourne, Australia



Biography  
and Society

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NEWSLETTER/DECEMBER 2022

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENCY

Dear Colleagues,

In only six months from today, the XXth World Congress of Sociology will take place in Melbourne, Australia, and online. We very much hope that this hybrid format will be satisfactory for everyone and that everything will work smoothly. In any case, we are looking forward to seeing everybody and to the terrific program which our session organizers have compiled and for which we would like to extend a big 'thank you' to them. We have counted 79 oral presentations which will be part of our RC 38 program. Abstracts of all sessions and presentations can be found in this Newsletter.

For all those who actively participate in the conference and who are ISA members in good standing, the ISA offers the possibility to apply for registration grants. Applications must be submitted to the program coordinators (Maria and Johannes) by January 31, 2023. For more information, please go to: <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/conferences/world-congress/melbourne-2023/guidelines-for-program-coordinators-and-session-organizers-2023>

At the World Congress a new board will be elected during the Business Meeting. If you are interested in active participation in the RC 38, please send us an email!

Apart from the congress program, you will find in the following pages announcements of new projects, conferences and, in particular, a large number of new publications. We hope that you will enjoy reading this Newsletter.

Johannes Becker, Hermílio Santos, Maria Pohn-Lauggas, Tazuko Kobayashi

### Membership fees

Please remember to pay your membership fee. To apply for membership or renew ISA and/or RC affiliation, please use the membership form online: <https://isa.enoah.com/Sign-In>

The membership fees to the RC38 for 4 years are (see ISA regulations):

Regular members	U\$40
Students and members from countries B and C	U\$20

If you have any questions concerning the membership, please contact Johannes Becker for advice: [johannes.becker@sowi.uni-goettingen.de](mailto:johannes.becker@sowi.uni-goettingen.de)

### The deadline for the next Newsletter is at the end of May 2023.

Please send us:

- A short paper (3-7 pages) on a topic you are currently working on
- A presentation of your current project
- Some reflections on your experiences of teaching biographical approaches and methods
- Reports or some notes about conferences you have attended
- General reports about activities in the field of biographical research in your institution, university, country, continent
- Interesting calls for papers for conferences, workshops, summer schools
- New publications from you, also in your respective native language
- Any other thought or information you would like to share.
- Please send your contributions in Word or rtf formats.

Send your contribution directly to: [Biography-and-Society@gmx.de](mailto:Biography-and-Society@gmx.de)

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## PROJECTS

### **“Individual and collective memories of slavery and the slave trade: A contrastive comparison of different communities, generations and groupings in Ghana and Brazil”<sup>1</sup>**

**Research report on the first field trip to Ghana by Gabriele Rosenthal & Maria Pohn-Lauggas for the team in Germany**

Berlin/Vienna, December 2022

**Principal investigators:** Prof. Dr. Maria Pohn-Lauggas & Prof. Dr. Gabriele Rosenthal (University of Göttingen)

**Researchers in Germany:** Dr. Eva Bahl, Dr. Artur Bogner, Lucas Cé Sangalli, M.A., Dr. Nicole Witte

**Cooperation partners:** Prof. Dr. Steve Tonah (University of Ghana; Legon/Accra); Prof. Dr. Hermílio Santos (Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul; Porto Alegre)

**Funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG: PO 2422/3-1\_RO 827/23-1)**

**Duration of the project:** 2022–2025

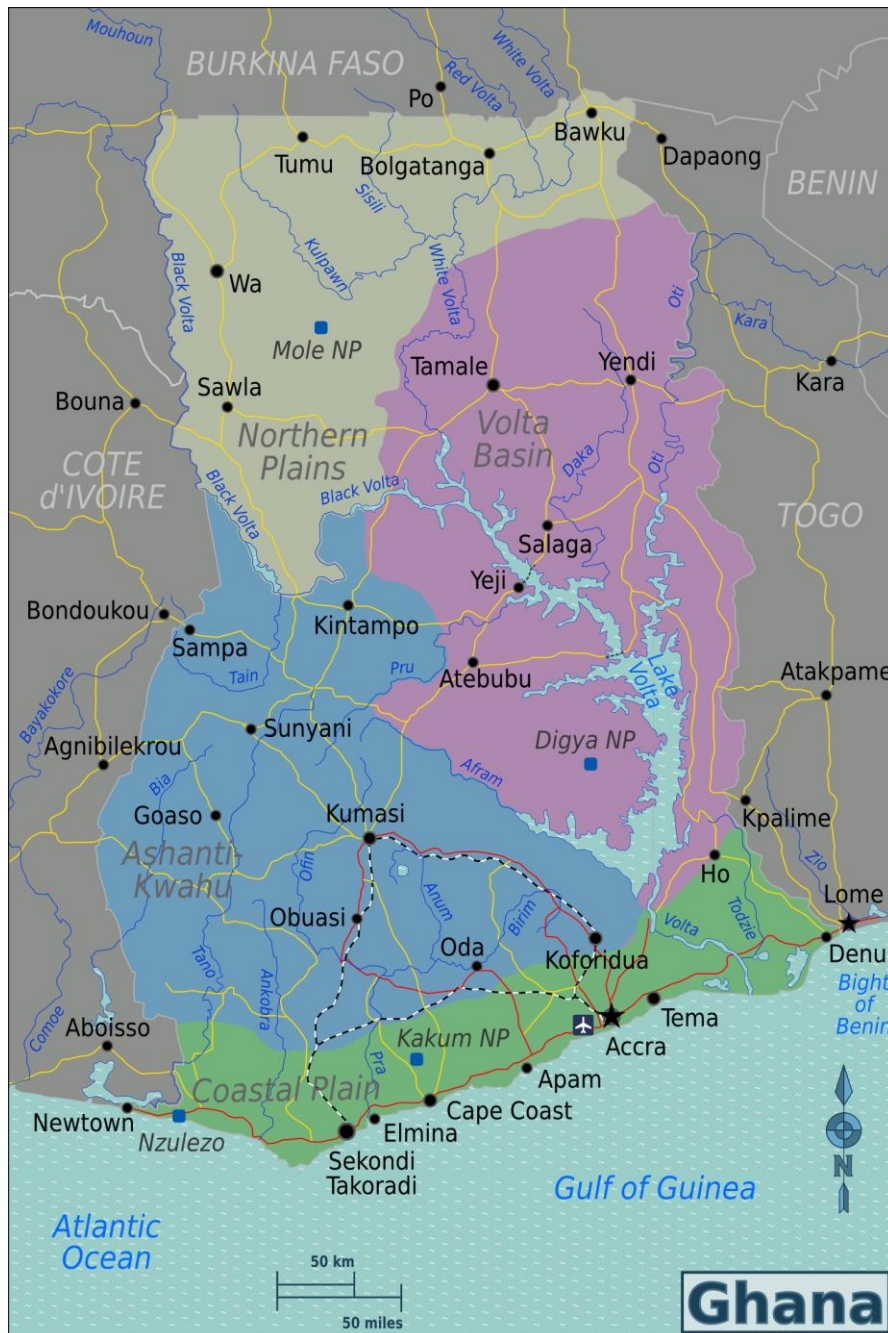
Our empirical interpretative study focuses on a contrastive comparison of collective and individual memories of slavery in different regions, generations and groupings in Ghana and Brazil. In October and November 2022, the team from Germany carried out the first field trip to Ghana. Together with Prof. Steve Tonah and his team, we started conducting interviews and participant observations in Accra, Cape Coast and Elmina. After this we worked together with his cooperation partners in Tamale, Salaga, and the areas around or in Navrongo, Sandema, Bolgatanga and Yendi in the north of the country<sup>2</sup>.

Situated on the coast of Ghana, the castles of Elmina and Cape Coast are among the country's most well-known national memorial sites. Captives were kept here in the dungeons before being loaded onto the slave ships of trading companies from various European countries, and shipped to the “New World” on the other side of the Atlantic. The central position of these castles in Ghana's memory culture today is a result, at least in part, of their great significance in the context of “Slavery Heritage tourism” (in the public discourse in Ghana sometimes: roots tourism) by descendants of enslaved people, primarily from the US, which is strongly focused on the transatlantic slave trade (and North America) (see e.g. Schramm 2008).

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/650363.html>

<sup>2</sup> On the research of our project partners in Ghana and Brazil see the project reports linked on the project homepage (see footnote 1).



*Burmesedays, minor amendments by Joelf, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons*

In the north of Ghana, we concentrated on those regions and memorial sites which were closely associated with slave raiding and the slave trade. This includes the former Pikworo slave camp in the Kassena-Nankana West District, the memorial sites within the territory of the Builsa in the districts of Builsa North and South, and Salaga (East Gonja District, Northern Region) which was perhaps the biggest and most important slave market in what is today Ghana. When planning this study, we worked on the initial assumption that the intra-African slave trade and (local) resistance to slave raiders in the north must also play an important role in the collective memory. During this first field trip, we gained a much more differentiated picture, depending on which particular grouping, local community and social setting we were dealing with, and we intend to investigate this further.

Without going into great detail, we present here our preliminary empirical findings, some of which require further field work, including in particular interviews with people whose views contradict these findings. To do this we will seek out outsiders who do not always comply with the rules of the dominant discourses, using methodological designs which have proved to be effective in earlier empirical studies. As Artur Bogner and Gabriele Rosenthal discovered in their interviews with outsiders in both Uganda and Palestine, this offers a very good opportunity to learn about the components and interpretations of collective history which are sidelined or silenced by the dominant discourses (cf. Bogner/Rosenthal 2022).

Our assumptions at the moment are:

1. What people know and what they say about slavery in the past differs greatly depending on the region in which they live, and their ethnopolitical or local or social grouping. Often their knowledge consists mainly, or only, of what is printed in school textbooks, and is seldom based on oral traditions. This suggests that there are differences corresponding to people's level of education and (socio-)political positioning, and we intend to investigate this more closely during our next field trip. However, we have already noticed that so-called royals seem to have a much greater knowledge than so-called commoners in respect of orally transmitted knowledge that is explicitly relevant to our study.
2. On the coast of Ghana, due to the public and geographical presence and great visibility of the memorial sites, and the guided tours of them, the dominant focus is on the transatlantic slave trade. This also applies to what we were told by our interviewees. They do speak of an intra-African slave trade but relate this almost exclusively to the keeping of slaves at the royal court of the Asante (Ashanti), and by other members of this powerful ethnic group which was dominant, and is still very important and influential today, in the south of the country. Our pointed questions about slavery, slave trade and slave raiding in the north of the country showed that this is a subject about which most of our interviewees in the south know practically nothing. To put it bluntly, one could easily gain the impression that both the intra-African and the transatlantic slave trade 'began' in Kumasi, the capital of the Asante kingdom. And yet most of the enslaved people who were shipped across the Atlantic from this coast most likely came from the north of present-day Ghana and neighbouring regions.
3. This forms a clear contrast to the presentations we heard in the north. Here, what people know about slavery or enslavement, and the way they speak about it, is concentrated on intra-African activities which took place especially in the north of Ghana. Not always, or only rarely, do people make a connection between these activities and the transatlantic slave trade. The slave raiders are said to have been people who came from areas beyond the borders of present-day Ghana (especially in what are today Burkina Faso und Niger). Our interviewees repeatedly explain how their forefathers had no choice but to let the slave raiders take people away, or to send them as a form of tribute to the Asante king. Members of different groupings gave us different information about which people were chosen to be sold or given away as slaves (young orphans, for instance). On the basis of the interviews we have conducted so far, we will in future work on the assumption that members of some groupings (such as the Dagomba) speak about slave traders and slave raiders in their family past more, or more often, with pride than with shame.

4. This difference in the presentations made by interviewees in the north and in the south is not really surprising; and yet we did not expect the difference to be so clear, and above all we did not expect to find such a lack of knowledge, about slavery in the north, in other parts of the country. During our next field trip we will try to find voices which contradict this and we will conduct interviews in the region of Kumasi (in the Asante kingdom).
5. In the north of the country, it became clear to us that all groupings kept slaves, and that everyone knows this. However, depending on which grouping they belong to, people talk about it in different ways, focusing on different actors and different historical phases. However, almost all interviewees mention the names of commonly known slave raiders, in particular Babatu and Samori (see e.g. Weiss 2008).
6. The interviewees all emphasize that no one speaks openly about which local families were slaves in the past, and how many or which other families (including those of former slave owners and slave traders) know this. That would be regarded as discrimination. Apparently, no one likes to admit that they had an ancestor or a family member with a slave past. But in the village, in the compound, in the town, most people know it. And it is a topic that is frequently mentioned casually in short ethnographic interviews.

**References:**

Bogner, Artur & Rosenthal, Gabriele (2022): Social-constructivist and figural bio-graphical research. *Current Sociology*, Online first:

<https://doi.org/10.1177/00113921221132511>

Schramm, Katharina (2008): Slave Route Projects: Tracing the Heritage of Slavery in Ghana. In: de Jong, Ferdinand/Rowlands, Michael (Eds.): *Reclaiming Heritage. Alternative Imaginaries of Memory in West Africa*. Walnut Creek: Routledge, 71-98.

<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315421131-3>

Weiss, Holger (2008): *Between Accommodation and Revivalism: Muslims, the State and Society in Ghana from the Precolonial to the Postcolonial Era*. Helsinki: Studia Orientalia.



# CONFERENCES



# DIVER

# SITY

Studies in  
Subjectivation

**28-30/09/23**  
**CAU Kiel**

# AND

# DIFFE

# RENCE



## CALL FOR PAPERS

**“Diversity” as a rallying buzzword crops up today in greatly varying contexts: to describe relations within societies, as a part of government programs and political manifestos, or as everyday practice in organizations. Referring to diversity is often intended to communicate a certain “openness” to categories of difference. Diverse actors positively reevaluate difference and distinctiveness, in processes where market interests and neoliberal programs also play crucial roles.**

Diversity characterizes societies of the present. Some fight using the slogans “We’ll come united”, “Leave no one behind,” “Black lives matter”, and “Trans rights”. Others, however, experience diversity as a loss of control, which they counter with defense mechanisms, including an “us” versus “them” mindset.

Accordingly, demands for inclusion and integration are often interwoven with diffuse fears of “new identities” (Hall 1991), for example of refugees and migrants, but also of queer persons and queer ways of life. In turn, demarcation struggles and identitarian divisions within social groups can arise from emphasizing difference, and can lead to “positional fundamentalism” (Villa-Braslavsky 2020).

The conference „Diversity and Difference – Studies in Subjectivation” selects these points of departure to enquire about subjectivation, i.e., about processes of socialization and of “becoming a subject”. “Being a subject” requires a confrontation between “self” and “world”, a relation that is constituted from materialities and organizations, sensualities and discourses, collectivizations and individualizations. They flag up the fact that subjects are in themselves incomplete, non-uniform and fragile — and yet remain subject to demands for authenticity, coherence, and continuity.

Subjectivation research in this context can be understood as an analysis of society (Bosančić et al. 2022), with primacy given to questions of being governed, questions of power relations and exclusion mechanisms, questions of resistance, subversion and agency, and questions of participation and recognition. Within the context of diversity and difference, these foci raise perspectives regarding social inequalities, intersectional interweavings, privileges and disadvantages, discrimination and racism.

*The conference “Diversity and Difference — Studies in Subjectivation” uses subjectivation research’s theoretical vocabulary and empirical approaches to investigate diversity and difference. How can perspectives on subjects and subjectivation, biographies and discourses, articulations and re-articulations, positionings and re-positionings become fruitful for critical social analysis in the context of diversity and difference?*



*We particularly encourage contributions containing feminist, post-/decolonial, diversity-sensitive perspectives on subjectivation research, alongside critiques of ableism and racism. We look forward to contributions ...*

*... that explore subjectivation(s) theoretically, analytically, and methodologically, and which, in so doing, contribute to current societal developments.*

*... that discuss the concept of the subject in the context of diversity. Which tendencies towards appropriating and rejecting diversity can we observe? How can we cognize a resistant and subversive subject, capable of action? How does this relate to a post-identitarian subject? And how can we connect such an understanding of the subject with other scholarship on hegemony, performativity, and normality?*

*... that deal with the incompleteness and non-uniformity of subjects and simultaneously account for demands of authenticity, biographicity and coherence.*

*... that explore the perspective of subjectivation regarding interpretative methods, or which enquire into possible perspectives and extensions of interpretative research in the context of subjectivation, so as to explore diversity and difference and to avoid othering in the research process.*

*... presenting empirical results and thereby indicating fields of research and policies in which subjectivation research can provide transversal and subversive insights, which are critical of racism and ableism. In which relations of domination and solidarity are subjects located, and how are they integrated into these relations? What role do institutions, "normalizing" social and political orders, and knowledge about "the others" play in this context?*

➤ We invite you to submit **abstracts of max. 500 words** in German or in English. Please state which language or languages you would like to present your paper in. Please send your abstract including a short **biographical note** (max. 100 words) and **contact information** in a **PDF attachment** by **January 31th, 2023** to: [diversity-and-difference@email.uni-kiel.de](mailto:diversity-and-difference@email.uni-kiel.de)

➤ There will be **childcare** available during the conference. When submitting your abstract, please indicate whether you would like to take advantage of this.

➤ The conference should be as accessible as possible to people with disabilities. Please let us know **your requirements** so that we can take them into account.

Contact persons before and during the conference:  
**Tina Spies**  
[spies@gender.uni-kiel.de](mailto:spies@gender.uni-kiel.de)  
**Folke Brodersen**  
[brodersen@gender.uni-kiel.de](mailto:brodersen@gender.uni-kiel.de)

## Music, Aesthetics, and Intersubjectivity

6TH CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ALFRED SCHUTZ CIRCLE  
FOR PHENOMENOLOGY AND INTERPRETIVE SOCIAL SCIENCE

PUCRS, Porto Alegre, Brazil, May 11-13, 2023

Keynote Speaker: Jusamara Souza (UFRGS)

**CALL FOR PAPERS – extended deadline**



The International *Alfred Schutz Circle for Phenomenology and Interpretive Sociology*, while gladly welcoming papers on other topics within the Schutzian paradigm, focuses for its 6th Conference the topic “Music, Aesthetics, and Intersubjectivity.” This topic was addressed in various of Alfred Schutz’s writings, most famously in his essay “Making Music together.” There he expresses his hope “that a study of the social relationships

connected with the musical process may lead to some insights valid for many other forms of social intercourse, perhaps even to illumination of a certain aspect of the structure of social interaction as such”. For him, the study of the musical process offers the possibility to analyze the general structure of intersubjectivity and interaction, insofar as it is specifically suitable for reflecting upon the “tuning-in-relationship” and the non-conceptual aspects of communication involved in any kind of interaction. Similar argumentations can be brought forward to aesthetic fields such as literature, poetry, or theater. Schutz’s theory of musical communication therefore results to be highly significant in other fields beyond sociology and offers phenomenological insights that prove to be continually influential in other disciplines. Beyond the eponymous topic of “Music, Aesthetics, and Intersubjectivity,” propositions on any topic within the field of phenomenology and interpretive social science related to Schutz’s work are welcome. Propositions should be written in English, and panel proposals are also welcome. Please submit an abstract of approximately 500 words. To be considered, all presentation proposals must include a cover sheet with name, paper title, affiliation, five key words, and full contact information, including email address. For more information, see our website [www.schutzcircle.org](http://www.schutzcircle.org) (photo © Carlos Stein).

Submission Deadline: January 20th, 2023/Notification of Acceptance: February 1st, 2023

Please send all submissions to: [schutzcircle@uni-konstanz.de](mailto:schutzcircle@uni-konstanz.de)

Local Organizer: Hermilio Santos (PUCRS)

Executive Committee: Jochen Dreher (Chair) (University of Konstanz), Michael Barber (Saint Louis University), Carlos Belvedere (University of Buenos Aires), Teppei Sekimizu (Rissho University), Andreas Göttlich (University of Konstanz)

## NEW BOOKS AND JOURNAL ARTICLES

### **Current Sociology Monograph: Reconstructive biographical research**

*Johannes Becker, Maria Pohn-Lauggas, Hermílio Santos (eds.)*

Will be printed as issue 2, 2023, online first articles have already been released.

### **Introduction: Reconstructive biographical research**

*Johannes Becker, Maria Pohn-Lauggas, Hermílio Santos*

Reconstructive biographical research is a diverse and differentiated sociological field. In this introduction to the Monograph, we trace its interdisciplinary and transnational historical development, consider the most important theoretical influences, and characterize central research areas. In this way we show that reconstructive biographical research is a distinct sociological approach to social analysis. It offers a reflexive access to understanding, classifying and explaining social processes and social challenges of the present through the analysis of experienced and/or narrated life stories.

### **Reconstructing biographical knowledge: Biographical policy evaluation toward a structural understanding of transnational migration**

*Ursula Apitzsch, Lena Inowlocki*

In our article, we address how migrants in transnational spaces are affected by policies of citizenship, language policies, labor market, and education and training policies, among others. The analysis of autobiographical narrative interviews can provide methodical access to latently effective structures of transnational spaces. Transnational spaces can be conceptualized as opaque structures of multiply interconnected state, legal, and cultural transitions toward which individuals orient themselves biographically and in which they are simultaneously intertwined as collectives of experience. Transnational biographical knowledge is not only a result of subjective agency, but at the same time produces the structure of migration biographies, which are experienced and repeatedly reconstructed by migrating subjects. Through *biographical policy evaluation* we analyze policies and their simultaneous and sometimes paradoxical effects that force family members to find solutions for shaping their life practice. Thus, members of a family of several generations might be affected differently by policies due to their incomplete rights and family status, age, and gender. In reconstructing biographical evaluations, typical effects of the underlying policies can be discerned and critically assessed.

### **Social-constructivist and figural biographical research**

*Artur Bogner, Gabriele Rosenthal*

In this article, we consider how biographical research can avoid common pitfalls such as viewing social phenomena as ahistorical, focusing on single individuals (as if they exist in isolation), neglecting power inequalities and power balances, or ignoring collective discourses and their impact on the groupings or individuals concerned. When conducting biographical research, we are constantly at risk of falling into

these traps, despite all our good intentions. To meet this challenge, we suggest an approach that combines social-constructivist biographical research with the principles of figurational sociology. This makes it possible to investigate the mutual constitution of *individuals* and *societies*, interdependencies between different groupings or we-groups (and different kinds of we-groups), and the changing power inequalities or power balances between and inside them, within different figurations in varying historical, 'social', and geographical contexts. To illustrate this methodological approach, we present examples from our joint field research on local post-war and peace processes, carried out in two adjacent regions of northern Uganda. This research focuses on the situation following the return to civilian life of former rebel fighters from different sociopolitical, ethnopolitical, or regional settings or groupings, and from different rebel groups.

