IUS Field Training School and Research Seminar on Urban Ethnography and Theory: Report and Research Abstracts

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With more than half of the world's population now living in cities, and this proportion set to increase to two-thirds by 2050, the ethnographic study of life in urban settings is urgent and important. Urbanisation proceeding at such a pace has meant increases in the number and size of cities but also continues to alter the social fabric of urban centres, sometimes in profound ways, leading to new policy priorities (such as the globally encompassing Sustainable Development Goals). 'States of emergency' (prompted by violence, pandemics, crises) add a further layer of complexity.

Aware of pressing methodological and theoretical questions raised by these multifaceted contemporary urban changes, we convened a Field Training School and Research Seminar in Montecatini Terme, Tuscany, Italy on 18-26 July 2022. The working language was English.

With the collaboration of an international group of high-calibre scholars[1] and the financial and organizational support of the International Urban Symposium-IUS, this event brought together 25 postgraduate, doctoral and postdoctoral scholars from around the world. It offered an interactive learning environment and extended opportunities to discuss in depth the rationale and practices of traditional and new research methods and mainstream debates. Students had the opportunity to present their own research and receive feedback from leading scholars; and to engage in team work and networking.

Over 9 full days, the activities developed through 21 interactive Teaching Seminars, for a total of 38 hours; a 1-day targeted field trip followed by 6 hours discussion of students' reports; and an 8-hour Research Seminar during which students' presentations were discussed by the group.

The Teaching Seminars focused on methodological and theoretical debates, benefiting from the leaders' wide range of ethnographic, methodological and theoretical expertise to address interrelated topical issues, including urban diversity; migration; informality; legitimacy and legitimation; governance, stereotype and stigma; sport mega-events; rituals; crisis, emergency and conflict; public space, vernacular landscape, heritage, identity.

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[1] They were, in alphabetical order, Gary Armstrong (City University London, UK); Subhadra Mitra Channa (University of Delhi, India); Ebru Kayaalp Jurich (Yeditepe University, Turkey); Jerome Krase (City University New York, USA); Marcello Mollica (University of Messina, Italy); David Nugent (Emory University, USA); Italo Pardo (University of Kent, UK); Giuliana B. Prato (University of Kent, UK); Michel Rautenberg (University of St Etienne, France); James Rosbrook-Thompson (City University London, UK); Liora Sarfati (Tel Aviv University, Israel); Manos Spyridakis (University of the Peloponnese, Greece); Adeem Suhail (Yale University, USA).

A key aim of this exercise was to train junior scholar in the 'art' of conducting ethnographic fieldwork and develop the link between ethnographically-based analysis and social theory. The in-class work was supplemented by structured city walks and focused observational field trips on which students produced field reports.

With a view to honing and developing junior scholars' skills as future professionals, the School culminated in a Research Seminar that gave participants the opportunity to present their work, engage in academic debate and benefit from expert feedback from the teaching staff. This was a promising exercise. Below are the abstracts from their work. Revised and expanded versions of selected papers are in preparation for publication in this journal.

The Research Abstracts
(in alphabetical order)

Flaviana Astone, University of Messina, Italy, flavy21095@gmail.com
Title: *Sicilian Identity as an Instrument of Political Vindication.*
Abstract: This study aims to reveal the ideological nature of the name given in 2008 to Sicily's heritage authority, which became the Department of Cultural Heritage and Sicilian Identity. The move was desired by the autonomist movements, adopting a clearly critical stance with regard to national policies. I start with a critical analysis of the definition of Sicilian identity, as it is constructed by public institutions and ordinary people of the island, by foreign intellectuals. The aim is to analyse what Sicilian identity is, not as a substantial material heritage, but as the result of the construction of a system of ideas. In many cases this system of ideas hides economic interests that intend to promote goods that are or appear to be part of a cultural identity. We are convinced that Sicily has always been the crossroads of various civilizations, but it could also be remembered for its vineyards, citrus groves, gastronomy, and sea. We may also be convinced that the island's basic identity is made up of many typical features, such as the *Carretto Siciliano*, the *Opera dei Pupi*, the Holy Week processions. Even today we feed this construction work, preserving and nurturing a myth, resulting from the need to label everything, creating stereotypes, to give historical depth to everything. We refer to literature, cinema and photography as means of creating cultural identity. Some particular cases will be examined that can highlight the great role of these artistic activities. The Sicilian community becomes an 'imagined community' (Anderson 2018), in which the Sicilians themselves think they are made the same way. In a contemporary and urban society, it is completely misleading to speak of belonging to a community made up of equals, sharing a 'Sicilian identity'.