### **Together or apart? Doing biographical research and oral history in an interdisciplinary context**

*Jakub Gałęziowski, Kaja Kaźmierska*

This article compares research and analytical approaches with biographical materials in the fields of biographical research in sociology and oral history practised by a historian. The reflection is based on the experience of long-term cooperation between biographical sociologists and oral historians in the Polish research context. These contacts have created a space for the fruitful exchange of experiences in the field as well as for strengthening the researchers' distinctiveness and disciplinary identity. It also makes it possible to identify various concerns, both mutual and individual, for each research field. The main objective of this article is to share perspectives, highlight the similarities and differences between the two disciplines, and to show concerns related to the practice of oral history and biographical research, especially those close to the boundaries between the two approaches when they use the same tool, that is, the autobiographical narrative interview. The first section of the article focuses on the specifics of each approach. It then describes the different results of the common research practice and their consequences in relation to anonymising, archiving and reanalysing the data. Ethical issues are embedded into the whole course of our argument.

### **Exploring biographies in a rapidly changing labor world**

*Giorgos Tsiolis, Irini Siouti*

The field of work and employment is among the most rapidly changing fields in current societies. The sociology of work attempts to map these changes, developing concepts that seek to grasp the transformations of labor. Currently, the discussion revolves around two main topics: (a) the 'normality of non-normality' expands on the flexible, insecure, and precarious forms of employment, while (b) the 'subjectivation of work' has been introduced in order to reflect the newly observed trend in which entrepreneurial strategies and rationales colonize the whole spectrum of an employee's personal life and the self. It is a paradox, however, that while all these transformations in the labor world are taking place, interest in biographical research on the field has declined. This article aims to show the ways in which biographical narrative research has studied the changes that have taken place in the world of labor and to highlight new research possibilities. We especially wish to highlight ways in which reconstructive biographical research can contribute to the corpus of knowledge generated on this topic. We argue that, through biographical case reconstruction, paths

by which transformations of the labor world become biographically significant for individuals and their social life worlds can be grasped in a dialectical manner. Employing systematic reconstruction of the ways in which social actors construct their work experiences biographically can serve a twofold purpose. First, it reveals how social rules, dominant discourses, and social conditions form new workers' subjectivities, and second, it identifies biographical sources of resistance on the part of the actors.

### **Social media as a means of visual biographical performance and biographical work**

*Roswitha Breckner, Elisabeth Mayer*

With the rise of social media, forms of communication emerge that are increasingly defined by the use of images. From the perspective of biographical research and visual sociology, the article addresses the question in how far biographical work becomes visible while visual biographies are formed in digitalized visual communication. It proposes a way how these processes can be studied with interpretive biographical and visual methodologies. Based on empirical material from Austria, we show how biographical performances in social media differ, in form and content, from conventional verbal-narratives, and how they simultaneously relate to each other. We present a case study that shows in depth how images on Facebook and Instagram become biographically relevant and what kind of biographical work takes place there. The methodological procedure consists of an innovative triangulation that combines visual analyses, biographical-narrative interviews and media interviews. The aim of this article is to give insights into the biographical significance and biographical work of visual biographies in social media, and to propose by triangulation of different data analysis a way of exploring the intertwining of narrative and visual biographies.

### **On the emergence and changing positions of old-established groupings in migration contexts: A process perspective on group formation in Jordan**

*Johannes Becker, Hendrik Hinrichsen Arne Worm*

While being 'old-established' is usually seen as a product of the social negotiation of migration, there is little empirical research on how this category evolves and changes over time. To unravel this process, we focus in this article on the group formation processes which contribute to the making and unmaking of being 'old-established' as a pattern of interpretation, a we-image and a potential power chance in various figurations. A combination of figurational and biographical approaches with an extended chronological horizon provides a theoretical and methodological framework to focus on when, and in what circumstances, residents distinguish between 'old-established' and 'newcomers' in their we- and they-images. Attention is paid to the socio-historical transformations which increase or reduce material and immaterial power chances (such as ownership of land, length of association and internal cohesion) within dynamic processes of group formation in migration societies. A multigenerational case study of an extended family in Jordan shows the complex processuality of how long-time residents become 'old-established' as a group, which expands their power chances, and under what circumstances this status can become eroded.

## **Exploring biographical case reconstructions of women with housing instability experience in South Brazil**

*Priscila Susin, Naida Menezes*

How do women who have experienced housing instability interpret and set up strategies to access housing? In this paper we aimed to reflect on biographical narrative interviews with women who have experienced compulsory housing removal and with women who were living in squats organized by social movements in the city of Porto Alegre, Southern Brazil. Interviews were analysed through the method of biographical case reconstruction with the aim of apprehending the interviewees' past and present perspectives on experiences of struggle related to housing and its connection to individual and family stories and broader socio-historical processes. The two cases discussed in this paper demonstrate that to access formal housing through social policy, not rarely women challenge socially and politically legitimate discourses and practices by adopting strategies beyond legal or formal means. The cases also show that women who have faced housing instability often find themselves in temporary housing arrangements, and that this temporariness and consequent processes of moving/breaking geographical and social ties with a territory can be interpreted and experienced in different ways.



## New book series: Advances in Biographical Research

**Series editors:** Maggie O'Neill, University College Cork, Lyudmila Nurse, Oxford XXI and Lynn Froggett, University of Central Lancashire

Biographical research has a long and diverse genealogy, and its methods are connected across interdisciplinary boundaries by the interpretive storytelling of lives and experiences. These methods help us to gain insights into the workings of contemporary society and the relationship between biographical, personal and collective social issues. The growth and variety of biographical research methods challenges the disciplinary boundaries of biographical sociology and narrative methods by engaging in collaborative work with artists, film makers, geographers, historians and musicians.

This book series provides a platform for authors who are exploring theoretical and methodological advances in biographical methods. It features innovative and experimental contemporary biographical scholarship alongside more established traditions, including oral history, narrative sociology, biographical narrative interview methods, free association narrative interview methods, in-depth hermeneutic life histories, arts-based and performative biographical research.

We welcome proposals for biographical research across a wide range of areas, including but not limited to:

- theoretical and methodological advances
- digital culture and technology
- arts-based and performative methods
- the biographical, temporal and spatial changes arising from the COVID-19 pandemic
- conflict, war and shifting geo-politics
- social change in the age of migration and the Anthropocene
- social care, motherhood, parenting, ageing
- social mobility, inclusion, educational studies
- inequalities, engaging with marginalised peoples and communities
- gender, sexualities, sexual citizenship and diversity

Contributions may showcase research that:

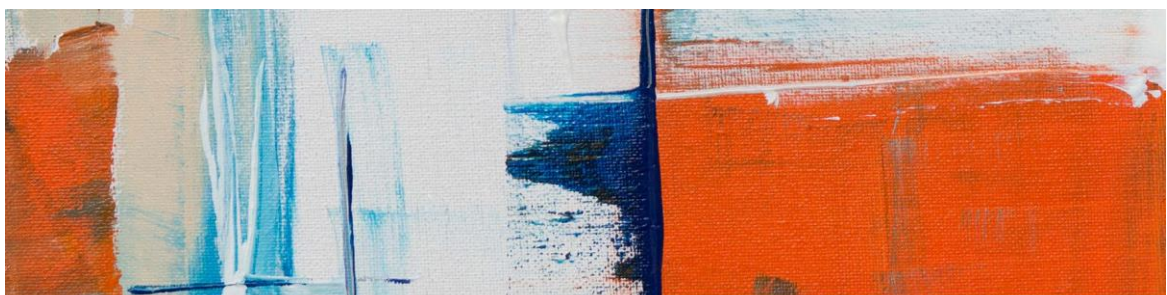
- address problems in theory, method and analysis of biographical research;
- explore lived experiences, in order to support policy and practice grounded in a concern for social justice;
- or design and develop texts books to support biographical research in the university curriculum.

If you would like to discuss submitting a proposal, please email the series editors:

Maggie O'Neill - [maggie.oneill@ucc.ie](mailto:maggie.oneill@ucc.ie)

Lyudmila Nurse - [lyudmilanurse@oxford-xxi.org](mailto:lyudmilanurse@oxford-xxi.org)

Lynn Froggett- [lfroggett@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:lfroggett@uclan.ac.uk)



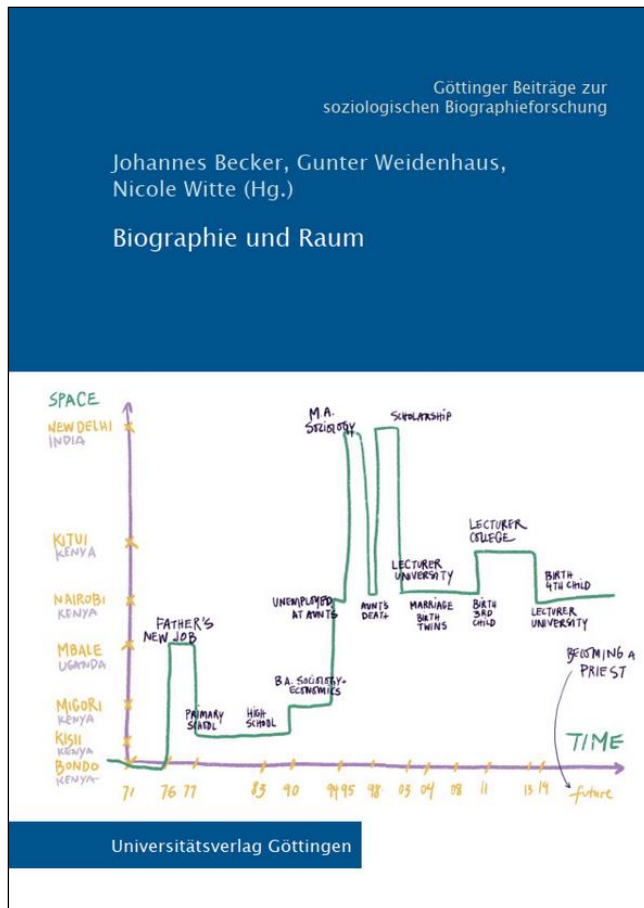
## Biographie und Raum [Biography and Space]

Johannes Becker, Gunter Weidenhaus, Nicole Witte (eds.)

Göttingen: Göttingen University Press

Göttingen Series in Sociological Biographical Research; 8

Open access: <https://doi.org/10.17875/gup2022-1860>



For a long time, sociological biographical research has been concerned with temporal processes and circumstances, while neglecting the spatial dimension of biographies. And yet an understanding of the relationships or interconnections between space and biography is important for both the sociology of space and sociological biographical research. The special challenge of this research field lies in its complexity and the need to study (concepts of) “space” and (biographical) “time” in relation to each other. Various ways of approaching this task are presented in this book, which shows how life courses and biographical constructions can be theoretically framed and empirically studied in their relation to constitutions of space.

Die soziologische Biographieforschung hat sich lange auf die Analyse temporalen Prozesse und Verhältnisse konzentriert. Weitgehend unbeachtet blieb hingegen die räumliche Dimension von Biographien. Dabei stellt die Aufarbeitung der Beziehung bzw. der Verwobenheit von Raum und Biographie eine wichtige Erweiterung sowohl für die Raumsoziologie als auch für die soziologische Biographieforschung dar. Die besondere Herausforderung dieser Verbindung liegt in ihrer Komplexität und darin, dass dafür (Konzepte von) „Raum“ und (biographischer) „Zeit“ zueinander in Beziehung gesetzt werden müssen. In diesem Band werden verschiedene Zugänge dazu vorgestellt. Es wird gezeigt, wie Lebensverläufe und biographische Konstruktionen in ihrem Verhältnis mit Raumkonstitutionen theoretisch gerahmt und empirisch erforscht werden können.

**Beiträge:**

1. Johannes Becker, Gunter Weidenhaus, Nicole Witte: Biographie und Raum: Betrachtungen eines komplexen Verhältnisses
2. Martina Löw: Das Verhältnis von Biographie und Raum aus Sicht einer Raumsoziologin
3. Gabriele Rosenthal: Das Verhältnis von Biographie und Raum aus Sicht der soziologischen Biographieforschung
4. Johannes Becker: Räumliche Orientierungen in Familien- und Lebensgeschichten: Wie sie Verortungen in der Stadt mitbestimmen
5. Eva Bahl: Räume, Diskurse, Verortungen – Perspektiven auf Stadtgeschichte und Zugehörigkeitskonstruktionen in Ceuta und Melilla
6. Talia Meer: Heimat und Geschichte: Lebensgeschichten und Place-Making in Observatory, Kapstadt, Südafrika
7. Sebastian Juhnke: Selbstverwirklichung in der „kreativen Stadt“? Lebensentwürfe von Kreativschaffenden in multikulturellen Nachbarschaften in Berlin und London
8. Nicole Witte: Biographisch relevante Raumkonstitutionen sichtbar machen
9. Gunter Weidenhaus, Claudia Mock: „I want my child to become a world citizen“: Raum, Zeit und (Re)Produktion in kenianischen Mittelschichtsbioographien
10. Anna-Lisa Müller: Räume, Zeiten, Orte: Migrationsbiographien und Raumkonstitutionen
11. Priscila Susin: Frauen im Kampf um städtischen Wohnraum in Porto Alegre: Eine biographietheoretische Perspektive
12. Elisabeth Pönisch: Vorbeugen, anpassen, zurückerobern: Zum Umgang mit wiederkehrender Gewalt im Judenhaus

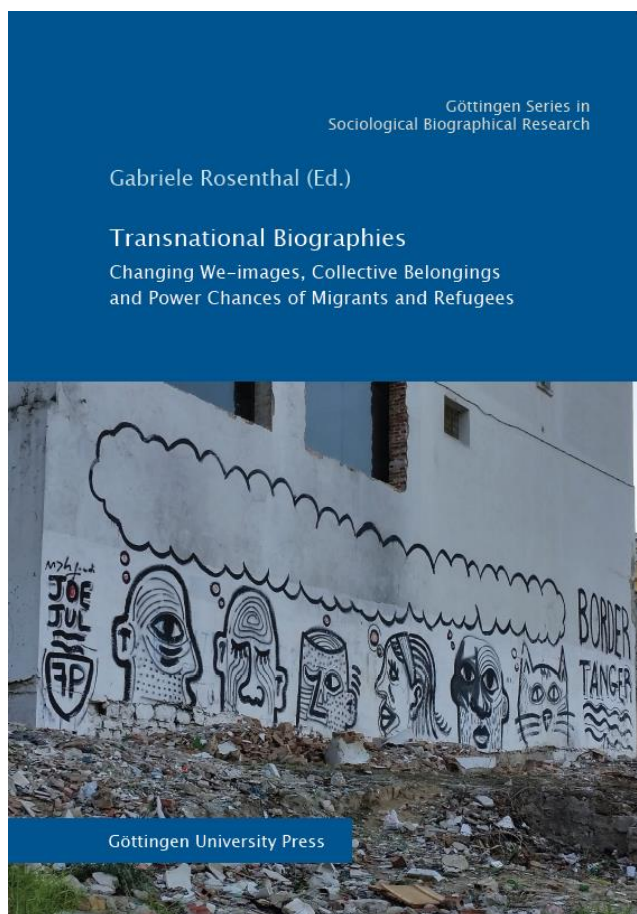
## Transnational Biographies. Changing We-images, Collective Belongings and Power Chances of Migrants and Refugees

Gabriele Rosenthal (ed.)

Göttingen: Göttingen University Press

Göttingen Series in Sociological Biographical Research; 9

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Every day many people leave the place where they live and move to some other place, where they settle permanently or stay for many years. The contributions to this volume are based on the results of three empirical research projects which set out to investigate the situation of migrants in Jordan, Brazil, Germany and other European countries. The articles focus on migrants at their place of arrival and ask questions such as: How do they look back on their life histories and migration paths? What dynamics and processes led up to their migration projects and how do they explain their motives? The studies in this volume show that leaving and arriving are interrelated: leaving one's home region is part of a long process, partly planned and partly unplanned, which is determined by complex collective, familial and individual constellations, and which has significant consequences for the action patterns and participation strategies of migrants in their arrival societies. This book also shows which constellations enable some migrants to realize their goals in their present situation, and which constraints or obstacles make it impossible for others to do so.

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1. Gabriele Rosenthal: Introduction

***I. The front-stage and back-stage presentations of African migrants in the diaspora***

2. Gabriele Rosenthal: On the rules for front-stage self- and we-presentations

3. Gabriele Rosenthal, Lucas Cé Sangalli, Arne Worm: Migrants from Senegal: Integrated in religious, national and multinational networks

4. Gabriele Rosenthal, Ahmed Albaba, Lucas Cé Sangalli: Migrants from Mauritania: On the existence of slavery today and the unequal power chances of the Bidhan, the Soudan and the Haratin

5. Lucas Cé Sangalli: Contested we- and they-images among people from Darfur and other regions of Sudan living in Germany

***II. Migration courses in the context of ambivalent cross-border entanglements***

6. Eva Bahl, Arne Worm: Precarious transnationality

7. Sevil Çakır Kılınçoğlu: Forced migration of Kurdish activist women to Germany: Navigating through a political movement, an armed conflict, and an engaged diaspora

***III. Changes in a transnational migrant society: Social figurations and everyday life in Jordan***

8. Hendrik Hinrichsen, Johannes Becker: Jordan/Amman as a changing arrival context: From polarization between old-established residents and refugees to fragmentation and new fronts

9. Hendrik Hinrichsen, Johannes Becker: Translocal vs. localized networks: How they shape migration, life chances and long-term establishment in Jordan

## 家の歴史を書 [Writing Family History]

Sara Park

Tokyo: Chikuma Bunko

<https://www.chikumashobo.co.jp/special/chibenorekishi/>



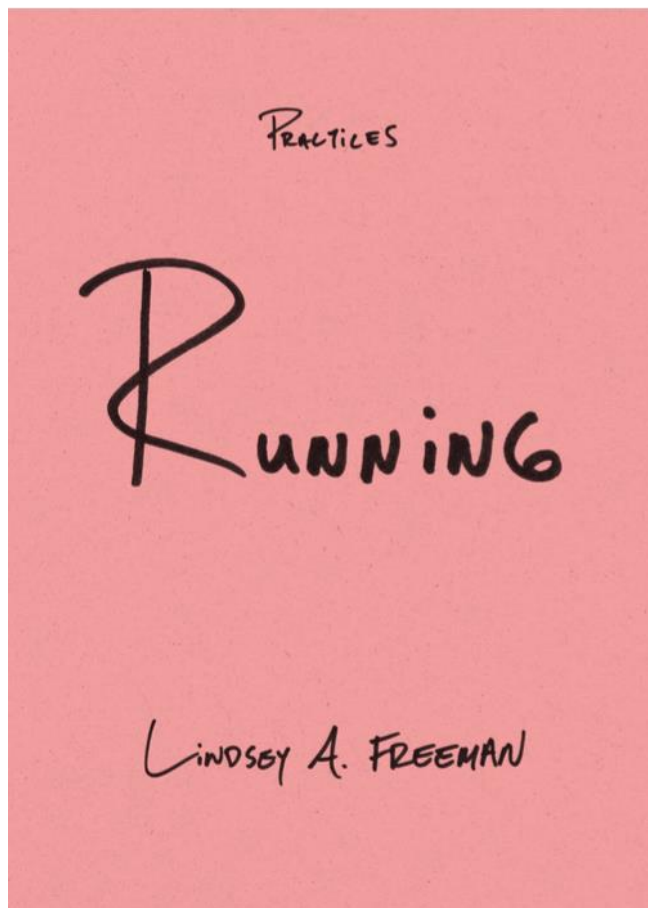
The author, a third-generation of Korean migrant in Japan, conducted family history interviews with her own family members, in search of her ethnic identity. She interviewed her four uncles and aunts, who survived Japan's colonial rule in Korea, the massacre (Cheju 4-3 Incident in South Korea) and the Korean War, and undocumented migration from Korea to Japan. However, the most striking was the description and meanings of their experiences. One of the uncles, who was once pro-Japanese in colonial Korea, then turned to be a communist in liberated Korea, then arrested and secretly escaped from his homeland, tells the author that he feels "liberated" when migrated to Japan. Another aunt, who survived the massacre in her home village on Cheju Island, tells the author that her hardest was being illiterate. Listening to the family, understanding the history, and revitalizing the past are the same, sociological act.

## Running

Lindsey A. Freeman

Duke University Press, 2023

Special offer: Use coupon code E23RUNN to save 30% when you order from dukeupress.edu.



In *Running*, former NCAA Division I track athlete Lindsey A. Freeman presents the feminist and queer handbook of running that she always wanted but could never find. For Freeman, running is full of joy, desire, and indulgence in the pleasure and weirdness of having a body. It allows for a space of freedom—to move and be moved. Through tender storytelling of a lifetime wearing running shoes, Freeman considers injury and recovery, what it means to run as a visibly queer person, and how the release found in running comes from a desire to touch something that cannot be accessed when still. *Running* invites us to run through life, legging it out the best we can with heart and style.

## **Our lives and bodies matter: memories of violence and strategies of resistance among migrants crossing the Mediterranean**

**Monica Massari**

Ethnic and Racial Studies 45(16), 458-477, available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01419870.2022.2101894> (Open Access)

This article addresses the counter-effects of the politics of externalization of European frontiers in Libya through a qualitative analysis of a case-study concerning a group of Somali asylum seekers that, after being detained and tortured in Libyan detention centres, managed to cross the Mediterranean and arrive in Italy where they accidentally met and, thus, denounced their torturer. Based on the information provided by the judicial files containing the testimonies of the asylum seekers which led to the first recognition by a European court of the unbearable forms of violence suffered by migrants in Libya, the article provides a critical reflection on the implications of the policy of migration control enforcement promoted at the borders of EU on European civil and political community. Moreover it provides a wider reflection on the challenges posed by survivors' testimonies to migration studies and, more crucially, on the wider implications of subjective experiences and biographical narratives in shedding light on emerging domains of social responsibility and political action.

**Keywords:** Migration, Mediterranean, Libya, violence, resistance, reflexivity, memory, bodies.



## RC 38 SESSIONS AT THE WORLD CONGRESS 2023

### Program Coordinators

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### Biographical Research in Extreme Places and Difficult to Reach Areas: Challenges and Strategies

*Session Organizers:*

*Karina REIF, PUCRS, Brazil*

*Hermilio SANTOS, PUCRS, Brazil*

*Martin DI MARCO, CONICET/IIIGG, Capital Federal, Argentina*

Biographical research carried out in places which are difficult to reach, either because of geographic or security reasons, will be discussed in this session. The intention is that the papers address planning in relation to field research in places that require effort, negotiation and care for researchers to access and develop their work.

Contributions on methodological challenges and ethical issues are also expected. Studies about specific areas, such as indigenous villages, closed institutions, regions of petty and organized crime, military conflicts or exploration in the open sea, are also welcome. Areas that have experienced natural disasters or regions with extreme temperatures, as well as places with a focus on contagious diseases, also require researchers to deal with several obstacles. Discussions about this kind of experience can contribute to the production of knowledge about ways to make research viable in the face of these types of difficulties and how biographies may help to understand social phenomena.

Investigations in regions of war, prisons and disaster areas, for instance, demand strategies that involve logistics, safety precautions and planning adaptations. These are the topics that we intend to discuss and encourage in this session.