Reference: Anderson, B. 2018. *Comunità immaginate. Origini e fortuna dei nazionalismi*. Rome: Laterza.

Giulia Bitto, University of Messina, Italy, giulia.bitto@unime.it
Title: *The Autobiographies of Mafia Inmates in the Catania Bicocca Prison: Reflections on an Almost Impossible Ethnography.*
Abstract: The ethnographic project I carried out with mafia inmates in the Catania Bicocca Prison, consisting of the guided writing of life stories in the early months of 2022, represented a considerable ethnographic challenge. This work aims to examine the difficulties of entering the penitentiary, exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and by a slow bureaucracy; the ethnographic experience

conducted inside, during which I was able to observe the commitment and availability of the school teachers but also the hostility of the police towards educational projects; the almost forced choice of using the autobiographical medium and the questionnaire as an ethnographic method, considering the restrictions imposed by the prison administration; the questions raised by the analysis of these writings, since the detainees are incarcerated under article 416 bis of the Italian Criminal Code, which condemns someone only for belonging to a mafia organization without the need to have committed another crime, and for this reason it is heavily criticized. The representation that the inmates give of themselves appears very interesting, since this crime consists of behaviours and attitudes that are closely related to subjective perception, in cultural contexts where intimidation, subjugation and silence are practices considered lawful in relationships with friends, relatives and colleagues. The focus of the work consists in the application of the categories of subordination, invisibility, locality and finally representation; thus, a complex and particular social reality emerges, living on multiple levels of marginalization, which build and shape life, experience and thoughts of the prisoner.

Tofie Briscolini, University Lumière Lyon II, France, t.briscolini@outlook.com
Title: *Understanding Intersection of Urban Accessibility and Subsistence Work Through Daily Mobility.*

Abstract: I examine 'The right to the city' (Lefebvre 1967) from the perspective of persons with mental health disorders, physical disabilities, or addiction in the context of metropolisation by observing their daily mobility. Beyond their diverse situations, these people share the commonality of having experienced homelessness or poor housing and they are living in collective social housing in Lyon agglomeration. To study this I am referring to the double acceptance of accessibility (Peltier 2021). First, accessibility of the city like the possibility to negotiate a way, a path, a route in the sense of Ingold and Lee (2006), so the possibility to go to one place and create familiarity. In addition, according to the second sense, accessibility like the possibility to access to rights and resources, an issue that occupies an important place in this social housing. This leads me to question the intertwining between the accessibility of the urban environment and the 'work of subsistence' and how this contributes to producing spaces and places (Collectif Rosa Bonheur 2019). Moreover, to understand this, I take into account the situation (administrative, health, etc.) of persons I am working with, their life course and the role of social work in this process. In a play of scale, I also focus on urban planning — influenced by metropolisation policies — and how it contributes in everyday motilies for these persons. Thus, accessibility seems to be a multifactorial acceptance and relational process. Finally, through the understanding of their practice, I seek to take a critical look at the production of urban space. First, I follow the everyday mobility in the urban environment. Second, I involve people in my project and create an opportunity for them to express their experience of everyday city life.

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Lefebvre, H. 1967. Le droit à la ville. *L'Homme et la société*, 6 (1):29-35.

Peltier, E. 2021. Aller en ville depuis le bidonville. Paper presented at the Seminar on Mobilités quotidiennes et études urbaines. 14 October.