### **Prisons, Border Spaces and Favelas: Building Access and Trust Strategy to Biographical Research**

*Hermilio SANTOS, PUCRS, Brazil*

One of the key questions in conducting research based on biographical narratives interviews is the establishment of trust with the interviewees. This process is even more critical when we consider conducting biographical interviews in field of complex access, as prisons, border spaces and *Favelas*, for instance. Based on my experiences of recent years in conducting studies in all those fields, this paper will propose a critical appraisal on the process of getting access to these fields and on the obstacles in gaining confidence from the research subjects, illustrated with examples of how these obstacles were surpassed successfully.

### **Biographical Research Near the Front Line: Strategies, Challenges and Positionality**

*Lyudmila NURSE, Oxford XXI think tank, United Kingdom, Ian THOMPSON, University of Oxford, United Kingdom and Iryna KUZINA, V.N. Karazin Kharkiv University, Ukraine*

The paper addresses the methodological approach and outcomes of the study of displaced young people and their families in East Ukraine (before the outbreak of military actions in the country in February 2022) as part of the AHRC – funded project Cultural Artefacts and Belonging conducted by the Department of Education, University of Oxford in 2021-22 in collaboration with V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University Ukraine. Qualitative biographical interviews with internally displaced individuals (IDPs) in Ukraine were part of the data collected through

a variety of methods: online scoping studies, biographical interviews and qualitative interventions and were aimed at better understanding mechanisms of self-identification of forced migrants and how dramatic changes in individuals' lives related to forced migration and on-going conflict were reflected in the process of their self-identification. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions and proximity of the place of research to the on-going military conflict in East Ukraine all data was collected using online methods (asynchronous and synchronous). Recruitment of the participants was carefully guided by the local gatekeepers: schools and researchers in East Ukraine. The paper discusses research strategies of the biographical empirical work: proximity to the military action areas; sensitivity of the topic of IDP (for the informants and researchers) and extreme conditions under which the research took place.

### **When Fieldwork Becomes Problematic: Ethical Dilemmas in Programs for Men Who Have Used Violence Against Women**

*Martin DI MARCO, CONICET/IIIGG, Capital Federal, Capital Federal, Argentina and María Florencia SANTI, Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas, Argentina*

Sociological and criminological studies on gender-based violence have encouraged methodological debates about how to conduct research with offenders. In particular, studies focused on those who exercise physical violence against women, given their relative scarcity in academia, have led to a discussion about the relevance, limitations and strategies to conduct empirical research on perpetrators. In this field, little attention has been given to the ethical issues involved in doing qualitative social research on violence in Latin America. Drawing on four experiences of qualitative fieldwork on perpetrators of gender-based violence in this region, this paper identifies the main ethical problems that arise in institutions for men who have used violence against female intimate partners. Four problematic aspects were identified: interactions with IRBs, institutional requests, coercion of participants, and the protection of the interviewees. The rationalities of the different social actors involved, and the contrasting viewpoints and interests of institutions create tensions in the research process and force us to rethink the ways of conducting ethically and methodologically sound interviews. We discuss the need to highlight and analyse the 26characterional and ethical challenges when studying violence in the context of programs and institutions, which have been marginal in academic literature.

### **The Emotional Journey of Doing Life Stories in Chilean Prisons**

*Liza ZUNIGA, Universidad de Chile, Chile*

Qualitative social research entails emotional work, both from the researcher and the interviewee, which must be considered together. There is no pattern or interview guide that can anticipate the emotions that will surface during interviews. With a captive population, it is expected that sensitive issues will arise and even more so when delving into their life stories, where memories and episodes, that most of the time have been bitter, are intentionally stirred up by the interviewer. The intense emotional work that prison requires is an element that must be considered both in the design and in the process of data collection and analysis. However, it should always be considered as an open space, since it is not possible to anticipate the emotions that will arise in both parties involved in the interaction. Based on the experience of a year of doing 50 life stories of inmates, both men and women, it is showed how the different emotional journeys emerged and were interspersed over time: each person and each interview involves an emotional journey that influences the next encounter. It is argued that the capacity for emotional agency of the people involved generates different interview situations that, when described and classified, can generate more comprehensive methodologies for working with people imprisoned.

### **Characteristics of Research on Ultra-Deepwater Oil and Gas Platforms**

*Karina SCHUH REIF and Francisco SCHUSTER RODRIGUES, PUCRS, Brazil*

Brazilian pre-salt oil and gas operations are carried out 200 km from the shore. To access these exploration and production platforms located in ultra-deepwater regions, a one-hour helicopter flight is required. During the period on board – usually two weeks –, people work and reside in the same place. Thus, communications and family life are restricted, 26characterizing an isolation condition.

These platforms remotely positioned in the ocean and subject to severe meteorological phenomena configure hostile workplace environments. Front-line workers handle heavy and oversized equipment; operate noisy machines; and are exposed to chemicals or toxic products. In addition, there are hazards related to processes, such as blowout and explosions, which could affect the integrity of the entire place.

The opportunity to interview workers on board allows researchers to have access to the point-of-view, challenges or difficulties experienced by workers in a more accurate way. The field observation and participation help in the perception of the interaction and the support network among workers, which would be more challenging to identify only through onshore interviews.

The aim of this presentation is to discuss the characteristics of research on platforms and show how the researchers dealt with all limitations of this field in a project in Brazil. In order to be able to embark and investigate strategies that offshore workers use to deal with the peculiarities of their work, researchers had to take basic safety courses, complying with the Brazilian Navy, to respond in case there is an emergency.

On two one-week long offshore experiences, in 2017 and 2018, the researchers got involved with the workers' routine and conducted biographical interviews. Every experience which took into account the proximity with workers and their limitations added more richness to the results comparing to the online data collection which took place during the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Retos EN Plataformas Petrolíferas EN Alta MAR: Investigación SOBRE La Trayectoria De LOS Profesionales Marítimos**

Distributed Paper

*Naida MENEZES and Rosana HALINSKI, PUCRS, Brazil*

En la sociedad brasileña, se observa la presencia de profesionales de la Marina Mercante en importantes contextos históricos de interacción con el Atlántico Sur, involucrando, por ejemplo, actividades relacionadas con el transporte de carga y pasajeros. En las últimas décadas, muchos de estos profesionales se han convertido en trabajadores *offshore*, prestando servicios a las industrias de petróleo y gas que explotan el Pré-Sal (una camada rocosa presente en aguas marinas ultra profundas). Nuestro estudio analiza el fenómeno de adaptación de los profesionales marítimos al trabajo realizado en plataformas *offshore*, considerando sus funciones a bordo encaminadas a la seguridad ambiental y, en particular, la seguridad de los trabajadores a bordo que desarrollan sus funciones en un entorno de alto riesgo. Nuestra investigación se basa en la práctica de métodos de triangulación que incluyen narrativa biográfica, entrevistas abiertas y observación participante. Cuando fuimos al lugar de trabajo de estos profesionales, fue posible observar sus actividades. Con ellos convivimos tanto en el viaje en helicóptero a la plataforma como durante las reuniones, simulacros de emergencia, almuerzos, desayunos y momentos de ocio, lo que sin duda amplió nuestras perspectivas de análisis y percepciones sobre riesgo y seguridad. En nuestra presentación, además de explicar la investigación de campo, también nos centraremos en algunos de los resultados de la investigación, destacando el análisis de la trayectoria de los entrevistados. En este análisis observamos la formación de una subcultura a bordo que mantiene viejos valores de la profesión como la disciplina y el liderazgo vertical.

### **Investigación En La Frontera: El Viaje Para Llegar Al Pueblo Manchineri En La Selva Amazónica**

Distributed Paper

*Raphaela DELLAZERI, PUCRS, Brazil*

Esta investigación es el resultado de una expedición realizada en la Selva Amazónica en Brasil. En septiembre de 2021 se realizó un viaje al estado de Acre – uno de los estados que componen la Selva Amazónica – para la investigación biográfica y la grabación documental con el Pueblo Manchineri. El viaje se llevó a cabo desde el sur hasta el noroeste de Brasil, saliendo del estado de Río Grande do Sul al estado de Acre. La distancia entre los estados brasileños corresponde a una media de 3.000 kilómetros en avión y coche. Esta distancia se hace aún mayor por la llegada a la pueblo indígena, que recorre toda la Cabecera del Río Acre hasta llegar a la Tierra Indígena de Mamoadate, en uno de los lugares donde se

encuentran, ya que también están presentes en Bolivia y Perú. Este tramo tuvo que hacerse en barco y en algunas partes fue necesario entrar en la Selva Amazónica para seguir el camino a pie.

Para llevar a cabo esta expedición fue necesario el contacto y el apoyo del cacique y de los miembros del pueblo. En el viaje participaron un profesor responsable de la investigación, otros dos investigadores además de mí. Al no ser una ruta habitual, el desplazamiento es arduo y requiere una planificación previa, con la ayuda de los que ya conocen la travesía. Es necesario establecer contactos para organizar la hora de llegada y salida de las embarcaciones que puede durar más de seis horas dependiendo del tiempo y del nivel del río. También es importante prestar atención a la cantidad de gasolina, preparar comida, bebida, ropa, repelentes, hamacas, así como equipos de investigación y grabación. Por todo ello, esta investigación se sitúa en un lugar de riesgo y de difícil acceso para la producción de investigación académica.

### **Community Gender Alert (ECG): Decolonizing Quantitative Methodologies for Documenting Violence Against Indigenous Women in Mexico**

Distributed Paper

*Maria FIGUEROA, Center for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean CERLAC, Canada*

The National Coordination of Indigenous Women in Mexico (CONAMI) created in 2013 a digital activist initiative called Community Gender Alert (ECG) to raise awareness and mobilize information about the impacts of the Drug War on Indigenous women and their peoples. Derived from a collaborative research process, this presentation will deliver some reflexive thoughts on the challenge of decolonizing quantitative methodologies used by Indigenous women placing the analytical eye on the knowledge production process and less on final outcomes.

### **Collective Memories of Violence: Remembering in Families and Local Communities** *(Joint Session with RC56 Historical Sociology)*

Session Organizers:

*Gabriele ROSENTHAL, Georg-August University of Göttingen, Germany*

*Miriam SCHAEFER, Georg-August-University Goettingen, Germany*

*Deniz DEMIRHISAR, IFEA (Institut français d'études anatoliennes) / CETOBAC – EHESS, Turkey*

In recent decades biographical research has given more attention to the relevance of collective memories of violence such as armed conflicts and persecution in different historical periods and world regions. Collective memories shape people's view of the past, and determine which parts of the past are included or excluded in the present knowledge of social groups and collectivities. They also shape the "we" and "they" images that are constitutive for biographies, and structure interactions in power asymmetric relations. Not least, collective memories are in competition with each other, and social power relations are responsible for their dominance or marginalization. Accordingly, they co-determine the social position of individuals and groupings.

From the perspectives of historical sociology, figurational sociology and biographical studies, we will investigate how collective memories of armed conflicts and persecution are shaped within local communities and families, and their impact on biographies and the social positioning of individuals and groupings. We will explore the following questions in the session:

What (competing) collective memories of armed conflicts and persecution are formed and transmitted by families or local communities in their respective contexts?

Under which socio-historical conditions can they be passed on (or not) and in what ways can they be subject to transformations?

What is the significance of collective memories and the associated discourses for biographical structures and social figurations in local contexts?

What effects on biographies can we empirically determine if the collective history related to one's own grouping is not part of dominant collective memories and discourses?

### **'Deep Stories' at the Dinner Table: Forgetting and Remembering Colonisation in Australian Settler Families**

Ashley BARNWELL, *University of Melbourne, Australia*

This paper explores how people relate to colonial wrongdoing via their own family history. It draws on Arlie Hochschild's theorisation of 'deep stories' (2016), which highlights emotional and narrative aspects of political affiliation and gestures to their historical roots. The paper extends Hochschild's theory into a different space, focusing on families in a settler colonial context to examine the complex and symbiotic relationship between family and national memory stories. To do this I draw from interviews with Australian settler descendants, each of whom was researching their family history and had found historical accounts of interactions between their colonist ancestors and Indigenous people that were previously undisclosed or unknown within recent generations of the family. This paper illuminates the memory-work that goes on in the everyday settings of family life; memory-work that is private yet vital in both reaffirming and questioning national myths and amnesias. Importantly, the paper explores ongoing impacts of British colonisation at an intimate scale and furthers dialogue between metropolitan and antipodean sociologies on this topic.

### **The Simultaneity of Persecution and Perpetration - (Competing) Memories of the German National Socialist Past in Families of Stigmatized Victims**

Sarah KOENECKE and Miriam SCHAEFFER, *Georg-August-University Goettingen, Germany*

In our paper we will give an insight into our research on family memories and intergenerational consequences of persecution under National Socialism. Persons who were persecuted and murdered as so-called "asocials" and "Berufsverbrecher" ("professional criminals") under National Socialism were officially recognized as victims of this regime in Germany only in 2020 – 75 years after the end of World War II. To this day, these persecuted groupings have not formed a "we-group" and no collective memory of their experiences has been formed. Their history of persecution and their experiences have not been discussed in the German-speaking public, or in large parts of academia, or in the culture of remembrance, but instead have been tabooed. The reasons for this can be found, among other things, in the denying public discourses and the stigmatized social position of those affected, which persisted even after 1945.

On the basis of our multigenerational research in families of these stigmatized victim groupings, we will discuss how memory processes of the persecution of ancestors take shape within families, and how this interacts with discourses and the tabooing and depoliticization of the perpetration of crimes under National Socialism. Just as the history of persecution of these groups has not become part of a collective memory, their experiences have been marginalized in family memories, in which the perpetrators tend to be exonerated. We will discuss the collective and the case-specific conditions that shape this (de)thematization, and how these differ in successive generations.

### **"A Place in Which to Put the Story": Childhood, Exile and Available Social Narratives to Place a Biographical Experience.**

Fira CHMIEL, LICH, *UNSAM/CONICET, Argentina*

The following presentation stems from my doctoral research which explores, from a biographical perspective, the childhood memories of those who experienced exile during the last dictatorships in Uruguay (1973-1985) and Argentina (1976-1983). Within this framework, I seek to explore the ways in which affection, politics and memory intertwine in the experiences of those who were children during exile.

In this work, I intend to investigate the social narratives highlighted by children of that time as available references for the construction of a biographical narrative. Also, I attempt to consider the lack of collective discourses alluded to in the narratives.

Thus, this presentation aims to examine childhood memories and their readings from present, locating in exilar childhood memory a singular feature of their own biographical experience: one that seeks to construct a place to locate one's own history.

### **Physical Violence As a Component in the Transmission of Ethnic Belonging: Changing We- and They-Images in the Dialogue of Families from Sudan Living in Jordan**

*Lucas CE SANGALLI, University of Goettingen, Germany*

In this paper, I will show how experiences of physical violence in the past and its thematization and de-thematization in the family dialogue in the present shape the transmission of group pride and ethnic belonging in the case of Sudanese families living in Amman, Jordan's capital. From the standpoint of the sociology of knowledge and the sociology of figurations, I will discuss two case studies of families. The first family represents a case in which the past in Sudan is thematized and knowledge about this past is passed on to the descendants. This type is characterized by a high level of group cohesion and pride in belonging to a Sudanese we-group. This is in strong contrast to the second case, in which the family past in Sudan is not discussed. In the latter type, the family members lack group cohesion, show hardly any group pride, and no pride in belonging to a Sudanese we-group. This difference correlates with the different forms of violence experienced by family members in Sudan, but also during the migration course and in the diaspora.

The results of this study – which is part of my doctoral thesis and was carried out in the context of the German Research Foundation Project “Dynamic figurations of refugees, migrants, and longtime residents in Jordan since 1946: between peaceable and tension-ridden co-existence?” – indicate that physical violence experienced within one's own we-group tends to cause de-thematization of the family past and of belonging to certain we-groups in Sudan.

### **Testimonial Narratives As Counter-History: The EARLY YEARS of Militarization in Sulu (1972-1974)**

*Elgin Glenn SALOMON, University of the Philippines Visayas, Philippines*

Using oral history and eyewitness accounts, I explore the use of testimonial narratives of Muslim Tausug witnesses and survivors during the early years of militarization of Sulu province (1972-1974) in the southern Philippines as a counter-history to the dominant, monochromatic, and polarizing historiography of Martial Law in the Philippines. Collected through semi-structured interviews, this article focuses on the silenced and subjugated narratives of war and violence and the role of identities and culture in articulating the conflict. Their narratives serve as an alternative source of knowledge on the marginalization of Muslim Mindanao during the repressive years of Ferdinand Marcos' Martial Law. Locating Islamic Studies in Philippine and Bangsamoro contexts would deepen the understanding of how Islam was used by the Muslim Tausug to air their grievances and to fight against oppression. Rooted on their postcolonial experience and their material condition, the Muslim Tausug were able to use Islam as their framework for emancipation.

### **Forgetting American Fascisms: The Role of Families and Local Communities**

Distributed Paper

*Arlene STEIN, Rutgers University, USA*

During the interwar period, fascist ideologies and organizations were in vogue not only in Europe but also in the United States. Dozens of US extremist groups openly espoused racist, anti-Semitic, and authoritarian ideologies. Though they did not speak with one voice, they shared the goal of domination over Blacks, Jews, communists, and immigrants, and were often willing to use violence to achieve their goals. They helped build popular support for immigration restrictions, delaying the entry of the US into WWII, and suppressed working class organizing. Yet little of this history is widely known today.

How can we account for the process by which groups such as the Bund have faded from American collective memory? What are the consequence of this collective forgetting? I am analyzing interviews with people who had first-hand memories of the Bund, “America's Brownshirts,” to try to understand why this history has been forgotten. These interviews were conducted in the 1990s, sixty years after the Bund was active, when individuals were in the 70s and 80s. They reveal that memories of the Bund tend to be highly localized, and situated in relation to specific neighborhoods and families. These interviews also suggest why the memory of the Bund faded with time, and why subsequent generations never saw fit to institutionalize its memory.

The forgetting of groups like the Bund has reinforced the prevailing belief in American exceptionalism: that a broad liberal consensus inoculates the US against the rise of fascist move-

ments. Today, at a time of racial reckoning, when symbols of white supremacy are being removed in towns and cities across the South, it is important to understand that violent white Christian supremacist organizations have long been a part of the US, and not simply in the Southern US.

### **Remembering As Resistance: Inclusive Commemorations Versus Competing Victimhood after Mass Atrocity in the Post-Yugoslav Space**

Distributed Paper

Ana DEVIC and Peter VERMEERSCH, KU Leuven, Belgium

What role do commemorations play in the construction of collective memory in places afflicted by extreme war violence? To what extent can non-official, grassroots commemorations stimulate inclusive forms of remembrance? These questions are explored zooming in on the sites of extreme war atrocity in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo and Croatia: Srebrenica, Prijedor, Vukovar, Knin, Glina, Jasenovac, Batajnica and Suharekë. At these critical sites nationalist elites regularly evoke competitive victimhoods to inflame the “enemy” images, mixing the memories of WWII, socialism, and atrocities of the 1990s. These nationalist mobilizations form an obstacle to inclusive citizenship and durable peace. Based on our fieldwork and research relying on the social movements analysis, we are creating a map of alternative and oppositional commemorations emerging in these contexts, and explore their possibilities to form a viable, more inclusive alternatives to the formal institutionalized (state) commemorations. Grassroots commemorative practices will be examined as social movement activities (studying their mobilizational capacity and significance) that seek recognition for victims of the “enemy” side, transgressing ethnonational divides of the communities that were forged during the wars of the 1990s and the reconfiguration of pre-conflict everyday life through violence. The study’s unique micro-level participatory approach unravels the tangible as well as virtual efforts at seeking active forms of memory, involving regular citizens in their relationship to the recent violent past, interacting with polarizing political forces. Through a specific lens – which includes different forms of activism, including those by local artists – the paper also examines visual and virtual interactive approaches to memory, where activists redefine the spaces where war atrocities took place in innovative and striking ways, reclaiming them as inclusive places of memory. The project relies on conceptual frames and methods from sociological and political research, while drawing on the recent studies of “memory activism” and engaged art practices.

### **Biographical Research – Contemporary Methodological and Ethical Concerns**

Session Organizers:

Kaja KAZMIERSKA, University of Lodz, Poland

Piotr SZENAJCH, Lodz University, Poland

The beginning of biographical research was based on written materials. The possibility of recording a spontaneous narrative in the presence of the researcher, who could observe the interactional conditions of creating a story, became the turning point. Most biographical research projects are carried out with the use of audio recordings while analytical work was focused on anonymized transcriptions. However, the new technical possibilities, analytical strategies and research practice and unexpected contingent conditions that emerged in recent years, may have started to transform the field again.

The two pandemic years have led some scholars to conduct interviews online. Researchers are increasingly expected to archive their material in digital repositories. The availability of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software led some biographical researchers to implement such practices. Social media, online collaboration and remote work enabled new forms of autobiographical expression and self-portrayal, displaying identity, belonging, taste and status, sharing intimacy or raising public concerns. They also reshaped attitudes towards privacy. All this prompted some researchers to consider audio-visual digital data such as photos, videos, vlogs and social media entries as viable and valuable research material. Others

reached for photo and video cameras as well as audio-visual techniques for producing and eliciting research material.

These issues and others not mentioned here pose new methodological and ethical challenges. We invite researchers who can share their experiences, good practices and dilemmas that arise when working on biographical materials and solutions agreed upon in their research environments on how to adapt the biographical approach to contemporary realities.

### **Biographical Research with Visual Biographies in Social Media – Methodological and Ethical Challenges**

*Roswitha BRECKNER, Univ of Vienna, Vienna, Austria*

Biographical research with visual biographies emerging on Social Media is accompanied by two different challenges: first, a methodological one, and second, an ethical one. From a methodological point of view, the question arises to what extent curated compilations of images, especially on Facebook and Instagram can be considered as visual documents of a lived life and its visual formation. Second, working with private images on Social Media accounts, complemented by narrative interviews, offers deep insights into biographies, which brings the challenge of protecting research participants by anonymizing their images and all others depicted on them without losing their analytical potential.

Based on the project "Biographies in the making in a connected lifeworld. Exploring visual and verbal constructions of life stories" (VIS\_BIO), in my contribution I will present a research design that combines visual and narrative biographical articulations. The analysis must consider the different modes of expression that imply different time frames and indexical references in image compilations on social media and in narratives that emerge during narrative biographical interviews. In addition, I will present the solutions to anonymization that we have developed in this project.

### **Participatory Theatre As Research Method**

*Umut EREL, Sociology, Open University, Milton Keynes, United Kingdom, Eirini KAPTANI, University of Greenwich, United Kingdom, Margaret O'NEILL, University College Cork, Ireland and Tracey REYNOLDS, University of Greenwich, United Kingdom*

This paper reflects on the uses of participatory theatre as a research method. Drawing on a range of research projects with migrant families over the past decade, it argues that participatory theatre methods offer an innovative way of engaging with research participants. These methods can contribute to debates in biographical research about the relationship between individuals, groups and society; the conditions - and challenges- for sharing difficult experiences and addressing sensitive topics. The paper argues that participatory theatre methods offer a way of sharing individual experiences with other research participants and the researchers. They also offer a way of reflecting on these experiences as a group, identifying shared experiences and developing collective analyses of structural issues - such as racist and sexist experiences. The use of embodied methods allows participants to share taboo issues that may be difficult to verbalise, while the method of building a scene with other participants allows participants to reflect on their experiences, identify possibilities for individual and social action, while offering a way to sidestep well-worn narratives that construct migrants' lives as problematic or even offer their experiences as a spectacle of suffering. The paper suggests that participatory theatre methods can make a valuable contribution to biographical methodologies.

### **Exploring Ethical and Technological Issues in Online Interviewing during COVID-19: A Thematic Analysis of International Research**

*Lisa MORAN, South East Technological University, Ireland and Liam O'FARRELL, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom*

This paper synthesises international research literature on the ethical and technological challenges and opportunities of biographic, narrative research published during the period of COVID-19, related to lockdowns and major restrictions (e.g. from January 2020 up to September 2022). While there is a growing corpus of literature on practical and ethical challenges, solutions and personal reflections of researchers during COVID-19, evident in the plethora of published research since 2020, there are few attempts to thematically analyse and cate-



gorise this literature and to explore similarities and differences in researchers' responses to Social Distancing (SD) and ethical and practical questions and solutions across countries. This paper, based on on-going work by the authors into the reconfiguration of social life during and post-COVID lockdowns, aims to advance research and is a resource for the training and education of biographical scholars globally, highlighting the diversity of work into research approaches and confluence and convergence in biographic narrative researcher's experiences. Importantly, it calls for more global interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, delineating what traditions, novel research approaches and recent research policies internationally can tell us about future directions for biographical research.

### **Lessons from the Rupaul's Drag Race Shady Edit: Ethical Storytelling in the Presentation of Video Methods Research**

*Adam CARTER, The University of Sheffield, United Kingdom*

This paper considers the controversies around alleged 'shady' editing employed in the production of television series *RuPaul's Drag Race* (RPDR), and suggests the debate about reality television ethics holds lessons for social researchers using video methods. At the centre of the debate in RPDR fandom is the 'villain edit', where a particular contestant appears to be designated the central antagonist of a given season, and footage manipulated in such a way as to build the contestant's 'villainous' story. This holds 'real world' consequences for the 'villain', who faces the prospect of prolonged abuse on social media. The paper unpacks some of the structural and operational issues that contribute to this potentially unethical form of storytelling in reality television – such as time pressures, consent issues and the utility of 'montage editing'. This is compared to the analysis and presentation stages of video data in social research. The paper contends that storytelling in video methods research is open to the same editing and presentation pitfalls: time often feels short in the neo-liberal university context, obtaining consent in the use of images of participants continues to be tricky, and editing practices of social researchers can lead to concerns over data manipulation. Similarly to reality television, we open up our participants to 'real-world' consequences if their image as part of storytelling is not used appropriately. The paper concludes with suggesting ways that these difficulties might be navigated, including practicing 'the slow edit', engaging with principles of ongoing consent, and maintaining the 'temporal integrity' of data.

### **Analysing Biographies and Photographs of People Living on or Near a Former Concentration Camp Site. What Can We Take from This Multi-Method Approach?**

*Margarita WOLF, University of Vienna, Austria*

What difference does it make if an interviewee is narrating parts of his/her life or shows them in photographs? Or if he/she is only narrating or only showing? When do interviewees verbalize and/or visualize their own life stories?

I will address these questions by presenting results of my dissertation project which deals with the former concentration camp Gusen in Upper Austria. Gusen was one of the largest camp complexes in Austria and the campground was used as a place of residence after the liberation in May 1945. The newly built settlement is in parts precisely bordering onto the old camps' roads and barracks. The traces of the concentration camp have been largely blurred; it is not clearly recognizable through its historical structure.

I conducted biographic and photographic interviews with people living on or near the former camp site. Separately analysed biographic-narrative interviews and interviews in which participants show their life stories with photographs are combined. It is asked which biographic/photographic presence the former concentration camp has in life stories of residents and what aspects of them are rather narrated or shown by photographs and why.

Residents used photographs with different purposes: some to illustrate their narration visually, some to underpin stages of their lives by setting a specific focus on a particular aspect and some even refused to show any photographs. Therefore, first results suggest that this multi-method approach can broaden biographic research because it gives some answers to the question, what photographs show that narration can't and vice versa.

## Gendered Intergenerational Experiences of Social Mobility in Migration

(Joint Session with RC32 Women, Gender and Society)

Session Organizers:

Ursula APITZSCH, Goethe University, Germany

Manashi RAY, West Virginia State University, Charleston, United States

Minna-Kristiina RUOKONEN-ENGLER, Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany

Social mobility, understood as a change of social location within a hierarchical social structure, can be investigated along changes of vertical and horizontal social position in a society. However, this says little about the multiple experiences and social positions of people like labour migrants, transmigrants, and forced migrants who cross nation-state borders and experience social mobility in reference to different nation-states as spatially linked transnational experiences. Further, little is known from an intergenerational gendered perspective about how experiences of social mobility, such as upward, downward, and contradictory class mobility, are individually and collectively conceived, valued, and negotiated and how these experiences influence not only individual agency but intergenerational relations and family biographies. In our session, we hope to discuss the following questions:

- How can intergenerational social mobility be conceptualized beyond nation-state borders? Which methods are helpful?
- How are social mobility experiences intergenerationally negotiated? Are there gendered patterns of difference in such practices?
- How do family members' different social mobility trajectories influence the development of individual agency?
- What does the intersectional perspective contribute to this field?

We invite papers discussing the topic from different theoretical perspectives, methodologies, and migration contexts. We particularly welcome contributions from empirically based studies.

### Decoding and Expanding “Women’s Work”: Migrant Women at the Intersection of Gender, Economic Policies, and State Regulations

Shruti GUPTA, National University of Singapore, Singapore

The gendered division of labour within and outside the labour market permeates national boundaries and has a profound impact on migrant women's engagement in the labour market and their employment outcomes. Added to that, women's status as migrants further (re)produces gender stratifications and hierarchies within the labour market. In this paper, I draw on over 200 semi-structured qualitative interviews with Indian women across income categories in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to show how gender and migration impact migrant women's engagement with/in the labour market. Currently, Indian migration policies regulate and record the migration of domestic workers and nurses only. This has resulted in academic and policy research concentrating on a narrow definition of gendered migration and work. However, beginning from the 1990s, women are occupied in a range of occupations such as teaching, hospitality, cleaning, and sales. Further, due to the intensification of the knowledge economy in the UAE, Indian women are being pulled into circuits of globalising capital either independently or through family migration. However, a “masculine version of economic globalisation” (Kofman and Raghuram 2006) invisibilises women and their differentiated experiences in “non-feminised work”. Therefore, in this paper, through an expansive understanding of work (across income categories, paid/unpaid, legal/irregular, and institutionalised/private), I aim to enhance the current discourse on gendered migration and work. I locate women's labour within the India – UAE transnational field, the myriad ways in which migrant women are included and excluded from the labour market, and how gender gets operationalised in employment relations.

References: Kofman, Eleonore, and Parvati Raghuram. 2006. “Gender and Global Labour Migrations: Incorporating Skilled Workers.” *Antipode* 38 (2): 282–303.

### **Intergenerational Mobility in Education Among Women: A Micro-Level Study from Weavers' Community of Varanasi, India**

*Laeek SIDDIQUI, International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai, India and Namrata SHOKEEN, Monk Prayogshala, India*

Macro-level studies on intergenerational mobility among women in India suggests that, there is a need to further probe certain excluded communities that have a higher likelihood of persistence of educational status among women through micro-level studies. The present study investigates the extent and drivers of high/low intergenerational educational mobility among young women (vis-à-vis their mothers) belonging to the weavers' community of Varanasi, India. Using transition/mobility matrices and mobility measures, along with qualitative methods, the paper builds on a mixed-methods study conducted among 364 households of weavers' community from Varanasi. The study shows that the overall intergenerational educational mobility among women (vis-a-vis their mothers) from the weavers' community of Varanasi is 0.30 and there is no downward mobility. The qualitative findings further highlight various reasons enabling or preventing high educational mobility in the given context. In conclusion, the paper illustrates several micro-level issues and disparities in intergenerational educational mobility that are not clearly evident through the macro-level studies and further helps in making informed policy decisions.

### **Generational Dynamics**

*Hengameh ASHRAF EMAMI, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom*

This paper aims to explore social mobility experiences of three generations of British Muslim women in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Glasgow. These women social mobility trajectory will be discussed through intersectionality of gender, ethnicity, religion and generations. The research highlights the significance of these women's agency developed, to some extent, by cultural, social and family capitals (Bourdieu). Intersectional perspectives will provide a powerful lens to discuss how first generation of Muslim women differ and/or similar from other generations. It is argued that social and cultural capital have been significant factors of influence and support British Muslim women in a generational context. In focusing on how these capitals operate, the research suggests that generationality is a significant element of the educational trajectory which can support social mobility. The generational similarities and differences in educational and professional experiences is revealed the dynamics of women's agency and their generations. Furthermore, temporal and spatial matters are regarded as significant factors in developing multiple identities and multiple agencies. Life history interviews utilised to obtain in depth insight into the participants' everyday day life and to gain rich data.

### **The Gendered Burden of Social Mobility. Brazilian Mothers' Struggles with German Schools**

*Magali ALLOATTI, State Observatory for Migrations (State University of Santa Catarina), Brazil and Javier CARNICER, Universität Hamburg, Germany*

Brazilian emigration has gained momentum in the last two decades, due to economic and social instability. Our study focuses on a recent Brazilian migration to Germany, an uncommon destination, involving young individuals and families, with middle-class background and highly qualified. Our research design included an exploratory survey with a non-representative sample of 108 Brazilian migrants in Germany and twenty in-depth interviews with selected cases during 2020 and 2021. In this presentation, we focus on how gender disparities are intertwined with education in these migrants' experiences, family, and migration projects.

Women and men in our sample are highly qualified, with advanced university degrees and high language proficiency. Yet, men experience a facilitated migration due to recruitment and support characteristics of engineering and IT, sectors in which their presence is overrepresented. Women in our sample have qualification in other areas and, due to visa status (as companions), and caring for young children they experience hampered labor market participation and reduced income. These gender disparities are germane to understand how family arrangements and gender roles are articulated with aspirations for social mobility.

According to our participants, migrating to Germany was a path towards better quality of life and to provide a better future for their children through good education, available in

Germany and too expensive in Brazil. Our research shows the unequal burden felt by Brazilian mothers who, due to family arrangements post-migration, become responsible for their children's education. They struggle with the structure and functioning of the German educational system; they fear and resist their children being transferred or changed to other schools; and engaged in conflicts with parents and school authorities due to discrimination. We understand that, in these cases, the importance of education in the path towards upward social mobility conflates with family arrangements (re)producing and strengthening gender inequalities.

### **Climbing up Together? Intergenerational, Gendered Negotiations of Upward Social Mobility in Migrant Families**

*Minna-Kristiina RUOKONEN-ENGLER, Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany; Institute for Social Research Frankfurt, Germany*

The upward social mobility induces a change of social status and societal position. According to Pierre Bourdieu, these changes are supposed to be followed by the transformation of the habitus, comprising of alienation from the life world of respective family and its social position. This argument that is mainly concerned with the idea of reproduction of distinct, hierarchical class positions, seems to neglect the power of intergenerational family dynamics and the importance of family support networks in the context of upward social mobility processes. Taking this into consideration, I ask in my paper how upward social mobility processes are induced and intergenerationally negotiated in the context of migrant families. I am especially interested in interrogating the gendered notions and emotional underpinnings of these negotiations. In my argumentation I draw on empirical material from my ongoing research project on intergenerational negotiations of social upward mobility experiences in migrant families in Germany. The research project explores from a biographical perspective how social upward mobility experiences are individually processed and intergenerationally negotiated in migrant families. It asks how social upward mobility influences intergenerational and gender relations, experiences of belonging and respective family support structures and aims at developing a theoretical model to explain the dynamics of the intergenerational and gendered negotiations of upward social mobility processes.

### **Intersectionality Revisited: Migrant Feminists from Iran and Turkey in Germany**

*Bahar OGHALAI, Universitaet Koblenz-Landau, Germany*

Based on biographic interviews with migrant feminists from Iran and Turkey living in Germany, the article critically examines the extent to which intersectionality can be used as a concept for capturing and analyzing the experiences of the aforementioned group. These feminists' positions and experiences are marked by ambivalences and contradictions: Though their own experiences, they are familiar with the situation in Iran/Turkey and the Islamist and misogynist discourses and states their. On the other hand, They are exposed to a gendered form of anti-Muslim racism that helps reinforcing highly polarizing debates about Islam in Germany. These experiences highlight the need for a reconceptualization of the concept of intersectionality:

Drawing on theoretical notions such as assemblage (Deleuze & Guattari) and nomadic subjects (Braidotti), I argue in this paper that the experiences of politicization, migration, and homemaking highlight the fluidity and instability of categories such as race, class, and gender. For identities, power structures, experiences of marginalization, and their "subjectivation effects" are not fixed conditions. Rather, they are constantly shifted, dissolved, and recreated with a tension between time and space. Experiences of marginalization and their causes can also shift, and with them the demands and views of those affected. In recent years, the concept of intersectionality has developed considerable clout both as a political term of struggle and as a theoretical analytical perspective for capturing the complexity of different categories of marginalization.

Like any other concept, intersectionality can and must be critically examined and supplemented with other perspectives and aspects. In this context, Jasbir Puar speaks of the notion of assemblage developed by Deleuze and Guattari for a critical reflection of intersectionality. Accordingly, a different or further developed view of diverse experiences of marginalization

as intersectionality is needed, which takes this ambivalence, contradictoriness and instability of contemporary subjects into account.

### **Understanding the Agency of Women, Power Shifts in Migrant Households in Mpondoland and How That Begets Continued Migrant Labour By Men to the Mines.**

*Sandla NOMVETE, Nelson Mandela University, South Africa*

This paper emanates from ethnographic work and in-depth interviews conducted in villages of Mpondoland in Flagstaff and Lusikisiki in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Using the concept 'imibutho', the paper highlights the expansive and superlative social reproductive roles of women in migrant households herein captured in the concept transformed femininity. It aims to show how the position of Mpondo women in migrant households in the labour sending areas influence continued reliance in mining migrant labour by Mpondo men in the post post-apartheid era. Fundamentally, the paper argues that transformed femininities have challenged the traditional make up of migrant household which has always rested in masculine authority. Thus, the paper demonstrates a gendered shift in power dynamics in the migrant household.

### **Outsiders in the City: Women in Paid Domestic Labor and Everyday Resistance**

*Priyanjali MITRA, University of Chicago, USA*

Female migrant labor in the paid domestic labor sector in cities of the Global South often find themselves at the intersection of precarity, marginality and exploitative working conditions. Based on ethnographic research conducted among informal sector workers in Delhi NCR in 2022, this paper argues that the COVID -19 pandemic offers us a lens with which to rethink the pivotal role gender theorising in the global south plays when challenging populist regimes. I take the pandemic as an inflexion point owing to the gendered experience among low class urban migrants in a North Indian city as one of struggle, adaptations and hollow promises of social security by populist regimes. Women domestic workers experienced the repercussions of the pandemic with job loss, discrimination from their employers, double burden of care work in their households and often the long journeys back to their home states on foot over several thousand miles. Drawing from the Foucauldian notion of bio power exercised by the Indian state towards low class labouring subjects and extending it to demonstrate the resistance to power and meaning making through a gendered lens, I seek to share insights from the field. The everyday acts of resistance often involve weaving webs and networks of trust predicated on shared information about rates, employer reputation and behaviour among other issues. These serve to subvert the power exercised by the administrative arms of a populist state. Beyond the ambit of traditional unionising as prevalent labour and organising literature explores, domestic workers in the Global South look beyond unions – to forge networks of solidarity based on kin and community relations.

## **New Developments in Biographical Research**

*Session Organizers:*

*Kathy DAVIS, VU University, Amsterdam, Netherlands*

*Roswitha BRECKNER, Univ of Vienna, Vienna, Austria*

In recent years, sociologists and other social scientists have begun to look for creative, innovative ways to do biographical research. Biographical interviews using traditional methodologies of interviewing and analysis often fall short in contexts where interview partners are – for whatever reason – unable to put their experiences into words or develop a narrative about their lives. Walking tours, performances, and research using photographs, visual art or music, often provide interesting ways to do biographical research. In a similar vein, biographical researchers are combining biographical interviews and analysis with other research methodologies (ethnography, performance and visual analysis). This session explores some of these methodological advances with an eye toward expanding the terrain of biographical research.

### **'Can We Just Take a Break?': The Methodological Merits and Ethical Labour of Creative Biographical Interviewing**

*Laura FENTON, University of Manchester, United Kingdom*

Drawing on insights from the author's experience across three research projects on youth and the life course, this paper explores how sensory and creative techniques are useful tools in biographical interviewing, but how they also require specific forms of ethical labour. The first project was my doctoral research on British women's drinking biographies; the second was a large mixed methods project on the resonances of post-war youth transitions and mobilities for British women's later-life identities and experiences; and the third is ongoing research on how austerity policies are shaping the life-courses and futures of young people in devolved regions of the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy. In the first two projects, biographical interviews were interspersed with elicitation techniques to facilitate multi-sensory engagements with the past. In the third project, creative techniques are used to encourage imaginative encounters with expectations and hopes for the future. Across all projects, different forms of sensation (e.g. hearing, sight, touch) and creative practice (e.g. drawing, writing, photographing) are mobilised to reconstruct past selves or anticipate future ones.

The paper investigates the methodological merits of using elicitation and creative techniques in biographical interviews, focussing on how such techniques enable movement across time. Sensory and creative techniques can produce unique forms of affect and intersubjective ways of knowing, providing access to past and prospective selves that are otherwise difficult to conjure. Rehearsed scripts about the self may begin to unravel, generating space for new knowledge. Feeling and temporality become densely intertwined in biographical interviews; this, in turn, necessitates careful choreographing of the use of such techniques. The paper concludes by reflecting on the ethical labour involved in layering techniques into interviews in ways that avoid overwhelming or burdening participants.

### **Visual Biographies – Looking at the Images of a Lifetime As a Way to Do Biographical Research**

*Elisabeth MAYER, University of Vienna, Austria*

We encounter life stories in diverse media and multiple places. Accordingly, biographical expressions include not only verbal-narratives, but also analogue photo albums or digital image compilations in social media. But to what extent can images that emerge within a lifetime can be understood as biographically embedded? Or do images from different life spheres and life periods remain only visual fragments of one's own life?

Based on a case study from my dissertation, I would like to address the question of how one's own biography is visually constructed in different media. The research is based on an innovative multi-method approach that combines biographical-narrative interviews and visual analysis. I would like this specific way to do biographical research, in which image analysis is crucial, to be visible in the way it is presented. What life story does emerge when you only know its images? In this session I focus on the reconstruction of the visual life story of a mid-30-year-old and visually take the audience through his life similar to a photo presentation. I show analogue photos from his childhood and youth as well as pictures from his social media accounts with the aim to show the development of the way photos are taken in different biographical phases and their respective biographical relevance. I then compare the visual results with his verbal-narrative in order to illustrate how they simultaneously relate to each other.

Starting from the reconstruction of a visual biography, the aim of this presentation is to demonstrate how the repertoire of biographical expressions and thus also the field of biographical research is expanded by focusing on the images of a lifetime.

### **Using the Photographer's Eye. Visual Competence As a Cognitive Tool in Biographical Research**

*Piotr SZENAJCH, Lodz University, Poland*

The practice of street photography became a refuge for me from the confinement of a small flat during lockdowns. As I developed my photographic workshop, I began to reflect on how this new mode of representation at hand – but also a perceptive and cognitive tool – could be incorporated into my research work.

The thick, palpable concreteness of a photograph can not only contain knowledge but also successfully act as an anchor for abstract generalizations or new concepts. It is similar in this regard to narrative or literary techniques used in academic writing.

However, previous attempts at adding a photographic component into social research have often ignored the fact that the visual medium requires a broad set of technical and practical skills that can only be developed through long-term *deliberate practice*.

These are not only technicalities of operating the camera or the selection, editing, presentation, and archiving of images. Composition techniques, the ritual of interaction with people during a session or a street situation, the sense of observation or the ability to achieve a unique state of heightened attention – these abilities also require reflection.

The photographer's eye seeks satisfying relations of shapes in the frame, intense patches of colour, contrasts of shapes and colours, faces that are young and conventionally pretty, what is rare and unique. The sociologist's eye may rather look for what dominates, what is typical, what is representative or what saturates a most diverse spectrum of phenomena.

These are clearly divergent inclinations. However, harnessing both in research work could prove they can work together in creative tension.

These remarks will be grounded in two research projects combining biographical, discursive and visual research – one based on autobiographical narrative interviews with renowned contemporary visual artists, and the second based on interviews with Poles of African descent.

### **The Potential of Musical Shaping of Biographical Experiences - Methodological Challenges and Methodical Approach**

*Simone FEICHTER, Department of Sociology, Austria*

How can music be made productive as data material within biographical research to complement or transcend traditional methods of biographical analysis? What makes it possible to consider and understand biographical experiences, which cannot be articulated with narrative and visual forms of representation, through the specific expression of music?

These questions will be discussed in the presentation of a case study from my dissertation project, which is dedicated to music from the Terezín concentration camp. In its special role as a concentration and transit camp, cultural and artistic activities were initially prohibited in Terezín, but later supported by the Jewish Self-Government in the context of "Free Time Activities" and finally, in order to present Terezín to an international public as a "Potemkin Village," demanded by the camp administration and used for propaganda purposes. Especially for the compositions written in concentration camps, the potential of music is of particular importance to refer, by means of symbolization processes, to experiences that were unspeakable in the context of the camp as well as incapable of being put into words.

The composer Viktor Ullmann, deported to the Terezín concentration camp in 1942, developed – like many other imprisoned artists – a great commitment to advancing his artistic production despite, or even because of the inhumane living conditions, and created a considerable number of musical works during his internment, including the opera "The Emperor of Atlantis, or Death's Refusal".

Based on this case study, a specifically developed sequential analysis method aligned with principles of hermeneutically grounded interpretive sociology is used to show, how music, as an access to extra-linguistic dimensions of meaning, can lend presence to experiences from the past through present listening, whereby these can be experienced and remembered in an aesthetic-bodily way.

### **Of Glue Dots and Familial Relationships: Reflections on Family Sculptures in Biographical Multigenerational Research**

*Miriam SCHAEFER, Georg-August-University Goettingen, Germany and Maria POHN-LAUGGAS, University of Göttingen, Germany*

The method of family sculptures originates from systemic family therapy and aims at making the relationships in a family visible. In biographical multigenerational studies of the Holocaust (Rosenthal 1997), family sculptures have been used to examine intergenerational structures and familial figurations, in combination with biographical narrative interviews. The use of family sculptures is a fairly recent development, not as a concrete procedure but in the sense that

there has been little reflection on its implementation in biographical research. This paper is an attempt to fill this gap.