Kenton Card, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany, and University of California, Los Angeles, USA, kcard@marlboro.edu
Title: *Disrupting Neoliberal Policymaking from the Streets to the Statehouse: How Tenant Movements Impact Housing Policy in Los Angeles and Berlin.*
Abstract: This paper compares rental housing politics in Los Angeles (USA) and Berlin (Germany) between 2008-2020 by way of each city's episode of contentious politics, and what political processes influenced policy outcomes. The paper serves as a case of the emergence, escalation, and impact of tenant power. Tenant Movement Organizations employed five mechanisms to impact policymaking: (1) making demands, (2) forming coalitions, (3) promoting people's referendums, (4) engaging in collaborative dialogue with government officials, and (5) transferring agents into government. The paper draws on multiple data sources, including interviews and participant observation over ten years. The cities witnessed policy episodes with four parallel characteristics: (1) progressive local reforms, moderate regional ones, (2) shifting from defensive to offensive, (3) shifting from particular to universal, and (4) signs of a breakthrough beyond neoliberal housing policymaking. The findings suggest that the rise of tenant movements and their allies help drive policy change via multiple channels — including money power and people power — exhibiting both similarities and differences across cities.

Proshant Chakraborty, University of Gothenburg, Sweden, proshant.chakraborty@gu.se
Title: *City as Method: Repair, Maintenance and the Production of Urban Spatiotemporality in Mumbai.*
Abstract: This paper is based on an anthropological study of Mumbai's suburban railway network, which are popularly known as 'local trains'. Between 2021 and 2022, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork at the oldest car shed in the city and also turned an autoethnographic lens to my experiences as a commuter. Thus, my project is situated at intersections of urban studies, science and technology studies (STS), and repair studies, and examines the interrelationships between the repair and maintenance of urban public transport infrastructures and how commuters and other inhabitants experience the city as a whole. In particular, my presentation attempts to frame the city in both epistemological and methodological frameworks. While agreeing that urban anthropology *is* anthropology (Prato and Pardo 2013), my work suggests that the city can be an *object* and *analytic* of anthropological investigation. I approach this problem in two ways. First, I build on the critique of 'methodological cityism', which looks at cities as bounded and isolated spaces (Angelo and Wachsmuth 2014); instead, the study of urban public transport reveals how cities are embedded in circuits of planetary urbanism and transnational capitalism (Brenner and Schmid 2015; Fisch 2018; also, Bear 2020), which congeal and arise through processes of materialisation and mutation (Martínez 2020). Second, my empirical focus on repair and maintenance foregrounds how entanglements of human and nonhuman agencies, including technical objects and local ecologies, are vital in producing urban flows (Anand 2019, Henke and Sims 2020). As complex sociotechnical assemblages, Mumbai's local trains are exemplary infrastructures for such an investigation. The preventive and corrective maintenance of trains forestall not only technical failures, but also breakdowns that could threaten the mobility and safety of over 8 million commuters. By studying both maintenance and commuting, city as method shows how repair is vital in producing urban spatio-temporality and mobility.

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Merlin Gillard, Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research & Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium, merlin.gillard@liser.lu
Title: *Public Transport Policing and Fare Transitions.*

Abstract: My research interests are articulated around two objects. On one hand, I investigate social and spatial aspects of policing and surveillance, and what security policies do to public spaces. On the other hand, I am interested in urban governance and policies, in particular mobility policies. For me, these two areas of research are also strongly linked to right to the city approaches. In my PhD dissertation, I aim to combine them in looking at the power relationships in public transport, in the particular context of Fare-Free Public Transport. In the past, I also conducted research on the policing of events in public space (such as festivals and demonstrations).

Peter Habib, Emory University, USA, phabib@emory.edu
Title: *Spatializing Humanitarianism: Adopting Topology as a Frame of Analysis.*

Abstract: Most studies of humanitarianism focus on its institutions and practices: the range of NGOs and political organizations committed to alleviating human suffering, and the variety of tactics adopted toward this effort. Less attention has been granted toward understanding the spatial arrangements of humanitarianism — that is, how the institutions of humanitarianism fit in relation to other actors, and how this spatial arrangement in turn shapes humanitarian practice. Such an effort, I argue, reveals otherwise overlooked or obscured dimensions of humanitarianism, and thus proves valuable for understanding questions of power, change, and connection among humanitarian and political actors and institutions. This paper first presents the customary 'topography' of humanitarianism, understood as a hierarchical and horizontal framework that represent the actors and institutions involved in humanitarian practice. It then offers a series of ethnographic vignettes and discussions which reframes this expected spatial topography through a consideration of 'topology', which preferences the malleable and flexible nature of power relations over rigid hierarchies. Topology allows us to examine how institutions and structures of power are ultimately rooted in relations that are prone to bending, stretching, shifting, and even rupturing within a specific temporality, and can thus account for complex and seemingly contradictory relational dynamics. Through topology, we can explore how humanitarianism operates in contexts of contested and emergent power relations, particularly alongside state (in)action. This paper

draws from fieldwork conducted during 2019 in Lebanon's urban Bekaa Valley, in addition to written ethnographic accounts of Lebanon's humanitarian landscape.

Steffen Hornemann, University of Oslo, Norway, Steffen.Hornemann@gmail.com

Title: *Moving Meals, Moving Bodies: An Anthropological Approach Towards Urban Food Delivery Work in the Platform Economy.*

Abstract: While increasing urbanization inspires efforts towards more sustainable cities, our lives are increasingly mediated by digital technologies. The gig economy is on the rise. Recently, the Covid-19 pandemic has only fuelled some of these trends. Against this backdrop, brightly-clad workers for digital food delivery platforms have gained a strong visible presence in cities around the world. Urban dwellers digitally order food through the platform's phone app; the platform's algorithm then assigns delivery couriers to transport these meals across the city by bike, car, or other means of transport. While the platforms purport to provide a smooth technological solution, physical human labour is integral to their functioning. And they have a notable impact on city life: They foster new work regimes, forms of urban mobility, sociality, and engagements with technologies. So how does the food delivery platform come together on the ground through delivery workers' practices and interactions with their social, digital, and material environments? And how do we approach this urban phenomenon anthropologically? In this paper, I sketch a framework for studying how digital food delivery platforms materialize in the urban environment. Theoretically, this outlook is grounded within the anthropology of infrastructure, of the body and embodiment, as well as design anthropology. It is: 1) to help make visible the embodied labour and mobilities that enable the infrastructural network of food delivery platforms, and 2) to develop an appropriately complex understanding of the relations between the platform's social, material, and digital dimensions. I discuss the methodological implications this perspective has for an ethnographic study of urban food delivery work. Finally, I tentatively apply the framework to insights from ongoing fieldwork with food delivery workers in Oslo, Norway. In doing so, I consider how this anthropological approach might tell us about changes concerning technology, space, and labour in an urban context at large.

Sasha Killen Tycko, Emory University, USA, sasha.killen.tycko@emory.edu

Title: *City in a Forest: An Ethnography of Abandonment.*

Abstract: At the edge of Atlanta, Georgia grows one of the largest contiguous tree canopies in the urban United States. In April 2021, the city of Atlanta announced a plan to clear-cut this 381-acre forest to build one of the largest police training facilities and movie soundstage complexes in the United States, a plan that is actively contested by an anarchist encampment, local environmentalists, and city residents. How and why does a forest in a Southern U.S. metropolis archive the entanglement of urban policing, plantation agriculture, capitalist entertainment, and feral ecology? In this paper, I argue that using the forest to train police and produce big-budget films falls in with a genealogy of practices that have mediated relationships between urbanity and wilderness, bondage and freedom, and pleasure and security. The very shape of this forest — its terrain, its flora and fauna, its topography — bears the imprint of other such projects: a 20th-century city prison farm, Civil War trench warfare, topsoil extraction for landfilling, and more. The forest also bears the trace of the abandonment of these projects: a crumbling prison covered in algae, soil erosion where a cotton field was once tilled, and a pine barren growing on formerly terraced farmland. The paper

draws on ethnographic study conducted in the forest since June 2021 amid ongoing political struggles, as well as archival research on the history of the forest and the prison farm it once housed.