Our study focuses on the families of people who were persecuted under National Socialism because they were, for instance, "professional criminals," "asocials," or Jehovah's Witnesses. These groupings have in common that they were not given official recognition as Nazi victims, and that their experiences were not incorporated into the national memories of the post-fascist successor countries. This has an impact on family structures. In contrast to the other groupings, Jehovah's Witnesses form a closed we-group that presents to the outside world the firm we-image of a conflict-free community. In the families of those persecuted as "asocial" the family sculptures correspond to the reconstructed case structures. In the case of Jehovah's Witnesses, they give only limited access to family relationship patterns, but help us to understand the structures of closed we-groups.

With this in mind, we will first discuss in general terms the ways in which family sculptures help us to understand family structures. We will then look at how a closed we-image affects the use of family sculpture in biographical interviews, and ask what insights we have been able to gain so far and what methodological conclusions we can draw in order to study family structures within closed we-groups.

### **Flashes of Lives: Photography As a Tool in Life and Family (hi)Stories**

Distributed Paper

*Ana GONÇALVES, Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, CRIA, Portugal*

The use of visual tools may open up numerous analytical possibilities in auto/biographical research. As a result of the democratization of photographic practices, everyday life is saturated with countless images. Photographs are currently common personal artefacts, tangible or intangible, of self-representation and self-reflexivity, which allow the retrospective reconstruction of life events. Essentially, they matter not only because they show aspects of the lived experience but also because they make people talk about them. Often accounts of lives are organized around flashbacks inspired by real photos. On the other hand, it is also usual that verbal descriptions of visual records spontaneously appear in auto/biographical narratives. Perhaps it is not known if it is the sight that induces the speech or if it is the speech that guides the sight, but one can infer their mutual interference. All these issues will be discussed and illustrated through examples taken from a recent research project conducted in Lisbon, Portugal, based on the methodologies of life and family (hi)stories. In general, the results of this research point out that both modes of enunciation — the visual and the verbal — constitute parallel narratives that mutually reinforce or disregard each other at some points.

### **Life on a Map. Creative Methods in Biographical Research.**

Distributed Paper

*Izabela KORBIEL, Vienna University, Austria*

This paper discusses two creative methods in biographical research: life charts and mapping as supporting tools to qualitative interviews. The aim of the project is to draw a picture of the post pandemic labour situation and work-life balance of female academics in order to show the transition caused by the COVID-19 crisis. The author approached creative methods from a constructivist point of view, as methods that give access to other dimensions of people's life stories. Participatory methods address and shift the power dynamics, they can also be used as ice-breaker and create good atmosphere during the interview. Creative methods assist interdisciplinary life narrative researchers in bringing forward other aspects of life stories than those favoured by the traditional, biographical interview.

On the one hand the mapping method was applied in order to visualise networks during the pandemic, this method supported the participants in evaluation of the role of the partner, children or colleagues. Maps produced during this process inform the data analysis afterwards as they assess and visualise social capital of the participants. Furthermore the participants could map their lives before the pandemic focusing on different settings. To reach this aim the participants were asked to draw places they were visiting every day before the pandemic such as the office, kindergarten or school. In the next step they were asked to draw the places visited mostly during the pandemic. Afterwards they compared both pictures and searched for spaces that overlap and pointed at places that vanished from their lives. On the



other hand life charts supported the narrative and helped to memorize events in chronological way. With creative methods in this biographical research project the researcher believes she opened a new perspective through the dialog that visualised the past and the present.

## Emotions in the Research Process: Methodological Challenges and Theoretical Reflections Part I *(Joint Session with WG08 Society and Emotions)*

Session Organizers:

Marina ARIZA, *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico*

Minna-Kristiina RUOKONEN-ENGLER, *Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt, Germany*

Irini SIOUTI, *Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt, Germany*

Emotions can both hinder and facilitate sociological research. Even though emotions surface in all types of face-to-face interviews and are shaped by its form, e(auto)biographical narrative interviews, in particular, seem to bring up strong emotions. These usually concern crucial moments of one's personal life that may be thematically related to wider social phenomena like societal cleavages, majority-minority relationships, socio-economic or political conflicts, political repression or (civil) wars. However, idiosyncratic emotions also surface in such interviews. Interviewees may openly address them or rely on different strategies to hide them. The researcher is usually affected by these emotions and should therefore not only learn to acknowledge and read them but also reflect upon their own emotions during the entire research process. In this joint session of WG08 and RC38, we would like to discuss the following questions: How do we recognize and conceptualize the emotional dynamics of the interview? How do we deal with the emotions of the researcher? What role does the research setting play in evoking emotions? How do we analyze emotions? How do we write about our findings and present them to our readers? How do we teach about the role of emotions in the research process? We invite papers that discuss the influence of emotions on a research process from different methodological and theoretical perspectives.

### **Conducting Qualitative Research in the Field of Drug Dependence: Emotional Risks and the Vulnerability of the Researcher.**

Zacharoula KASSERI, *Hellenic Mediterranean University, Greece*

Biographical narrative research has a strong tradition in the field of drug dependence as it provides valuable insight into the experiences of people with substance use problems. Conducting a qualitative study in this field, is a challenging endeavor: it requires not only the theoretical preparation of the researchers but also, they're dealing with strong emotions that may emerge in the research process. Emotions that surface in the research process, however, are not always a topic of discussion in studies about drug dependence: researchers prefer to present their findings, without providing enough information about the setting of data collection. The main reason for this, is that the reference to emotions can easily be perceived as a sign of inadequacy of the researchers or considered as conflicting with the proper scientific style that an academic paper should have. The development of ethnographic research on drug use and the emergence of biographical reflexivity as a methodological tool for the study of vulnerable social groups, invites the researchers to reconsider their practice and openly discuss their own emotions during the entire study. The presentation is based on biographical narrative research conducted with women in recovery from opioids in a drug-free residential therapeutic community (TC) in Greece. Using examples from this research, the presentation will focus on (a) the emotional dynamics that may develop in the researcher's attempt to gain access to the field, and to gain the trust of participants; (b) the emotional risks and challenges that the researchers may face in the research setting of a therapeutic community and (c) the vulnerability that the researchers may experience in trying to handle the issue of self-disclosure (what kind of information the researcher may share about oneself with the participants) and the impact of the research processes on the participants' lives.

### **How Emotions Impact the Research Process and Its Outcomes. the Example of Researching Nationalist, Regressive Movements in Peripheralized Places.**

*Christoph HEDTKE and Katrin GROSSMANN, University of Applied Sciences Erfurt, Germany*

Since the Emotional Turn in the social sciences, emotions have increasingly been a subject of interest in research. For decades, feminist researchers in particular have emphasised the ethical responsibility and importance of reflexivity in the research process that this entails (see Holland 2007). It is all the more surprising that the emotional experience of the researcher itself still receives very little attention in research practice, even though it has obvious implications for the research process, such as how we move in the field, how we ask and interpret certain statements, and last but not least how we deal with our emotions that arise and how these experiences impact future research (see Hubbard et al. 2001).

A special challenge seems to be research on nationalist, authoritarian actors and regressive movements, investigated in marginalized and peripheralized contexts. A certain degree of empathy is the basis of any interview situation. But what does this mean for research in anti-democratic contexts? While marginality usually evokes sympathy and agency of social scientists, with heuristics at hand explaining the production of marginality, stigma and the like, researchers working on this topic are confronted with actors their practices and values, we feel alien and even hostile to. This impacts the research process in a number of ways. During interviews, the own political positionality is undeniably present and influences any communicative situation. Negative emotions like anger, rejection, even disgust mix into the communication on both sides. Further, established ways of interviewing are called into question by the fact that we as scientists and science itself are questioned by the field.

The presentation draws from focus groups with researchers and own research experiences in the field. We will highlight the interwovenness of emotions, own political positionality and activity, as well as normative and analytical perspectives.

### **Affectivity and Embodied Knowledge in Biographical Research on Mediterranean Migration**

*Monica MASSARI<sup>1</sup>, Gianluca GATTA<sup>2</sup> and Simona MICELI<sup>2</sup>, (1)University of Milan, Milan, Italy, (2)University of Milan, Italy*

The investigation of changing migration and refuge realities in times of anti-migrant politics increasingly requires accurate concepts, tools and strategies that might adequately capture contemporary dynamics. Moreover, it also involves a further epistemological and ethical step that, while illustrating complex social dynamics, is not afraid to address and question the politics of knowledge production that informs research in this field and to illuminate emerging domains of social responsibility and political action.

In this framework, affects, emotions and embodied experiences have growingly become timely research topics (Gray 2008). Emotions, however, cannot be seen only as psychological states, but also as (relational) social and cultural practices which are destined to shape our object of study (Ahmed 2014 [2004]: 9) and enhance a further self-reflexivity from the side of researchers. Reference is here made to the feelings of pain, sadness - at one side - or discomfort, shame and rage, at the other, that biographical accounts of and encounters with migrants and refugees often touch or evoke. Thus, attending to emotions and the work of emotions itself is destined to become a crucial aspect of our method.

Based on the outcomes of an ongoing European project on migration narratives of people on the move between the two shores of the Mediterranean, this paper addresses the *affective* dimension of the relationship between the researcher and research participants, focusing on embodied forms of knowledge produced in the framework of biographical research which also involved participatory and art-based methods.

### **Ambivalences of Research Empathy - Methodological Considerations in a Strong Reflexivity Perspective**

*Alina BREHM, University of Vienna, Austria and Philipp LANGER, International Psychoanalytic University Berlin, Germany*

Emotional empathy is considered a key competency for qualitative researchers in that it provides an important resonant space for affective experiences and expressions by research partners. It refers to the emotional reactions, the sensations and feelings of the researcher in response to the observed or narrated experiences of the research partners, the perceived

ability to share and respond to their emotions. It can range from (more or less conscious and intentional) mirroring what an interviewee is (or seems to be) feeling to experiencing emotional states of helplessness, despair and pain when coming across stories of social suffering and trauma. In this regard empathy is conceptually close to notions of counter-transfer in psychoanalysis. Empathy in the research encounter, e.g., creates good rapport, generates recognition of others' experiences, and promises an affective and preconscious understanding of the situation and the other. In recent years, significant ambivalences of empathy, however, have been elaborated from different sides (see, e.g., Paul Bloom's *Against Empathy* or Fritz Breithaupt's *The Dark Sides of Empathy*). Based on these debates and with reference to empirical material from projects on the biographical emergence of affective attitudes in politically very differently positioned participants in Austria and Germany as well as the experiences of former ISIS child soldiers in Iraq, we will shed light in our paper on the ambivalent and sometimes contradictory role of empathy in qualitative biographical research: aspects of an ethically problematic use of strategic empathy, dynamics of overwhelming through over-identification with the suffering of others, leveling appropriation of "other" experiences as an identical reflection of ours will be discussed. At the same time methodological possibilities – rooted in depth-hermeneutics and autoethnography – for making a particular affective resonance in the research process systematically fruitful in terms of a "strong reflexivity" will be presented.

### **Don't Look Too Closely into It – the Emotional Challenge in Visual Biographical Research**

*Elisabeth MAYER, University of Vienna, Austria*

Biographical construction takes place not only verbally, but also through images. New forms of biographical research include visual methods that show how visual self-presentation is biographically embedded. Research with biographies can confront researchers with challenging emotions for which there is guidance in form of a specific methodology of interviewing that involves active and attentive listening. But how to manage strong emotions during the research process that are not caused primarily by verbal-narratives, but by the pictures shown, which when observing them touch you emotionally and pull you into someone else's life story?

Based on a case from a project funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF), I would like to explore and reflect on how emotions are dealt with in visual biographical research. Therefore, I focus on the visual practice of an interviewee who uses WhatsApp pictures to create a 'visual diary of end-of-life care' and thus visually finds a way of dealing with her grief.

The aim of this presentation is to provide insights into the images of a 'visual diary' and thereby showing how the emotional dynamics have developed in the interview and continued throughout the later stages of the research process. I want to illustrate how it is possible to 'look closely into it', but at the same time – through methodological procedure, reflecting and theorizing – returning to the sociological role of the researcher and thus making an outstanding practice of visual communication scientifically accessible.

### **Researching the Personal: The Contribution of Lived Experience in Liminal Research Spaces**

Distributed paper

*Michelle KING, Queensland University of Technology, Australia*

In this paper, I reflect on research with decision-makers for young adults with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD). As a sociologist, lawyer, and parent of a 24-year-old daughter with PIMD, I developed a research project from my personal observation of issues which emerge as a young person with PIMD becomes an adult. Transition to adulthood is a time when many legal and administrative interactions become complex and difficult for people with PIMD. I wanted to explore how the law works in practice for these young adults and their decision-makers, and better understand why problems arise.

I interviewed 12 pairs of participants (a parent decision-maker and a young person with PIMD), and another 6 parents where the young person was not able to be present. In these 18 interviews I asked parents to give a narrative history of their young person's disability, and then to describe their child's journey into adulthood in legal and administrative spaces. Interviews covered the areas of banking, income support, leaving school, voting, healthcare, and disability support in Australia's National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The research ex-

plored key problems and theorised about why the law does not deal well with people living with PIMD.

Here, I reflect on these interviews as *conversations*: where meanings were built and shared in a dialogue between people with similar experiences. The contribution of mutual understandings, meanings, and feelings was vital to the exploration of profound intellectual disability and its impacts. The shared lived experience of *whole-life management* made interviews an authentic and collaborative conversation about difference. It allowed demonstrations of emotion, black humour, and mutual recognition of insights, and led to deeper explorations of difficult experiences. This demonstrates the value and importance of reflexive use of lived experience in research, particularly in liminal spaces like care work and profound disability.

## Emotions in the Research Process: Methodological Challenges and Theoretical Reflections Part II *(Joint Session with WG08 Society and Emotions)*

*Session Organizers:*

*Irini SIOUTI, Goethe University, Germany*

*Marina ARIZA, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico*

Our session aims to elaborate on various understandings of the gaze that either refer to the act of in/directly witnessing violence or to the violent look itself: to the act of gaze that is present in certain events of our lives and is in a sense the result of our past, i.e., our life (hi)story.

Besides the different concepts of the gaze, or the encounters manifested in these gazes in philosophy and psychoanalysis (Buber, Levinas, Lacan, Sartre etc.), recent feminist theories (e.g. Barbara Fredrickson and Tomi-Ann Roberts) discuss the objectifying gaze of men towards women. Yet, this phenomenon of objectification can be present in any kind of "power situation", in which human beings become treated as objects. This is e.g., the gaze of the aggressor whose look becomes reflected in the terrified eyes of the children shot in Buchach.

Accordingly, we are especially interested in gazes related to traumatic (historical) events where we would like to grasp the complicated relationship between various gazes between the perpetrator, the bystander and the victim. At the same time, we are likewise interested in the analysis of institutions where the remembrance of these events is at stake and there are people whose gaze is directed on these past events.

Therefore, we would like to invite papers that reflect on these acts of gazing and the persons behind these gazes through the analysis of their biographies and biographical narrations, through which empathy and solidarity can also be strengthened towards those persecuted.

### **From the Biographical to Emotional Work – Specific Features of Contemporary Life Stories of Young Adults.**

*Kaja KAZMIERSKA, University of Lodz, Poland*

When conducting autobiographical narrative interviews, we must always consider the possibility of confronting with the narrator's emotionally difficult experience. Although as sociologists, we should not take on the role and competence of psychologists or psychotherapists, there are also particularly sensitive subjects and encounters with interviewees that may even require the researcher to cope with such situations. Between these two fairly easily distinguishable alternatives, a third has recently emerged related to interviewing the younger generation.

Recent research experience gained in projects that collect interviews with people born in the 1980s and 1990s shows that there is a significant cultural/generational shift in the way of storytelling. In earlier generations of interviewees, emotionally difficult situations in the interview were embedded in emotionally difficult biographical experiences. Whereas in younger generations it's not just about the emotions involved in sharing difficult experiences but about working on one's own emotionality in general, which is reflected in the narrative. Young interviewees very often undertake rather emotional than biographical work during the interview and quite often the storytelling process is supported by psychotherapeutic training. In my presentation I will comment on this phenomenon and show implications for the research process.

### **How Can We Write about an Adult Who Says “I’m Really a Small Child”? Understanding Others’ Experiences By Analyzing the Researcher’s Emotional Transformation**

Yayoi YUKAWA, *Aichi University, Japan*

This paper focuses on a method called the “interactive life story” in Japan to discuss how analyzing and describing the researcher’s emotional transformations could lead to sharing an informant’s reality beyond an objective understanding.

The “interactive life story” was proposed by a Japanese researcher based on the theory of active interviewing. The method has been widely referenced in Japan, especially among young researchers conducting minority studies, but has also received much criticism. This paper focuses on criticisms of “self-reflection,” which is encouraged in the method, as an active description of the researcher’s transformations during interviews including an emotional transformation. The main criticisms of such self-reflection are threefold: (1) possible intrusiveness forcing moral self-transformation; (2) use of limited word counts to describe the researcher’s own thoughts and emotions rather than the informant’s; and (3) most importantly, a lack of clear explanation regarding what aspect of understanding others’ experiences cannot be expressed without the researcher’s self-reflection.

This paper responds to these criticisms by examining distinctive scenes from my research. For example, an adult male informant told me about his self-image in which he sees himself as “a small child,” which caused him distress. He might need a psychiatric diagnosis. In a typical sociological description, the researcher would only provide an objective understanding: “Although he views himself as a child, he is actually a middle-aged man.” However, during the interview, I felt uncomfortable and uneasy in dealing with him acting as an “adult,” and eventually I realized that I myself had come to see him as a “small child.” Such a process of understanding others beyond objective reasoning cannot be explained without mentioning the researcher’s own emotions. Based on my fieldnotes, I will elaborate about these moments of “sharing the subjective reality of others,” which arise spontaneously during research.

### **Sentiment(al) Research**

Julie BROWNLIE, *Edinburgh University, United Kingdom*, Simon ANDERSON, *Mr, United Kingdom* and Youssef AL HARIRI, *University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom*

This paper explores, through the lens of kindness, the experience of researching the ‘sentimental’. Synonyms for the sentimental include saccharine, syrupy, twee and ‘over-emotional’ and, in everyday life, sentimentality is understood - and often dismissed - as involving simplification and idealisation. Yet we know from Lauren Berlant’s (2008) work that, whatever its political misuses, sentimentality is also experienced as a way of expressing what is felt to be authentic, creating solidarity among strangers. We know, little, though, about the experience of *researching* the so-called sentimental. Through drawing on interview and Twitter data from a project, *Telling Good Stories* ([Telling Good Stories | School of Social and Political Science \(ed.ac.uk\)](https://www.ed.ac.uk/school-of-social-and-political-science/research-projects/telling-good-stories)) which explores cultural story telling about kindness, we investigate the emotional and methodological challenges for researcher and participants of engaging with what is deemed sentimental. Building on previous work on emotional reflexivity in research and specifically the emotional challenges of sharing about the ordinary (Brownlie, 2011; 2019), we highlight, through this substantive focus on kindness, how feelings about sentimentality are managed at different points in the research process in relation to both talk and text. In doing so we surface persistent ambivalences for researchers and those we research about what gets to ‘count’ in everyday life and in sociological research. As such, we also begin to address the challenge of researching ambivalence.

Berlant, L (2008) *The Female Complaint* Durham: Duke University Press

Brownlie, J. (2018) ‘Out of the ordinary: research participants’ experiences of sharing the ‘insignificant’ *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 22, 3: 257-269

### **Emotions in Virtual Ethnography in Facebook Groups of Social Policies in Argentina: Notes from Our Role of Researchers**

Andrea DETTANO, *CONICET, Argentina* and María Victoria SORDINI, *INHUS-CONICET/UNMDP, Argentina*

From the digitalization of the management and implementation processes to the virtual communities created by the recipients of the interventions, the Internet began to appear as

a space for the deployment of social policies. From auto-ethnography, this paper aims to explore the emotions that have taken place in the realization of virtual ethnographies in Facebook groups of recipients of social policies in Argentina between 2020 and 2022. An important part of our work is the self-socioanalysis regarding the subject under study and the way to approach it, considering the theoretical load from which the phenomenon is problematized, and also the personal dispositions to carry out the task.

Virtual ethnography pretends to capture the experience of networks. It implies the continued presence of researchers in the virtual environment. This entails knowing these environments, delimiting the possibilities of interaction they offer, a particular form of social presentation of the person, as well as a spatially and temporally dislocated way of interacting. Another element is its multimedia character: These environments allow us to analyze the written word, images, videos, emojis and different reactions. This abundance of resources and the speed of their flow, has implied the use of field logs, which have recorded our provisional analyses, but also our methodological questions and uncertainties: How to record the different types of resources that appear deployed in the social networks? How to establish contact? How do we introduce ourselves to build trust? How to sustain dialogues and interactions? In this framework, different emotions are superimposed in virtual fieldwork: uncertainty in the face of virtual response rhythms, daze in the face of the flow of exchanges, the effects produced by the images and comments posted such as displeasure, disapproval and the mistrust that we receive when starting the first virtual contact with the study subjects.

### **Loss, Grief and Memory. Retrieving Emotions of the Dead, the Living and the Dying through Novelistic Techniques, Applied to Autobiographical Data**

*Feiwei KUPFERBERG, Malmö University, Sweden*

Since my wife died after a long and heart-breaking illness (progressive aphasia) which evolved gradually over several years until she chose to die, I have been engaged in a type of autobiographical work which has less to do with problems of the scientific method, but rather the idea that artistic techniques might be useful in order to sort out my own and my wife's (main protagonists) potential or actual emotions. In this paper I will describe what novelistic techniques are and how they function, how I became acquainted with these techniques, and how they helped me to overcome the strong feelings of loss and grief, by reawakening both the good and bad memories of the life shared together over a period of forty years. I will also try to retell some of the technical (novelistic) problems I experienced when writing a novel about the emotions of the dead, the living and the dying. It might seem strange to talk about the emotions of the dead, but it has been important for me to try to imagine my wife alive somewhere, watching over me and providing her own versions of what happened both to her and between us during the long process of dying. One of the advantages of the form of the novel is that it allows different characters to tell what they feel, think, remember. Most novelists use this technique in order to retrieve the many perspectives from which the same type of biography can be told. These individual variations is one of the strengths of the biographical method. Given that biographical research is science, it has to stick to documented facts (interviews). With the result that many significant emotional reactions (feelings, thoughts, memories) never becomes expressed or retrieved as hypothetical or imagined emotions.

### **Emotional Entanglements in Ethnographic Research. Conducting Fieldwork on "Doing Exclusivity" in Service Clubs during the Pandemic**

Distributed Paper

*Kaethe VON BOSE, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, Germany*

The Covid-19 pandemic has greatly influenced qualitative social research, particularly ethnographic research. In my ethnographic research project I ask for feelings of belonging and practices that I call "doing exclusivity". The term is intended to describe the production of exclusivity in the sense of both "exceptionality" and "restricted access". Originally I had planned a classic ethnography, consisting of participant observation, interviews, and document analysis. However, shortly after I had gained initial access to my field, the pandemic began and fundamentally changed the field and thus my research.

In the paper I want to argue that ethnography under pandemic conditions does not only require creative temporary solutions. Rather, a basic condition of fieldwork becomes newly visible: the emotional, affective and bodily entanglements of researchers and their fields. I will argue that this new awareness offers an opportunity to include what is otherwise too often overlooked: that the researcher's own emotions should also be treated as data and systematically analyzed.

I will illustrate this using examples from my fieldwork during the pandemic. In research settings happening in physical co-presence, vulnerabilities such as age, illness, or disability became significant in a different way, both for interviewees and for myself. Mixed into the inseparable interplay of material and immaterial elements of moods, atmospheres, and emotions, alongside hygiene practices, tests, and vaccines, was a new "researcher's fear of the field" (Lindner 1981). In contrast, in digital research settings, it proved to be more difficult for me to distance myself emotionally. In the face of intensified needs for connection during times of social distancing, virtual spaces of fieldwork at times became touching spaces of encounter.

I want to discuss this (new) significance of emotions in the research process by means of concrete proposals for analysis.

## Biographical Methods in Applied Social Research

*Session Organizers:*

*Michaela KOETTIG, Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences (FRA-UAS), Germany*

*Priscila SUSIN, PUCRS, Brazil*

*Débora RINALDI, Universidade Pontifícia Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil*

Applied or intervention-oriented social research uses baseline studies to first identify, delimit, and characterize daily problems faced by institutions, organizations, groups, communities, or individuals and then to develop appropriate interventions. There is a growing interest in what is called "policy research", i.e. the study of public policy as a social phenomenon and a tool of state intervention with varying degrees of civil society participation in its planning and execution. Quantitative research still dominates policy research because it is believed that said phenomena need to be explained from a long-range analytical perspective and that qualitative methods are only capable of dealing with subjectivities and with microsocial investigation. However, public policies based on biographical methods have stood out for the past decades, bringing to light the diversity of needs, strategies, and resources present in people's everyday lives, especially in its relationship with institutions. Other fields have also been using applied social research, such as studies on the mobilization of civil society and research for public and private organizations focusing on people and work management. Research-action, as well as the different qualitative methodologies commonly associated with it, plays a special role in these efforts. Under this light, this session is open to papers that focus on the use of biographical methods in applied research and baseline research with practical orientation within the following areas: a) research design (e.g. definition of research problem, methods, triangulation, action plan); b) ethical challenges; c) research praxis; d) implementation of interventions; e) impact assessment; f) data dissemination strategies.

## Youth Co-Research and Memory Work – about the Biographical Data Flourishing in Participatory Research Settings

*Eren YETKIN, Koblenz University of Applied Sciences, Berlin / Koblenz, Germany*

The reality of plural German society affects various sociopolitical features and institutional frameworks in the country. It can be observed in the discussions about the education system reform plans, civil society funding programmes, and possible policy reforms against discrimination in the workplace and everyday life. In recent years, one of the fiercest debates has occurred concerning cultural remembrance. In this regard, memory of the colonial past has become an essential topic with its transnational ties; the migrant memory – covering a broad spectrum from conditions of migration to the right-wing violence of the 1990s – has been increasingly considered in the new German heterogeneity. Further, the concept of participation, especially of people affected, comes up as a crucial question.

Considering different phases and the data gathered in the project “Participatory Remembrance Education in Koblenz and the Surroundings” at the Koblenz University of Applied Sciences, this paper explores the questions of multimethodology and biographical elements emerging in the process of participatory field research. The project studies the dynamics of remembrance together with young co-researchers who joined the project through youth work and youth organisations. Additionally, it has begun conducting semi-structural interviews with young interlocutors – co-researchers and non-participants – which foster the analysis of participation mechanisms. Due to the identity-related elements of collective memory, a particular biographical turn has taken place in the field research of the project.

This paper discusses the challenges in the implementation of participatory concepts and asks how participatory research does lead to employing a multimethod design. What are the touch-points of biographical turn in this multimethod research context? Driving from the complex intersection of youth work and remembrance praxis, it also asks when interventions can be consistent with the methodology in such a setting. It examines these questions based on the project’s corpus of qualitative data.

### **Public Policy Analysis Via Qualitative and Biographical Research: Possibilities, Limitations, and Contributions**

*Débora RINALDI, Universidade Pontifícia Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil*

In Brazil, as in the rest of the world, broad-scope studies that assess the effects and impacts of public policies tend to do so via quantitative research methodologies. Even the qualitative studies tend to similarly work with a large amount of interviews that, for the most part, follow pre-determined scripts, seeking their explanations based on the frequency of repetition of certain phenomena within and between cases, thereby prioritizing “representation” over depth. Under this light, and based on the result of a recent biographical study about one of the main conditional cash transfer programs in Brazil, Bolsa Família or Family Allowance, the current presentation promotes a discussion on the possibilities, limitations, and contributions of researches that analyze the effects of public policies from the perspective of qualitative methods, i.e. methods open to data production which allow us to work with a small interview sample, albeit rich and dense in content, that can be analyzed in depth. Some of the study’s specificities will be presented, as well as its results and contributions to debates about conditional cash transfer programs in relation to personal skill development. Finally, there will be a discussion on the possibilities, limitations, and contributions of open, biographical research for public policy analysis and improvement.

### **Episodic Interviews and Reconstructive Analysis in the Investigation of Safety Events in the Oil and Gas Industry in Brazil**

*Priscila SUSIN, PUCRS, Brazil and Gabriele BACHI, Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil*

The oil and gas industry has multiple facets that draw sociological curiosity. The present research explored offshore platforms in Brazil, investigating their realities and proposing an intervention in the way safety events are perceived and handled in this industry. This process was guided through the interdisciplinary perspective of Human Factors and originated from a research team that formed an Operational Safety Event Analysis WG. During the phase of data collection, the conduction and analysis of biographical narrative interviews and other qualitative instruments were able to reveal that one of the critical points in offshore work is the conduction of incident investigations. The examination identified that the linear methods currently being applied serve insufficiently their purpose of creating a safer environment and instead fuel a punitive system that finds culprits. Seeking theoretical and methodological foundations in the field of Interpretative Sociology, the outcome here presented is an adaptation of Episodic Interviews and Biographical case reconstruction approaches. Its focus lies on the preliminary stage of incident/accident investigations, in which evidence is collected for the inquiry of the event under analysis. The objective of the suggested tool is to lead the implementation of new interviewing practices among the participant offshore investigation teams, and its development process is the content of our presentation.



**Femicide, Offenders and Trajectories: Identification of Prevention Points Based on Biographical Narratives of Perpetrators**

*Martin DI MARCO, CONICET/IIGG, Capital Federal, Capital Federal, Argentina*

Femicide/feminicide has been a topic of increasing recognition and social awareness in academia and the public sphere in the last three decades. Perpetrators have been predominantly analysed from a biomedical and medicalising perspective, to the detriment of a social understanding of their actions, their narratives and life trajectories. From a biographical approach, this paper identifies the strategies developed by femicide offenders to hide and camouflage the physical violence performed to their partners before the femicide, and the narratives sustaining these strategies. A special focus was made to analyse the contact between the offenders and public institutions. This paper is part of a broader narrative project (CRIMLA: Crime in Latin America), based on sequential multi-stage interviews with prisoners in Argentina and Chile. 25 interviews with femicide perpetrators were analysed, following an open coding strategy. Six main strategies were identified: a. breaking and weakening bonds, b. strengthening bonds with male peers, c. targeting the body, d. targeting the outside world, e. blocking access to labour market, and f. blocking the access to health institutions. These strategies were sustained by narratives about masculine self, dominance and control, and changing social contexts. This paper discusses that offenders' stories about their relationships help to identify missed opportunities for intervention in both the prevention of- and responses to intimate partner violence (IPV).

**Coping with No Access to Social Assistance: A Qualitative Longitudinal Study on Single Parents' Life Course in Switzerland**

*Ornella LARENZA, University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland - SUPSI, Switzerland*

Single parents (SPs) are among the main beneficiaries of social assistance in Switzerland. Most studies associate their vulnerability with negative outcomes that would be the product of their non-normative family structure, disregarding how the social policy context can impinge on their life course. Indeed, as a risk-management policy, social assistance can redress SP's life course when facing critical transitions. Conversely, when support is not available or SPs experience a clash with eligibility rules or non-take-up, it may turn into a stressor and affect their life course in many domains. Despite its relevance, the link between no access to social assistance and SP's vulnerability is mostly overlooked. This paper investigates how such problem can shape SPs' life course in Switzerland and sheds light on the unintended consequences of social assistance conditionality. Two waves of semi-structured interviews were conducted with a group of fourteen SPs with full custody of their children, facing economic hardship and problems with receiving social assistance, in the French-speaking Switzerland. A three-step analytical strategy involving thematic, categorical, and chronological analyses of qualitative data was run. SPs can try to supersede the unreceived resources by mobilizing their families, some third parties or making extra money; fight against the providing institutions to seek to obtain the benefits; adapt their life course to the benefit eligibility requirements or accept the status quo and forgo the benefits. Problematic access to social assistance does not just affect SPs financially but entails a more complex set of undesirable changes in many life domains such as: delaying the professional career; reducing time for the children or adapting to an unsatisfying quality of relationship with them; delaying new couple relationships and living in an unpleasant environment. Matthew effects allow the most audacious and better-informed SPs to overcome problems of access and contribute to inequalities among them.

## Biographical Perspectives in the Research Field of Political Participation

Session Organizers:

*Irini SIOUTI, Goethe University, Germany*

*Georgios TSIOLIS, University of Crete, Greece*

In this session we would like to discuss and reflect on biographical perspectives in the research field of political participation and how this might contribute to the epistemological and methodological debate in political participation research. We are especially interested in the particular role of transnational migration experience contexts and the social conditions and constellations under which forms of political participation develop in (post)migration societies. With a broad concept of participation, we are inviting papers for this session based on biographical case studies in diverse fields of political participation (including classical forms of political participation in political parties and trade unions as well as civic participation and transnational activism, etc.). Above all, the following questions should be discussed: What is the impact of a biographical-theoretical perspective in the research field of political participation? How can we take theoretically into account the local, (trans)national and global dynamics of political participation in (post)migration societies? What are the methodological challenges of using biographical methods in the research field of political participation?

### Political Participation Processes Among the Younger Generation in Families of Labour Migrants in Germany

*Irini SIOUTI, Institute for Social Research at Goethe University Frankfurt/Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences UAS, Germany*

The political participation of the younger generation of labour migrants in Germany is still an unexplored research field. Some studies in migration research have addressed the question of political participation among the first generation of the so called "Gastarbeiter". However, there has been no investigation about how the younger generation participated in politics. Traditionally, the epistemic and methodological framing of political participation is dominated by quantitative research perspectives. It took place in the context of the nation-state and is being challenged by the critique of methodological nationalism. A main challenge is to construct an adequate methodology to investigate processes of political participation and their transnational dimensions in (post)migration societies. To overcome the shortcomings of methodological nationalism in investigating political participation processes in a (post)migration society I suggest using the concept of biography as a key theoretical and methodological concept for the investigation of political participation processes. This makes it possible to empirically reconstruct the processuality and complexity of political participation paths. The biography-analytical perspective enables an intersectional investigation of the significance of the migration experience for political participation as well as for the total life context. In this way, we can investigate the emergence and course of political participation in its interplay between individual and societal conditions.

On the basis of biographical case studies from an ongoing research project I will discuss how political participation processes come into being under conditions of migration and discrimination experiences in a (post)migration society. Using a broad concept of participation that looks at biographical construction processes, I will reflect on the impact of a biographical-theoretical perspective in the research field of political participation.

### The Biographical Approach to the Processes of Trade Union Activation and Deactivation

*Konstantinos FAGOGENIS, Nikos SERDEDAKIS and Georgios TSIOLIS, University of Crete, Greece*

The biographical approach to the processes of trade union activation and deactivation  
The presentation focuses on processes of trade union activation and deactivation examined through biographical narrative interviews. We will discuss the findings of a research carried out in Corfu (Greece), concerning the trade union activity of workers in the island's hotels (during the period following the collapse of the authoritarian regime in 1974). The biographical research is combined with archival research carried out in the local hotel workers union. The study of the archive revealed the existence of two distinct sub-periods. In the first sub-period, we observed the trait of mass participation in union activities coupled with the adop-

tion of new radical repertoires of action. In the second sub-period the radical repertoires of action recede, gradually leading to the institutionalization of union activity. The analysis of life-courses highlights the ways in which these structural differentiations are inscribed in the biographies of the acting subjects. Furthermore, the analysis of life-histories focuses on the way in which both the massification/radicalization and the opening of an institutionalization process of trade union action were experienced by the protagonists themselves. The analysis of the narrated life stories also showed ways in which the narrators/protagonists of the events stand from their contemporary perspective facing their biographically framed experience and actions. The research utilized as sensitizing concepts theoretical and methodological tools drawn from collective action and social movement studies. The political environment and the emerging contentious cycle in Greece, during the transition from the dictatorship to democracy, affect both the organizational traits of trade union actors, the repertoires of action adopted, the construction of collective identities and the framing of their collective action.

### **Feminist and Queer Activisms and the Transformation of Gender Studies in Greece: Encounters on Gender Related Violence.**

*Alexandra ZAVVOU<sup>1</sup>, Pavlos HATZOPOULOS<sup>2</sup>, Nelli KAMBOURI<sup>3</sup> and Eleftheria PAPASTEFANAKI<sup>1</sup>, (1)University of Crete, Greece, (2)Independent Researcher, Greece, (3)Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece*

Our paper discusses the role of feminist and queer politics in the construction and transformation of gender studies in Greece, focusing specifically on understandings and interventions regarding the issue of gender related violence, and drawing on biographical and archival research in Athens and Crete.

We approach gender studies and gender activism as a complex and articulated field shaped by theoretical, institutional/academic and social dynamics, in the context of which competing accounts of gender and/or violence are at stake. In this sense, following a long tradition of feminist research, we wish to interrogate the politics involved in the production of power/knowledge about gender and gender related violence.

Growing out of the post-dictatorship autonomous women's movement of the late '70s and '80s, academic feminism in Greece engaged in public interventions on key social problems facing women, including rape and domestic violence, demanding legal protection and social support and assuming a woman-centered approach. More recently, however, especially since the 2010 crisis, a multiplicity of novel gender activisms, subjectivities and politics has emerged, including younger feminist and queer collectivities, civil society initiatives, and NGOs, which are often in dialogue with, but also challenge and confront academic feminism. They draw attention to the silences and erasures of the field, highlighting the intersections between gender, sexuality, ethnicity and class which render certain kinds of violence less visible, legitimised or normalised. Thus, critical new understandings of gender related violence are elaborated and new voices of epistemic authority are claimed.

Drawing on biographical research with older and younger feminist and queer activists and scholars, in this paper we revisit the relationship between institutionalised and grassroots gender discourses, practices and identities in order to trace the different trajectories- social and conceptual- that have shaped and are transforming the field.

### **How to Become a Political Activist in the FFF Movement? Reflexion on Biographical Narratives of Young Activists.**

*Natalia WAECHTER, Ludwig Maximilian University Munich, Germany*

The transnational social movement "Fridays For Future" (FFF), whose origins go back to the school strikes of the Swedish student Greta Thunberg on August 20, 2018, has not only surprised the general public, but has also surprised researchers to some extent. While young people have found to be not particularly interested in politics for decades (see e.g., Schneeklot/Albert 2019), the majority (84%) of the FFF protesters are young people in their teenage years or in their twenties (Sommer et al. 2019). Applying an biographical approach and in-depth interviews, in our research we aimed at identifying the most relevant persons in young activists' social environments (family, friends, school, etc.) to further find out how those influenced their lifestyle, their attitudes and their motivation for political participation regard-

ing FFF and climate change activism. The interviews were carried out with seven young men and nine young women aged 16 to 25 who, with one exception, were in school or university education at the time of the research and who were active members of the FFF movement. Narrative analysis shows that on the one hand, the interviewed young people mainly participated in the „strikes“ and in the movement with friends and/or schoolmates, and despite emphasizing intergenerational aspects in the movement, they have developed an understanding of a „generation“ in Mannheim’s meaning. On the other hand, their parents and other family members have shown to be crucial for the young activists’ development of environmental political interest. This supports the theoretical assumption that political interest tends to be related to family socialization while actual political participation is rather related to peer socialization. Finally, the conference presentation will reflect on the benefits and challenges of using a biographical approach in the field of political participation and in particular in the context of young people’s activism.

### Same Interview, Different Perspectives – Invited Session

*Session Organizers:*

*Lena INOWLOCKI, Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, Germany*

*Monica MASSARI, University of Milan, Milan, Italy*

*Gwendolyn GILLIERON, Université de Strasbourg, Morocco*

Biographical researchers have different ways of approaching a biographical interview. Depending upon their preferred methodology for doing biographical analysis, but also their theoretical and normative perspectives and their substantive interests, they will tackle the analysis of a life story in different ways. In this session several researchers will be invited to engage with the same interview about a person’s life and reflect on how they would approach it and why. Transcripts will be available for participants attending the session. In order to make sure that a range of approaches is present in the session, this will be an invited session.

#### **Dreaming in Conditions of Precarity**

*Kathy DAVIS, Sociology, VU University, Amsterdam, Netherlands*

The focus of this session is a biographical interview with a Nigerian boy whose dream is to become a web-designer. It is this dream which enables him to narrate his life story as an up-the-hill battle of an agent who is convinced that by taking a series of steps and being as good as he can possibly be he will ultimately achieve his goal. In the interview, this dream serves not only to explain the challenges (obstacles and difficult circumstances) he faces, but is also recycled in order to justify his own (in)actions and to obfuscate how they may have contributed to the downward trajectory of his life. In my presentation, I will talk about the ambiguous or two-sided role of aspirations in biographical narratives and their importance in negotiating precarious lives. I will also discuss what dilemmas they might present for us as sociologists and how we might use these dilemmas to re-think our own notions of agency and biography.

#### **Constructing a Singular Profile As a Freelancer: The Tension between Independence and Self-Exploitation**

*Georgios TSIOLIS, University of Crete, Greece*

In the analysis of the biographical narrative we will focus on the processes of subjectification in the cases of young platform workers in the context of the creative economy of post-industrial societies. The biographical narrative analysis will focus thematically on the following points: (a) how career plans are constructed biographically and which social factors (“resources”) emerge as important in the articulation and implementation of these plans; (b) what forms of educational services contribute to the construction of a professional identity as well as its reformation; (c) through which processes and practices does the employee seek to produce a “singular” professional profile in order to find his place in a globalized labor market mediated through platforms; (d) What precarious forms of labor are experienced by freelancers, who operate on international platforms? (e) How connections and transitions are achieved in biographical construction between local, national and transnational as distinct symbolic spaces. The biographical analysis will be based on the principles of the reconstruc-

tive biographical approach and draw on elements from thematic, structural and dialogic/performance analysis. Concepts of theoretical sensitivity will be drawn (a) from texts by authors in the Foucauldian tradition who explore how subjectivities are reconstituted under neoliberalism, showing that the neoliberal self is constructed as an entrepreneurial subject; (b) from texts by the German sociologist Andreas Reckwitz who describes the formation of the modern employee of the creative economy as a process of Singularization and the Self-singularization of working subject.

### **Reconstruction of James' Biographical Case: Work Paths between Struggles and Opportunities**

*Priscila SUSIN, PUCRS, Brazil*

The interview with James was conducted online and asked him to speak about his work and life experiences. James was born in Nigeria in 1992 and currently lives in the Netherlands and works as a freelancer data analyst. The analysis of the interview with James followed the method of biographical case reconstruction and aimed to understand his professional trajectory and experiences and how it developed intertwined and informed by broader contexts such as the cultural, territorial, economic, and family aspects that had impact over his opportunities and choices. The reconstruction also focused on the interviewee's present perspective to understand what are the thematic fields that appeared in his narrative and how these current lenses informed the ways he framed past biographical situations. The analysis showed, among other findings, the central role that the family background plays in James' life course and how the family influence is seen by him in a dubious way: as an enabler of concrete conditions for developing certain professional competences, but also as an absent support structure that impedes him to follow his desired personal preferences. Analysis also showed how technology and online work platforms can have a central role in fostering technology careers but also work-related informality to people with moving biographies and coming from developing countries.

### **The Case of James: A Migrant's Path into the Gig Economy**

*Me-Linh RIEMANN, Catholic University of Leuven, Germany*

James' career trajectory was marked by several major setbacks and disappointments, which could be retraced both to his personal upbringing and the structural conditions he was faced with. His early biographical project of becoming an IT specialist was obstructed by his father's insistence on a more traditional university degree (petroleum engineering), which he experienced as invasive and alienating. James portrayed the belief that working in the oil industry would bring about job security as a collective myth in Nigeria, resulting in an oversupply of petroleum engineers, who struggle to compete for very few positions available.

James tried to maintain ties to his earlier biographical interest in computer science by following free online courses. His training seemed, however quite fragmented and ill-directed. Given his lack of formal credentials and the meagre job opportunities in Nigeria, James became interested in online labour platforms. He soon witnessed how the fierce competition drove freelancers into a downward spiral of undercutting each other's prices.

As an action scheme of taking control, James decided to go abroad and pursue a master degree in the Netherlands. The institution turned out to be fraudulent, targeting international students for financial gain. Highly indebted and with little-recognized credentials, James found himself in a difficult situation after graduation. He feared returning to Nigeria, not only due to the lack of opportunities but also because of the violence and crime rates. His chances of getting a work permit in the Netherlands, however, appeared very slim. James turned to an online platform to remain economically active in the meantime. His work experiences were marked by the rating system, the blurring of temporal boundaries, incidences of discrimination and difficulties of combining his informal training with the pressure of being available 24/7.

## Biography and Disaster: From Methodological Perspectives

Session Organizers:

Tazuko KOBAYASHI, Hitotsubashi University Japan

Gaku OSHIMA, Meiji University, Japan

Many disasters have occurred on our earth. Various natural disasters, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, storms, wildfires, and floods, have brought us the loss of homes and families, the collapse of local communities, and sometimes immeasurable damage.

Disasters have caused enormous loss and hardship to people's daily lives and have changed their lives. Disasters have a long-term impact on people's lives and experiences of disasters have been handed down to be left behind in biographies and shared as collective memories in local communities.

Disaster experiences which included severe difficulties or loss, and sometimes a feeling of solidarity have been studied through qualitative research, especially biographical methods. Interpreting these kinds of experiences requires careful considerations based on empirical research, historical oral tradition and multiple sources.

This session, "Biography and Disaster," is of particular interest to organizers who have studied the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake using the biographical approach in Japan, where earthquakes occur frequently.

The disasters are not limited to natural disasters such as earthquakes, but also include catastrophes that cause great hardships for people, such as wars or social disasters. This session aims to be a place where participants can discuss the possibility of biographical research on disasters.

We would like to address this question along with various research examples from the perspective of what kind of biographical methods are possible in the study of disaster experience. We particularly welcome contributions that discuss this topic in reference to specific empirical approaches.