Sandra King-Savic, University of St.Gallen, Switzerland, sandra.king-savic@unisg.ch
Title: *Labels and Categories: The Making of Diaspora.*

Abstract: In this project, I try to understand the intersection between 'integration' in legal terms and how 'non-citizens' (Anderson 2013) situate themselves in terms of belonging vis a vis the genealogy of this legal structure that renders individuals at once inside and outside of the normative power structure that constitutes a body politique. More specifically, how do labour- and forced migrants from former Yugoslavia negotiate 'integration' in Switzerland in legal and social terms? Former Yugoslavs constitute not only a comparatively large number of 'non-citizens' in Switzerland. Individuals connections to this community also embody numerous labels and categories of migrant that statistical databases, the media, and legal practices attach to them. In an effort to illustrate the fluid character of how labelling and categorizing 'non-citizens' affects belonging empirically, this article builds on the theoretical reflections by Rebecca Hamlin, Patricia Ewick and Susan S. Silbey, Engin Isin, and Cecilia Menjívar. Key findings in this paper illustrate a two-tiered narrative: 'non-citizens' maintain their pursuit of not attracting attention to their persona — a strategy that lets individuals disappear within the larger society. At the same time, and in conjunction with the tightening legal basis of belonging to the Swiss body politique during the 1990s, interlocutors do not simply highlight discontent with the exclusionary legal practices 'non-citizens' experience. Instead, interviewees actively built Swiss-wide diaspora connections and networks to aid each other when legal and administrative questions arise, but also to influence actively the political and legal landscape in Switzerland.

Reference

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Danielle Hynes, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, danielle.hynes@unsw.edu.au
Title: *Imaginaries of the Future City: Neoliberalism and Social Housing.*

Abstract: This paper analyses a case study of public housing in Sydney, Australia to explore the question: What are the social justice implications of competing imaginaries of the future city? Stable, safe and secure public housing is a vital resource, providing stability and increasing quality of life for those on very low incomes. Through an analysis of the competing imaginaries of public housing in Australia I argue that the current dominant imaginary of the city is neoliberal. The methods informing this case study are a media analysis of over 700 newspaper articles mentioning public housing published in 2020, 16 semi-structured in-depth interviews with key stakeholders in the public housing sector, and discourse analysis of 13 key policy documents. The analysis explored visions of the present and future of social housing expressed by various actors within the political-economic hierarchy. Within the neoliberal imaginary public housing is a stigmatised tenure type that is increasingly defunded. The withdrawal of the State from the provision of stable, secure housing serves to further marginalise those who rely on this type of housing. If this imaginary remains dominant, this trend will continue. Through exploring spaces of resistance to the dominant neoliberal imaginary and engaging with alternate visions of the city, I argue that it may be possible to broaden the collective imagination towards a more just city.

Katharine Lindquist, Emory University, USA, katharine.mary.lindquist@emory.edu
Title: *Middle-Classness as an Urban Aesthetic in Kampala, Uganda.*

Abstract: Through an examination of official state discourse, public visual culture, and original ethnographic research, I consider what middle-classness as an urban aesthetic both produces and obscures as it becomes increasingly more hegemonic in cities across Africa. Taking Kampala — the capital city of Uganda — as my vantage point, I explore how the promotion of middle-class aesthetics through state development policy has reconfigured economic and political ecologies in urban Uganda, creating a new form of urban citizenship. Specifically, draw attention to the temporality of middle-classness in Kampala. For many Ugandans in Kampala — from small shop keepers to business owners — middle-classness is future-oriented — an aspiration and commitment to a Uganda of the future. I argue that it is this temporal orientation that makes middle-classness as an urban aesthetic a dynamic space of inclusion and exclusion. Ugandans from many different walks of life can lay claim to a middle-class status of the future. Expressing middle-class aspirations thus opens up new forms of political alliances and mutuality, while of course obscuring some of the very real barriers for many to achieve such aspirations. This paper seeks to outline some of the arenas of contest and conflict around middleclass expression in Kampala and in the process suggests that middle-classness as an urban form is a key ontology of many contemporary African cities.