### Story-Telling Vs. Argumentation. Reconsidering the Importance of Argumentations in Narrative-Biographical Research

Fatih KAYA, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany

The assassination in Hanau has to be understood as a social disaster involving hardship. The collected one-to-one interview data also illustrates this traumatic and traumatizing social disaster from a methodological/methodical perspective. Following Schütze's premises of narrative-biographical qualitative research, narrations would have to follow adequate stimuli. According to the separation of text types, which is also used in the documentary method according to Bohnsack, narrations would have to dominate in order to grasp the practical meaning (Sinn) of actions, and descriptions, argumentations, and evaluations would have to be taken up rather secondarily as background constructions. How can it be understood, if in narrative-biographical interviews some affected individuals answer consistently argumentative, evaluative and/or descriptive? Still, other persons affected by the same assassination produce narrations easier. What is here significant for researchers? How can one capture a practical biographical meaning when investigating about biographical effects of a social disaster in the form of a far-right extremist attack? What practical, social, and individual meaning does it have from a methodological perspective that some of the interviewees functionalize argumentations, evaluations, and descriptions? Text types other than narrations have long been considered only as secondary constructs in narrative analyses or according to document meaning (Dokumentsinn). My claim is that traumatizing social disasters impair the memory and narrative capacity of those affected in the form of a *perversion of the text type priority*. For those affected individuals, the present experience *gains an essential relevance*, because arguing about it, criticizing (evaluating) the misconduct of those responsible, and describing the events do not function as "healing by story-telling" according to Rosenthal, but as "gaining resistance and resiliency" by arguing, describing and evaluating. Briefly, the question of how text types can function in interviews about social disasters such as the Hanau assassination is my main interest to investigate.

**Small Traces of Disaster Experiences: Reading “the Tono Volunteer Diary”**

*Yutaka IWADATE, Bunkyo Gakuin University, Japan*

“The Tono Volunteer Diary” contains descriptions of events in tsunami-devastated areas—including the details of relief activities in these areas and the emotions felt by volunteers who participated in those activities—that were written by visitors to the Tono Union Volunteer Center (TUV) . TUV is a support base for the disaster volunteers who went to Sanriku—an area devastated by Tsunami on the March 11, 2011, called “Great East Japan Earthquake”. This space was developed at a community center in Tono City, and was an effort of Kyosei Union Iwate, an individual affiliated labor union based in Kitakami city in the inland region of Iwate prefecture.

Several number of people who came to the Center from Iwate prefecture, Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, and overseas, left notes about their experiences in two notebooks that were laid out inside the Center. Turning the pages, a reader can find many fragmentary words and sentences about huge debris, rotten sanma fish, the conditions of the wounded, etc. One volunteer from Kyoto wrote that the journey from there to Sanriku spanned 1,000 km, and that he “saw breathtaking scenes that made impressions on my mind.”, with handwritten pictures in the notebooks. These are the footprints of the volunteers who went to the Sanriku coastal area—a document of their relief experience.

How did these volunteers engage in relief action in this tsunami-devastated area? What did they witness and encounter there? Reading the diary will offer valuable hints to answer these questions. Based on field study of TUV since 2011, this paper will consider disaster experiences of relief volunteers, and reflect on such kind of diary as biographical method.

**Continuing to Face the Unpredictable: Fukushima As a City Laboratory for a New Way of Life**

*Gaku OSHIMA, Meiji University, Japan*

Unpredictable events, such as disasters and epidemics, sometimes result in suffering beyond imagination. Important to note is that the suffering imposed is deeply social, as it is part of the social structure and history. Conversely, it is also worth investigating under what social structures enjoyment can be experienced in unpredictable events. Although several works have examined the temporary formation of a “Paradise built in Hell,” characterized by people’s spontaneous mutual help after a disaster, such studies have not clarified the medium- to long-term social conditions related to community formation while focusing on the psychological recovery process.

Due to the evacuation order following the Great East Japan Earthquake and nuclear accident in 2011, the population of 12,800 people of Odaka Ward, Minamisoma City, Fukushima Prefecture, was reduced to zero. Although the evacuation order was lifted in July 2016, only a quarter of the population returned. Local characteristics of community revitalization, focusing on biographies retelling the process of reconstruction in Odaka Ward, are analyzed and discussed in this report.

When the evacuation order was rescinded, everything was a local issue in the devastated town. However, because there was nothing there, the returnees cooperated to reconstruct their lives and create a new neighborhood by rediscovering and utilizing the nature that originally existed in the area without being bound by common sense or vested interests. In the reconstruction process, the community’s goal was not to attract large corporations or rely on subsidies, but to create a diverse business environment in which many small-scale sustainable businesses could thrive. The goal was to foster a positive climate for entrepreneurship by attracting and supporting the challenges of migrants who wanted to achieve self-fulfillment. In sum, the biographies show Fukushima as a city laboratory for new ways of life, fostering a local culture that can cope with unpredictability.

**Applicability of the Biographical Approach to Resilience Theory: A Case Study of Returnees to an Evacuation-Order-Lifted Area in Fukushima after the Nuclear Power Station Accident**

*Ryo SHOJI, Senshu University, Japan*

Resilience has been a topic of special interest to sociologists studying disasters. Most studies that have attempted to elucidate factors of revitalization from disasters have focused on social capital in a local community and have conducted structural and formal analyses at the macro-level or meso-level. However, in order to elucidate resilience to disasters that cause

specific loss and hardship to people's daily lives, it is essential to employ qualitative methods with a biographical approach to interpret individual disaster experiences.

This study investigates individual disaster experiences of victims and generation processes of micro-level resilience through life histories. The interview data used is from returnees to Otomi District in Odaka Ward, Minamisoma City, Fukushima Prefecture, which was an area under an evacuation order until 2016, following the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident.

As a result, it was found that differences in livelihoods and life stages have a significant impact on the emergence of loss and hardship. It is also indicated that occurrences during the long period of evacuation and return should be viewed as disaster experiences that bring about later changes in people's lives. Thus, these experiences affect the generation of individual resilience. It is suggested that these experiences can be positive factors that bring about creativity in the community life, such as discovering new community issues and rediscovering a purpose in life, as well as negative factors such as trauma, injury, and giving up on rebuilding life in the community.

These findings advance our understanding that a small disaster community can be rebuilt only through the collective creativity of returnees' individual resilience. Finally, this study contributes to the theme of this session by discussing the necessity and applicability of the biographical approach to research into disaster experiences from the perspective of resilience theory.

### **Social Disaster, Place, and Struggle for Collective Memory**

*Jini KIM, Sogang University, Republic of Korea*

The social process of collective memory is that fragmented memories dynamically compete with each other (Hirsch, 1995). This study focuses on the place of memory as one of the cultural tools that form collective memory (Assmann, 2009), and analyzes how the place of memory of social disasters has been institutionalized. This study investigates how the place-ness of the memorial spaces has been socially constructed and what factors have influenced the institutionalization process of the place of memory. Furthermore, the study aims to explore that the institutionalization of place of memory is a process for reflecting on social suffering and acquiring 'moral universality' (Alexander, 2003) that goes beyond the context of power struggle and hegemonic occupation of territory.

According to the analysis of field research, in-depth interviews, and content analysis for each case, the social disaster cases in Korea created a place of memory based on symbolic features of the local community. However, the institutionalization of the places differed due to the power and autonomy of local governments, the solidarity within victims and with others, and the resources and procedural institutions. In addition, this study found that, in the institutionalization process, the places of memory are being signified (internalized) as public values that can access the ultimate ground of moral horizons. The struggle for the memory of the bereaved family over the place of memory can be interpreted as an externalization process of the social suffering caused by disaster and as a call for social awakening. This study shed light on the place of memory in the process of internalization to reflect continuously in the public sphere oriented toward under moral universality and not to be forced to place collective memory of social suffering into oblivion.

### **Indigenous People's Experiences amid Socio-Historical Power Struggles**

*Session Organizers:*

*Johanna SAGNER TAPIA, Universidad de La Frontera, Chile*

*Victoria TABOADA GOMEZ, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Germany*

*Gabriela GARCES, Universidad de la Frontera, Chile*

In this regular session, we will discuss how indigenous peoples around the globe position themselves in the face of multiple forms of socio-historical power struggles throughout their history. When considering a historical background of constant struggle against colonial processes, institutionalized violence, and processes of exclusion/inclusion in different areas of life, it is difficult to speak about a "resurgence" at all: to build strategies against outsidership and power inequalities including authoritarianism represent an intergenerational task among in-



indigenous peoples. For this session, we invite papers that aim at exploring these strategies empirically, considering current realities from different socio-historical, geographical, and cultural contexts. We particularly welcome methodological approaches that seek to reconstruct and focus on biographical or community experiences and perspectives from indigenous peoples themselves as experts on their current challenges and lessons.

### **Mapuche People in Academia: Challenging Narratives about Displaced Indigenous Identities**

*Denisse SEPULVEDA, Haute école de travail social, Chile*

This paper explores the trajectories of the authors as indigenous women who are members of the Mapuche people. It focuses on the experience of constructing indigenous identities in colonial urban spaces and positioning in academia. This qualitative study follows a flexible methodology oriented to producing and analyzing personal narratives related to the journey of self-identification and the subsequent insertion in the academic space. The findings reveal the difficulties of constructing indigenous identities amidst the dispossession of land, loss of native language, and diaspora, which are the most notorious consequences of the internal process of colonization promoted by the Chilean state against the Mapuche people. This affects both past and new generations of indigenous people, giving rise to the construction of different profiles, emerging from nuanced circumstances that do not fit in with ingrained beliefs or stereotypes about indigeneity. In the cases of the authors, this means questioning their indigenous authenticity, since they are part of a generation born outside the ancestral territory and have lost their Mapuche surnames. The results also expose the obstacles faced by indigenous people in accessing academia and in validating their perspective of research on indigenous topics. Moreover, this study appeals to the accountability of academic institutions to eradicate the mechanisms through which the exclusion of indigenous peoples is perpetuated.

### **Indigenous Women's Strategies Against Outsiderness: A Biographical Perspective on Historical Colonial Processes and Current Power Dynamics in the Paraguayan Chaco**

*Victoria TABOADA GOMEZ, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Germany*

What can indigenous women's biographies tell us about power dynamics taking place in the Paraguayan Chaco and what can their strategies to negotiate their right over resources tell us about the historical processes that shaped current figurations here? Which are the discourses that legitimize or enable their positions in social relations, and what do their biographical presentations tell us about how they counter a highly invisibilized and stereotyped perspective on their role?

I will address these questions based on a biographical analysis which is historically located in the long-standing occupation of the Central and Southern part of the Paraguayan Chaco's territory by indigenous groups and the more recent missionary and agricultural-cattle production activities of Mennonite colonies, who have established a colonial socioeconomic system since 1927, where the systematic exploitation of indigenous peoples is a fundamental component (Canova, 2021) until nowadays. The case study refers to an indigenous woman belonging to one of the most numerous groups among the Enlhet-enenlhet linguistic family, with an established use of the group language, and with certain access to traditional cultural practices and collective history. In this presentation, I will analyse how collective and biographical processes on family history and leadership projects from an indigenous woman navigate between her establishment within colonial structures, strategies for gaining autonomy, and improvement of life conditions for her community, with the aim of depicting ongoing historical processes in the Chaco region based on the biographer's experiences.

### **Formación De La Identidad Étnica-Cultural En Biografías De Jóvenes Mapuche. Análisis Desde La Perspectiva Del Trauma-Histórico Transgeneracional.**

*Gabriela GARCÉS, Universidad de la Frontera, Chile and Johanna SAGNER TAPIA, Universidad de La Frontera, Chile*

En este trabajo presentamos evidencia preliminar respecto de la influencia de aspectos asociados al trauma histórico transgeneracional en las biografías de cuatro jóvenes adscritos/as a la identidad étnica-cultural mapuche, procedentes de sectores mapuche rurales y que cursan estudios de enseñanza superior en la ciudad de Temuco, región de la Araucanía,

Chile. El análisis se centra en la comprensión de elementos vinculados a la formación/configuración identitaria que emergen desde sus propias narrativas biográficas. De manera específica se analiza la comunicación y traspaso de la historia familiar; y la valoración de la cultura mapuche. La aproximación metodológica corresponde a narrativas biográficas y un diseño de teoría fundamentada en versión constructivista. Los resultados muestran que las biografías de los y las jóvenes expresan de manera diferenciada tanto elementos de afectación, como formas de afrontamiento traspasadas de forma transgeneracional, asociadas al denominado trauma histórico-colonial. Estas dinámicas de interacción, intermedian la formación de la identidad étnica-cultural: En unos casos es el velamiento de la historia familiar, en tanto disuasión/disolución de la memoria, y en otros casos, la memoria es resignificada, actualizada, ejercitada y robustecida en espacios de interacción familiar, lo cual estaría en la base de las posibilidades de reflexionar sobre la pertenencia identitaria y la apropiación de lo mapuche. A su vez, emergen elementos vinculados a compromisos emocionales, en tanto promesas contraídas con los padres, familia extensa, y consigo mismos, que se traducen en expectativas y proyectos a futuro. Estas son fuente de tensión y cuestionamientos, que interpelan el proceso de formación profesional y el sí mismo. En el periodo de estudios, emergen de sus experiencias estrategias de mantención, persistencia y pasividad identitaria, en tanto formas de gestión de la vida entre contextos culturales diferenciados. Ello estaría en la base de las motivaciones y enunciados sobre la adscripción/no adscripción étnica-cultural mapuche.

## Spatial Scales and the Analysis of Biographies and Family (Hi)Stories

*(Joint Session with RC21 Regional and Urban Development)*

*Session Organizers:*

*Eva BÄHL, University of Goettingen, Germany*

*Johannes BECKER, University of Goettingen, Germany*

*Nicole WITTE, University of Goettingen, Germany*

The analysis of spatial scales and re-scaling processes is a research perspective that has had a large impact, not only on urban sociology and the sociology of space, but on all social sciences. It has provided an important gateway to look beyond the focus on nation-states and to include the interconnections and interrelatedness of different scales, such as neighborhood, city, or region. Interestingly, the concepts of scale and biography have rarely been brought together, although references to different spatial scales are an inherent part of life stories and life histories. If biographies are seen as being not only temporally, but also spatially shaped, this aspect of multiple scales in life (hi)stories acquires central importance.

In this session we are interested in contributions which deal with the role of spatial forms and various scales in life and family (hi)stories. We invite papers addressing this topic through empirical research and discussing methodological, conceptual, and theoretical insights.

Questions include, but are not limited to the following:

- In which ways are different spatial scales (neighborhood, city, state, the world...) interlinked when people tell the story of their lives and that of their families?
- How do socio-historically shaped foci on specific spatial scales impact biographical courses?
- How can biographical narratives help to analyze different spaces on particular scales or the interrelations between different spaces?
- Are there differences in the way spaces/spatial scales are narratively conceptualized in different regional or cultural contexts?

## Childhood in Post-Soviet Lithuania: Precarious Places and Sour Encounters

*Goda DAMASEVICIUTE, Vilnius university, Lithuania*

Childhood in Lithuania after the break of the Soviet Union was formed between two poles - socialism and capitalism. These interacting poles changed the entire social, cultural, and economic environment, as well as everyday practices, one of those was children's understanding, and activity in their childhood spaces. Despite the fact that transformative societal processes are broadly analyzed themes, they are usually looked at from the perspectives of

elites, institutions, or political establishments. Nevertheless, the life experiences of children and childhood spaces are not thoroughly researched. The main focus of this paper is how children understood their yard spaces, and what experiences they associated it, with focusing on the Transformation period in Lithuania that took place between 1980 and 2010. The main research method is biographical interview analysis. Theoretical approach is taken from Children's Geography studies and Karl Mannheim's generational theory. The aim is to show the perception, activity, mobility and experiences of children in the yard spaces. Data from biographical interviews with people born in the period 1980-2000 reveal an essential childhood space - the yard, which includes different meanings, practices, rules, accessibility, emotions. Stories of the yard appear as a formative factor for the biographical identity or in relation to socio-cultural changes of the Transformation. The yard is a significant symbolic and material space and was perceived, accessed and used on the basis of different factors. Territory, children's mobility, control exerted by parents or other adults, and experiences of long-term relocation were significant factors that reflected in their biographies. The 1980-2000 generation put a clear emphasis on feelings of fear and insecurity determining, accessing and using their yard spaces. Even though childhood and its spaces in the 90's are often romanticised in popular culture, the interview data show that it involved far more unpleasant and negative experiences.

### **Urban Poverty Twenty Years Later: Coping Strategies in Milan**

*Alberta ANDREOTTI, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy*

In Urban poverty studies, the role of space and the spatial scales at which people act are overlooked as poor people are supposed to be quite still. Yet, mobility practices have always been important events in family biographies, mainly in the case of internal and international migrants, but not exclusively. Mobility remains important even despite the pandemic. Mobility affects supportive networks sometimes enlarging the possibility for support, sometimes reducing them, and it strongly affects families coping strategies.

In this paper, I will present the results of a qualitative study focussing on life histories of some families who experienced a condition of poverty twenty years ago in the city of Milan (Italy). Interviewing the same people twenty years later, exploring what has happened to their family members, and in particular to their children with the lenses of networks and space can help us understanding some mechanisms through which the situation of poverty has been overcome or reproduced, and the role of the spatial scales in these mechanisms.

### **Practicing in Cities Against the Backdrop of the Nation and the Self: Auto/Biographies of Urban Practitioners from South Africa**

*Geetika ANAND, University of Cape Town, South Africa*

There is a growing consensus around the significance of urban development practice, and the complexity associated with intervening in cities and urban systems at large. Furthermore, with the endorsement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), followed by the New Urban Agenda (NUA), cities have taken centre stage in the global debates and development agenda, and national governments across the globe are increasingly coming up with urban policies and programmes. As the locus of urbanisation shifts to Africa and Asia, this transition is particularly critical in the global South where there is rapid urbanisation and the capacities within the urban institutions are relatively limited. While several studies have focussed on how these global and national commitments pan out at the local level, inverting the perspective, this paper asks: situated in these contexts, amidst influences from all around, for an urban practitioner, what does it mean to practice in the city?

Centring the narratives and experiences of practitioners and their contexts, the paper highlights drivers, motivations and influences behind practitioners' work trajectories and transitions. The paper draws from biographical interviews conducted with 30 practitioners working in the urban development sector in South Africa. It particularly pays attention to the multiple spatial scales – neighbourhood, city, provincial, national, and transnational – practitioners find themselves in and navigate through in their professional as well as personal lives. In these practitioners' auto/biographies, what happens at these multiple scales, especially at the national and at the city, directly inform their career choices and decision making. It is further argued that these multiple scales do not only form a context within which these practitioners contin-

ue to practice, they also feature prominently in practitioners' considerations for positioning themselves at an appropriate scale for maximum impact based on their own values and interests.

### **Mapping Socio-Economic Mobility and Urban Inequalities through Spatial Histories and Biographies: Trajectories of Dalit Life in a Metropolitan City, Delhi**

*Rama DEVI, KREA University, India*

In India, the caste system stratifies and hierarchically ranks people based on the degree of purity and pollution. The system also determines and unevenly distributes the power, entitlements, privileges and disadvantages to each caste group. According to the caste system Dalits, ex-untouchables, positioned at the bottom of the system are considered impure and assigned to perform the demeaning and disgraceful work for the "pure" upper castes. Structurally subjected to exploitative life, they are denied dignity and property ownership in rural India. The prolific leader and Dalit icon Dr. B.R Ambedkar urged Dalits to abandon the wretched and degrading village life for urban centres. Envisioning dignity and liberation for untouchables, he imagined cities as modern spaces holding the promise of emancipation from the clutches of caste-driven exploitative feudalistic relations.

This paper focuses on the urban life and spatial shift of Dalits who outmigrated from the villages to Delhi in search of livelihood and dignity. Based on an ethnographic study conducted in a resettlement colony in Delhi which is predominantly inhabited by Dalits, it uncovers the extent and limits of urban spatial geographies in realizing the envisioned promise of emancipation of Dalits in the city. In 1976, at the height of the national emergency, the first generation of the Dalit residents of the neighbourhood was relocated from their erstwhile squatter settlements spread across the city into state-planned resettlement colonies. At the intersection of tracing the familial histories of the spatial shift from informal to state-recognized and legitimized settlement, and biographies, the paper unfolds how the internal movement of the marginalized is interwoven with the urban design of the city vis a vis how urban inequalities are perpetuated and reproduced.

### **Negotiating the House and the Home: Space, Place and Belonging in Kolkata, India**

*Sreya SEN, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India*

Across South Asian cities, complex entanglements between temporal politics, practices and imaginaries arising from a range of contexts call for a subject-centred perspective. In this paper, drawing from two rounds of qualitative fieldwork that was conducted in the east Indian city of Kolkata, I focus on how families negotiate different spatial scales to mark their sense of belonging. During fieldwork I would frequently raise the question—'What comes to your mind when you think of house and home?' This was specifically asked to initiate a discussion on 'house' and 'home' as two separate categories in the field and to map out the points of convergence and divergence between them. Firstly, it was observed that using western categories in non-western context is misleading. Respondents revealed that house and home as categories could be expressed in multiple vernacular terms depending on the context as—*bari*, *basha* (house/home/literally nest), *desh* (village and sometimes country), *griha*, *ashroy* (shelter), *bati*, *bhiti* (roots), and so on. Thus representing the complexities that each term entailed. Secondly, since Kolkata as a city underwent significant turmoil and witnessed the influx of a large number of people in the years following the Partition (of British India and of provinces of Bengal), the rich social and cultural history of the city suggests the co-existence of multiple perspectives of 'home' along with multiple imageries of the city. Here Partition memories and memories of houses in the past formed and still continue to form a substantial part of individuals' sense of rootedness and belonging. Amongst the refugees and displaced individuals who moved to West Bengal, the practice of recalling and co-memorizing is thus strongly endured both at the family and community level. Therefore the narratives suggested that sense of belonging can emerge in scales beyond the boundaries of a nation state.

### **Scales of Sociability: Towards New Forms of Segregation of Social Ties in Urban Space**

*Felipe LINK, Instituto de Estudios Urbanos y Territoriales, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile*

The relationship between space and sociability has revolved around two different considerations. On the one hand, the loss of relevance of the neighborhood scale as a space for significant encounters (Wellman, 1979; Bridges, 2002; Piselli, 2007). Moreover, other authors emphasize the dispersion of social networks throughout the city, where the neighborhood's boundaries would no longer fulfill any significant role as a space for sociability (Webber, 1964; Wellman, 1979; Ascher, 2004). On the other hand, the importance of the neighborhood as a provider of social ties (Gans, 1962; Suttles, 1972; Guest, 1999), even if they are weak (Pinkster, 2007; Volker, 2007).

However, within this discussion, the consideration of space is usually reduced to the gross geographical distance (Dagaranova, 2012; Preciado, 2012; Mok, 2007; Viry, 2012) or the distinction between links located inside or outside the neighborhood. (Wellman, 1979; Campbell, 1992; Guest, 1999a; Mesch, 2003; Carrasco, 2008). The paper aims to contribute to this field, inquiring about the location patterns and scales of different social ties in the urban space. Based on a qualitative analysis of personal networks, we analyzed the concentration of social ties throughout the city. This pattern does not occur randomly.

We analyzed the case of Santiago de Chile, understood as an example of urban inequalities in Latinamerican cities. We found very different locations considering the types of social ties. Consequently, we propose an intermediate scale between the neighborhood and the city, referring to the location of different social ties and where the inhabitants maintain a certain familiarity. The scales between the local and the urban and beyond are essential to understand personal networks and discussing the relationship between scale, sociability, and biographies in big cities.

### **Conceptual Challenges in Biographical Research**

*Session Organizers:*

*Susan BELL, Drexel University, USA*

*Lena INOWLOCKI, Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, Germany*

This session brings to the fore conceptual challenges scholars encounter. Some of the questions this raises include: What kind of terms do researchers use to make sense of the experiences people talk about? In which ways do researchers' concepts differ from the terms ordinary people use to talk about their experiences, and which consequences can this have? How do researchers find terms and concepts that they consider adequate?

Further questions concern the terms and concepts that researchers use in different interdisciplinary contexts, such as in ethnography and in biographical research. Thus, how do we describe the research situation? Do we speak, for example, about rapport, relations, or research alliance, and what do we mean in each case?

### **Distortive Applications of the Concept of Biographical Process Structures**

*Katarzyna WANIEK, University of Lodz, Poland*

The paper discusses the concept of biographical process structures developed within the framework of sociolinguistically grounded analysis of autobiographical narrative interviews (the method of Fritz Schütze and his co-workers). Its main objective is to point out the increasing misunderstandings surrounding its use. Not only is it not taken into account that four basic structural process (biographical action plans, institutional action patterns, metamorphoses and trajectories of suffering) have their own features and a dynamic course that is to be identified in sequential analysis of what and how is told, but also that they usually form specific configurations. Their reflexive embedding in the frame of social, cultural and political contexts make it possible to identify both the specific features of a particular case, as well as the typical (i.e. common to many cases) characteristics of a specific biographical and social process. Recently, there has been an increasing number of analyses based on a threefold mistaken assumption. Firstly, that process structures always occur disjointly, i.e. that each phase of biographical experience is assigned a single process structure, and that their interre-

lations are merely sequential, but they may not only follow one another, but also compete with each other, interact with each other; one can be dominant, displace others, or be recessive. Secondly, there is a misconception that during the interview all process structures will be presented from beginning to end, as a certain relived, closed whole. And yet, each process structure has its own course, which, at the time of the encounter with the researcher, may have been in its initial stages. Finally, the third mistake is to assume that every narrative consists of all four process structures while the trajectory of suffering is no longer the experience of all narrators, and the process of metamorphosis is quite rare.

### **'I'm Not a Problem!' – Negotiating between Concepts of Analysis and the Perspectives of the Participants.**

*Gwendolyn GILLIERON, LinCS, Université de Strasbourg, Morocco*

In social interactions, attributions are inevitable, and this is also true for the interaction between the researcher and the participants. In my research on experiences of 'mixed' individuals, I looked for life stories of individuals of binational origin. The sample criteria 'binational origin' is based on theoretical assumptions but presents at the same time the danger to reproduce national, ethnic and cultural attributions and to perpetuate experiences of othering. In the presentation I will discuss two encounters during my research in which individuals resisted my designation as 'mixed' and 'binational'. They refused having particular experiences to share with me as a researcher. I will show how in one case this led to the end of the research alliance and how in the other case the analysis of the very first resistance broadened the understanding of the biographical narrative in particular and the experiences of individuals of binational origin in general. This discussion will give insights into the co-construction of our research subject, into what resistance against our concepts and questions can tell us about our research field and how it may open up to new questions.

### **Categories and Naming Practices in (Biographical) Migration Research**

*Anna SCHNITZER, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Germany*

"What kind of terms do researchers use to make sense of the experiences people talk about? In which ways do researchers' concepts differ from the terms ordinary people use to talk about their experiences, and which consequences can this have? How do researchers find terms and concepts that they consider adequate?"

These questions, the session aims for, come up again and again in the course of my research. Who refers to whom in what way are central questions in qualitative research, especially in biographical research, which is concerned with highlighting the biographical constructions, meanings and relevancies of the research partners. In the field of migration research, these questions arise in a special way. As GÜBRA GÜMÜŞAY points out in her book "Language and Being" ("Sprache und Sein", 2020) from the biographical perspective of a muslim women, naming practices and the associated categorizations are powerful constructions of belonging and alienation. At the same time, naming practices are indispensable, for example, when an informed consent must be obtained in advance of the research, or when specific phenomena of biographical experiences are to be named and described - especially with a focus on social inequalities, discrimination and exclusion.

Based on my ongoing project on memories and biographies of families in the context of flight and migration I will reflect on possible and impossible ways of naming and conceptualisation of categories as a challenge between generalizable analysis and making visible biographical experiences versus inadequate, generalizing and alienating categorization reproducing social exclusion.

## The Social Construction of Migrants: Contested (Hi-)Stories of Migration from the Perspective of Biographical Research

Session Organizers:

Steve TONAH, University of Ghana, Ghana

Arne WORM, University of Goettingen, Germany

Lucas CE SANGALLI, University of Goettingen, Germany

This session focuses on migration as a category of everyday life in different geographical contexts of the Global North and the Global South. On the one hand, migrations in the sense of spatial movements are universal phenomena in human history. On the other hand, constructions of migration – and especially "migrants" – are shaped by the emergence of statehood, border and citizenship regimes, and nationalized discourses of belonging, which are in turn entangled with global history and (post-)colonial modernity. The "comings and goings" of people in the past and in the present are negotiated differently in discourses, stocks of knowledge, and collective memories in different contexts (whether as a problem, a necessity, something normal, a tradition, to name just a few possibilities). There are great differences in respect of whether the category "migrant" serves as a symbolic boundary.

We invite papers that use qualitative approaches to study processes and constellations in the Global South and the Global North, in which constructions and (hi-)stories of migration are contested, negotiated, and transformed within everyday life figurations. The papers can relate to these suggested topics:

- *Contested knowledges*: How is migration-related knowledge produced, reproduced, or transformed in different localized or transnational collectives (such as families, generations, social movements, etc.)?
- *Contested (hi-)stories*: Whose experiences are presented and remembered as migration histories (or not) in different contexts and situations (e.g. in discourses, in asylum interviews, during fieldwork)?
- *(De-)Categorization of migration*: Which meanings do migration categorizations have for "migrants" in different periods of their lives?

### The Gendered Construction of "Bureaucratic Truths". Life Stories of Nigerian Migrants in Front of the Asylum Commissions in Italy

Ombretta INGRASCI, University of Milan, Italy and Federica CABRAS, Univesrità degli Studi di Milano, Italy

This paper deals with institutional discourses of migrants by presenting the outcome of a study which is grounded on the integration of two projects: the ongoing Horizon2020 "Ithaca- Interconnecting Histories and Archives for Migrant Agency: Entangled Narratives Across Europe and the Mediterranean Region", and a PhD thesis on Nigerian trafficking carried out at the University of Milan (2018-2022). The study analyses the interaction practices between migrants involved in the trafficking of person seeking political asylum and the Ministry of Interior's territorial commissions for the recognition of international protection in Italy. Starting from a critique of the "victim paradigm", it focuses on the narrative processes underlying the life stories that Nigerian migrants provide to commissions, confronting with those emerging from biographical interviews. From the analysis of territorial commission acts, it emerges that the status of "victim", which is crucial for obtaining the humanitarian protection, is gendered constructed. This gives evidence of the so-called "sexual humanitarianism", namely the process according to which specific groups of migrants are depicted - more than others as "vulnerable" because of their involvement in the prostitution market. During the hearings, women are asked for a detailed autobiographical story, stimulated by precise questions aimed at providing a coherent, consistent and chronological logic of narratives. This is not the case for men, whose narratives are often "unsolicited stories". Thus, women involved in trafficking are perceived and constructed as subjects entitled to claim protection rights by virtue of an alleged higher vulnerability, unlike men.

From biographical interviews a different narration, comes up: not only trafficked men might be involved in prostitution but also experience torture and sexual violence. However, demonstrating this vulnerability condition is difficult in the absence of physical signs that prove a "bureaucratic truth" consistent with the predominant humanitarian paradigm.

### **The Varying Importance of Migration in City Life. a Comparative View on Biographies and Family (Hi)Stories in Two Cities in the Middle East**

*Johannes BECKER, University of Goettingen, Germany*

Why do some places become characterized by a “culture of migration” (Massey 1998), while in others migration histories and previous entanglements lose their importance or are simply forgotten? Building upon extended periods of research in East Jerusalem and Amman, this comparative paper examines the question why the intensifying processes of globalization have not yielded the same results, even in geographically and culturally close localities. Based on biographical case reconstructions and historical analyses, the paper identifies processes which lead to an extension of migratory practices, as in the case of Amman, or to a decreasing relevance of migration in everyday life, as can be reconstructed in East Jerusalem. Aspects which assume importance in this regard include, for example, the differing power relations between established and outsiders, different political structures, social histories and prevalent discourses, as well as the importance, and symbolism of (urban) space. I argue that these differences impact the characteristics and horizons of everyday life in these two cities. I will exemplify this by analysing the differing relevance of migration in the histories of two families, one from Amman and one from Jerusalem.

### **Welcoming the Other: Comparing Munich and Dublin Based Hosts' Biographic Narratives of Cosmopolitan Hospitality in Response to the Russian-Ukrainian War**

*Daniel GUIGUI, University College Dublin, Ireland*

Between 2010 and 2018, 36 countries worldwide recorded the immigration of over 200 thousand people, with 14 of these countries even exceeding one million immigrants, according to UN International Migration reports. More recently, Europe is experiencing the immigration of an estimated five million Ukrainians fleeing the war, during its biggest migration crisis yet. This puts governments across Europe under pressure to provide accommodations for Ukrainians without compromising the needs of existing residents. In response, people in Europe's metropolitan cities with competitive and precarious housing markets, like Munich and Dublin, started sharing their homes with Ukrainians. Contrasting this phenomenon with support and housing offered during previous European refugee crises raises the question of changes in current hosts' motivations, cosmopolitan outlooks, practices, and identities. Due to their socio-economic and demographic similarities, Munich and Dublin provide excellent comparative cases grounded in a real-world experiment that allows holding factors of population density, demographic stratification, and housing precarity constant. Thereby, enabling the isolation of life-course elements presented in 50 biographic narrative interviews of Munich- and Dublin-based hosts leading up to the decision to share their homes. Moreover, the analysis of autobiographical narratives grounded in the cross-country comparison supports inductive inferences based on national differences in socio-political, historical, and geographic contexts on an individual's biographic narrative and life course. The results of this study provide insights into determinants of biographically constructed narratives that lead to the manifestation of cosmopolitan outlooks, practices, identities, and ethics of sharing, and impact academic theories of formation of cosmopolitan characteristics and attributes. Findings are also interesting to policy-makers seeking to foster and harness the positive effects of cosmopolitan ethics of sharing to alleviate bottlenecks in housing provision caused by unexpected migrations. Ultimately, ensuring that our rapidly growing cities are welcoming the other.

### **Neither Swedish/American, Nor Chinese – Swedish and American Adoptees Reflects on Their Lack of Belonging**

*Ingrid BOSSELDAL, Department of Educational Sciences, Lund University, Sweden*

This paper draws on an ongoing study of narratives of non-biological parenting and inter-country adoption, and has a particular focus on adoptees' own stories about belonging versus non-belonging, both at a local, national and global level. According to international law and declarations, the best interests of the child and the rights of the child are the starting point for all transnational adoptions, but this has recently been strongly questioned, not least by revelations about corruption and human trafficking in the adoption business, but also by adoptees' testimonials about growing up in racist societies as *inappropriate/d others* (Mnh-



iha 1997, Haraway 2004). Somewhat paradoxically, this has led some adoptees to direct harsh criticism towards the countries they were adopted to, at the same times as they, both culturally and geographically, have drawn closer to their countries of birth.

The paper is based on qualitative group interviews with Swedish and American adoptees together with narrative analysis of autobiographical novels and documentaries, and shows how being adopted often means crossing cultural and geographical boundaries and challenging certain categories. The adoptee belong to a neighborhood, where some people question her right to be. The adoptee belong to a family, despite none biological relation. And the adoptee belong to a nation, despite being born somewhere else. On top of this, many adoptees testify about how their deviant complexion makes it impossible to assimilate. It does not seem to matter that they have lived in a particular place since they were infants and do not know about anything else. People will still ask them where they come from, for real. And they will still have to cope with this lack of belonging, which can lead to an intensified desire to know more about their personal origin, both ethnic and genetic.

### **Black Lives and the New Wave of Antiracist Mobilization within and across World Regions** *(Joint Session with RC47 Social Classes and Social Movements)*

*Session Organizers:*

*Nicole DOERR, University of Copenhagen, Denmark*

*Sabrina ZAJAK, German Center for Integration and Migration Research (DeZIM), Berlin & Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany*

*Sevil CAKIR, University of Goettingen, Germany*

*Eren YETKIN, Koblenz University of Applied Sciences Berlin / Koblenz, Germany*

The violent death of George Floyd has sparked mass mobilizations in the U.S. and led to an unprecedented diffusion of “Black Lives Matter” protests around the world. However, anti-racist and black activism has a long tradition in different regions. This session wants to explore the new wave of antiracist mobilizations. Some argue that the recent wave of mobilization - while strengthening and transforming pre-existing antiracist activism in different countries - still remains largely a support of the US BLM movement. Others have pointed out, that the new shape of anti-racist mobilizations and black women's activism, although often transnational, have little to do with dynamics in the US. They are rather a response to the recent crisis of democracy, including recent advances in the systems of oppression of intersectional marginalized social groups. This session, therefore, asks: How far is the recent wave of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) activism inspired by US protests? What narratives, visual and performative repertoire, identity constructs, actors, forms of resistance, and networks shape the recent mobilization in different localities? What are its context-specific historical and regional origins? Could we apply a global perspective on the recent mobilization? What are the connections between the biographical and collective projects in dealing with different forms of discrimination and racism in the Global North and the Global South? This session seeks to discuss these topics with scholars from different world regions which explore the topic of anti-racist mobilization in its local and global constellations.

### **Emerging Anti-Racism Activism and Discourses of Racism in Times of Political Polarization in Bolivia**

*Eija RANTA, University of Helsinki, Finland*

Advocating for the rights of Indigenous peoples has been central to the activism of social movements in Bolivia for decades. In a country where a large part of the population belongs to one of the thirty-six recognized Indigenous groups (Afro-Bolivians being one of them), the land rights, autonomy and self-determination of Indigenous peoples have been at the center of the politics of social movements. Furthermore, for the past 15 years or so, Indigenous issues, plurinationalism, and decoloniality have played a significant role in state discourses and policies, although not without disputes and contradictions. As in many parts of the world, the debate about race and racism has intensified significantly in recent years in Bolivia, but instead of anti-racism activists leading it, it appears to have become a fierce battlefield between the governing regime and the political opposition. This paper examines the emerging anti-racism

activism in times of political polarization, when political elites have become active in the discursive deployment of the notions race and racism for a variety of purposes. Using fieldwork observations and interview data, it analyzes Indigenous activists' complex navigation amidst challenging political scenarios, as well as their perceptions and experiences concerning racism and anti-racism. The aim of the paper is to enhance an in-depth and contextualized understanding of how and why issues of indigeneity, race and racism have become increasingly visible in the contested national politics over the last few years. Importantly, the paper suggests that in times of political polarization, discourses of racism intersect with concerns over democracy and authoritarianism. Furthermore, it underlines the importance for the autonomy of Indigenous and anti-racism activists, and warns of the attempts by political parties to instrumentalize anti-racism struggles.

### **Agenda Setting and Reframing. Black Lives Matter and Media Debates on Racism in Germany**

*Moritz SOMMER, German Center of Integration and Migration Research (DeZIM), Germany*

The killing of George Floyd in May 2020 sparked widespread protest – also in Germany. In this paper, we explore how the recent wave of BLM mobilizations has impacted the media debate on racism in Germany. Specifically, we analyse overall shifts in the salience of racism and the resonance of key frames articulated by the BLM protesters. Drawing from a mix of quantitative content analysis and semi-structured interviews, we show that the BLM protests were indeed able to change the public debate on racism in Germany. They did not only lead to a significant increase in the salience of the topic overall but also created resonance for some, yet not all, of BLM's concrete frames. While specific forms of racism became increasingly publicly discussed during the BLM mobilizations, including anti-Black racism as a particular form of racism, the attempt to increase the visibility of Black lifeworlds in Germany more broadly, was less successful. Theoretically, the article bridges insights from social movement studies and race and ethnicity studies to advance interdisciplinary scholarship on social and cultural change induced by collective action.

### **#Blacklivesmatter and Global Framing of Social Protest and Dissent**

*Jeniece LUSK, American University of Sharjah, Sharjah, Sharjah, USA and Sammy BADRAN, American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates*

The US based Black Lives Matter Movement (BLM) has resonated internationally and inspired various social movements, especially Palestinian movements. Just five days after George Floyd was murdered, Israeli police chased and killed a 32-year old autistic Palestinian man--demonstrators held signs that read "Palestinian Lives Matter" (Holmes, 2020). It is well established that social movements strategically frame their demands to best resonate with the public. Social movement framing allows us to study how the internationally resonant BLM movement has changed Palestinian movements. Benford and Snow (2000) argue that framing attracts bystanders to participate. Movements are commonly inspired by other (successful) international movements.

Anecdotal accounts suggest that Palestinian activists have been reframing their movements as a racial justice and anti-police brutality struggle; however, this is the first paper to empirically study this connection between the BLM and Palestinian civil society organizations. We conduct a content analysis of various Palestinian civil society organization websites, blogs, and social media pages for evidence of BLM-inspired framing strategies. Specifically, we argue that various Palestinian groups have changed their framing strategies by highlighting themes related to racial injustice and police brutality, among others. This research provides insights into the characteristics of BLM framing that penetrate geopolitical boundaries; particularly, how BLM has impacted Palestinian activism and framing. This multidisciplinary and transnational approach to framing is unique and will be of interest to those that study social movement dynamics.

### **Waves of Anti-Racist Mobilization and Challenges to Racial Capitalism Since the 1980 until Today**

*Sabrina ZAJAK, German Center for Integration and Migration Research (DeZIM), Berlin & Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany and Jill PÖGGEL, German Center of Integration and Migration Research (DeZIM), Germany*

In the social sciences, we have recently seen a renewed engagement with the relationship and connections between racism and capitalism which are often framed through concepts of racial or racialized capitalism. In so doing, these discussions can build upon a long legacy of critical perspectives: From dependency and world-systems theory to post-colonial approaches, from critical theory to Black Marxism and Cultural Studies. Simultaneously, however the newly emerging theories seem strangely disconnected from knowledges produced in the context of social movements trying to change structures of (racialized) inequalities. In this paper, we want to put such knowledges center stage by investigating the interrelations of capitalism, racism, and anti-racist mobilization through the lens of specific social movement contexts in Germany: namely, earlier attempts of antiracist mobilization in Refugee protests of the 1980s and early 1990s on the one hand, and the contemporary wave of Black Lives Matter protests on the other. By bringing these two contexts into dialogue with each other, we illuminate some of the specifics of anti-racist struggles in the German context but also draw attention to the ways in which ideas and concepts central to these movements with regards to racialised capitalism 'travelled' both temporarily and geographically.

### **The Movimento Negro Unificado and the Confrontation of the Brazilian Crisis**

*Rodrigo ROCHA, Universidade de São Paulo, Brazil*

The political, economic and health crisis, which manifested its first signs in Brazil from 2014 and intensified from 2020, with the arrival of the covid-19 pandemic, produced changes in the different organizational dynamics of social movements, through demands, expectations and articulations. This work sought, through interviews with 6 state coordinators of the Movimento Negro Unificado, one of the main movements in the confrontation of racism in Brazil, to understand how the entity behaved, understood and faced the demands of these last years. The research showed that the period was faced from different angles in each of the 6 federal states, but in general, the greatest difficulties were in dealing (1) with hunger, which disproportionately affects the national black population; (2) with police violence, which intensifies in this period through murders and slaughters in slums; and (3) with the arrival of the virtual mode of mobilization, which is the result of social distancing in the pandemic and ends up affecting the dynamics of political militancy, training and claim actions of the movement during this period.

### **“It Was to Show What People Could Do If They Wanted to”: The Struggles over Empty Plinth– in the Aftermath of Statue-Toppling in Bristol and New Orleans.**

*Carmit WOLBERG, Ben Gurion University, Israel*

During May and June 2020, following the murder of George Floyd by police officers in Minneapolis, dozens of monuments were toppled or removed worldwide. In the US, the Caribbean, and Europe, activists targeted monuments representing White supremacy and colonialism. This wave of Fallism – the process of contesting and removing contentious monuments – created a symbolic void in the form of empty plinths. While there have been sustained discussions on the merit and meaning of removing statues, this paper examines an underexplored angle: what happens to the empty plinth in the aftermath of removals and what can we learn from the struggles over these newly empty spaces about the memory activism which underpin Fallism or is triggered by it.

Based on field research in Bristol, England, and New Orleans, this paper will explore how various interventions on the empty plinth of Edward Colston's statue, which was toppled during the BLM protests in 2020 and the empty pedestals of Confederate monuments removed in 2017 in New Orleans, became emblematic to the local politics surrounding the removed monuments. These newly empty spaces were used in varied ways providing an opportunity for analyzing the local and global meaning and forms of memory activism in these contexts. Based on these comparative case studies, this paper will suggest reviewing Fallism from a broader perspective beyond the act of removal. Both case studies demonstrate how Fallism

is a continuous process, which is also affected by the nature of the removal – top down and bottom up. This new unexplored perspective will allow us to expose new meanings behind different forms of memory activism and demands to remove contentious monuments and offer a more nuanced outlook into local politics and power struggles.

**@Minority Voices: Racialised Communicative Labour and Anti-Racism in Singapore**

*Selvaraj VELAYUTHAM, Macquarie University, Australia and Chand SOMAIAH, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, Singapore*

For a very long time ethnic minorities in Singapore were unable to express and share their experiences of racism. The everyday and casual nature of their encounters of racial discrimination were difficult to pin point because they were subtle, deemed trivial and often framed as banter among friends or colleagues. Even though racist incidents occurred in public settings, racism was endured as a personal experience; a product of personal prejudices and not a social failing. There were no spaces to speak out and be heard. However, in recent years, young Singaporeans have turned to the internet and social media to convey their testimonies, express the emotional toll and debilitating effects of racism and orchestrate anti-racist actions. This paper examines the various ways in which young ethnic minorities who have experienced racism are using digital media to create awareness, share its effects and confront it. This work we argue constitutes a form of racialised communicative labour. This paper contributes to the scholarship on antiracism, a relatively new and emergent phenomenon in multiracial Singapore.

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