Sana Malik Noon, Emory University, USA, snoon@emory.edu
Title: *The Politics of Women's Rights Activism in Urban Pakistan.*

Abstract: In the new millennium, social transformations in the Muslim world have been characterized by a growing youth consciousness of social justice and human rights, animated by new media forms, transnational alliances among activists, and global movements such as #MeToo. Analysing the practices of two women's rights organizations in urban Pakistan, this paper reflects on how human rights discourses are translated, vernacularized, and mobilized by activists while lobbying for women's political representation and inclusion in the public sphere. Women's Action Forum (WAF) was established in Pakistan in 1981, by professional women advocating for women's legal protection. Girls at Dhabas (GaD) was formed in 2015, by young, middle-income women lobbying for women's safe access to public spaces, as a civic right. This essay contends that contradictions in practices, institutions, and discourses of women's rights create myriad possibilities for political action and activism in Islamic polities over time. Contemporary anthropological literature of the Muslim world has presented women's pious agency as an alternative to liberal, autonomous subjectivity. This paper explores a 'third way' between the analytical binaries of secular/religious agency, by studying urban women who constantly strategize, innovate, and reorganize their practices in response to changing socio-political conditions. In doing so, they create possibilities for alternative, gendered, and plural public spheres in Islamic nations — inclusive of women, minorities, and other social actors. Using ethnographic examples from urban Pakistan, this paper suggests that women's agency, and broader shifts in women's movements, can be understood through a close study of evolving organizational practices and discourses.

Leone Michelini, University of Messina, Italy, leone.michelini93@gmail.com
Title: *'I brought an angel to Lucifer': Malayali Migration, Religion and Care Work in Messina's District.*
Abstract: The ethnographic fieldwork carried out during this year in Messina district, both in urban and peri-urban contexts, focuses on religion driven trajectories of inclusion and exclusion in the labour

market of Malayali population from the southern Indian State of Kerala. The aim is to understand how religion intersects migration paths and experiences and how it shapes the access to a certain type of 'right to the city' and the construction of diasporic identities in Sicilian society. In particular, the belonging of migrants to the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church, combined with specific socioeconomic factors and with the mobilization of cultural stereotypes of ethnic-religious matrix, favours the incorporation of migrants into the highly informal, religious and moral system of domestic and care work. The important role played by local parish priests, by employment agencies based both in Rome and India and by active informal intermediaries define precise constraints and limits of these processes. First of all, working on fieldwork evidences grounded on participatory observation and non-structural interviews, we want to map the Indian migrants' presence on the territory and their forms of social, religious and working organization. Furthermore, through the collection of life stories and migration biographies, it becomes possible to problematize a universalizing view of migratory phenomena. Specific dynamics lead to creative and different re-combinations, from below, of religious and ethnics ways of belonging. Within an intersectional anthropological approach, variables such as gender, age, class and ethnicity become as important as categories of marginality, religion or informality.

Greta Rauleac, Cenral European University, Austria, Rauleac_Greta@phd.ceu.edu
Title: *Collective Life in the Linear Metropolis: A Case Study from the Romagna Region.*
Abstract: Researchers agree that public space has been in dissolution for a while. Without a doubt, the proliferation of multiple public spaces, their privatization, commercialization, and policing contributed to empty public spaces. In their everyday life, people usually 'cross through' public space, and only gather when events are staged in public spaces. This picture is confirmed by my ethnographic observation of youngsters' social life in Emilia-Romagna, Northern Italy. As many Mediterranean urban areas, the Romagna sub-region in particular has changed following an America style of growth: cities and towns have extended in low-density residential areas where public space is never pursued. As traditional public space is emptied, my ethnographic observations show that youngsters often choose to socialize in spaces which are in between the private and the public. I focus on a public park and a community-centre inside it, to show how it has become a meeting point for youngsters from across the town and beyond. With concrete observation of everyday use of the space, I consider how events changed youth's collective imagination of the space and contributed to a shared identity; I reflect on how private and public stakeholders' intervention onto the space reshapes its power-dynamics and collective imagination of the area; finally, I consider the effects of such ongoing transformation on youth socialization and identity formation. This paper aims to contribute to current debates on public spaces by considering the role of stakeholders and collaborative planning models of development in defining public space, and the consequences of their interventions.

Aline Silva Santos, University of São Paulo, Brazil, paisageira@gmail.com
Title: *Garden and Bereavement: Contributions from São Paulo Cemeterial Spaces.*
Abstract: Cemeteries and crematoriums could be considered as places where the bereaved not only homage the loved ones that passed away but also communicate with them. In São Paulo, Brazil, in some public cemeteries and in the municipal crematorium, the bereaved utilize the open spaces to construct personalized little gardens: in cemeteries, there are gardens made over the graves, directly in the soil; and

in the crematorium, people build gardens on its lawn and woods to localize the exact site of the ashes scattering. These gardens have a lot of elements that indicate the connection between the dead and the bereaved, showing congratulations for birthdays, gifts, ornaments with dead preferences, and messages of love, for example. Assuming grief as a process and considering that death does not represent the break-up of bonds, this research aims to discuss how the cemeteries and crematorium gardens express continuous bonding. There is a tie resignification between the bereaved and deceased, and those gardens could be a mediator of this. Establishing São Paulo as an empirical field, we are using an ethnographic approach, as well as interviews, and a literature review. It is relevant to emphasize that this research is in progress.

Kirsty Stuart Jepsen, Cardiff University, UK, stuartkf@cardiff.ac.uk
Title: *Challenges Faced During a Pandemic: Remote Ethnography and a Re-negotiation of Ethics.*
Abstract: The introduction of the pandemic lockdown deferred the majority of face-to-face services, and substance-use services reduced to essential on-site personnel or re-located online. This created a barrier to traditional access of participants and challenged researchers to re-think research strategy. Substance-use services began to occupy remote meeting spaces, such as Zoom, allowing the service to provide real-time connection and support. This enabled the development of a new research strategy using remote participant observation. This restructuring was not a simple transition from physical place to remote space. Drawing on established digital and ethnography procedures, the ethical implications of ongoing consent and visibility are considered along with risks of inadvertent lurking. This novel provision of remote support both created barriers and provided opportunities. Remote meeting spaces require knowledge and access to technology which excludes many individuals, and assumptions of a 'safe space' are challenged when someone is physically in their own home. However, remote groups improved access to those living remotely, and allowed potentially less stressful exposure via the use of a microphone and camera to participants who may experience anxiety. Finally, the 'field' is considered in context to the online domain. Research participants live in both online and offline spaces, with overspill or contradictions occurring in the presentation of the self. Researchers often do not draw distinctions between the two domains yet this is an important consideration when conducting remote ethnography.

Thalles Vichiato Breda, Federal University of São Carlos, Brazil, and Bauhaus University Weimar, Germany, thallesvbreda@gmail.com
Title: *The Dismantling of Social Housing in Brazil and 'New' Strategies to Access Housing: From Lulism to Bolsonarism.*
Abstract: The Minha Casa Minha Vida (MCMV) programme was created in 2009 by then President Lula. Focused on the production of Social Housing (for the low-income population) and Market Housing (for the middle class), it had contracted about 5.5 million housing. Being the only federal program and present in the most diverse Brazilian cities, it has become a model of urban development. After the coup d'état in 2016, with the ousting of President Dilma Rousseff (Workers' Party), the MCMV was drastically reduced until its extinction in 2020, under the Bolsonaro government. In the last six years, some laws and regulations on social housing and urbanization have been created. The hypothesis of this research indicates that these frameworks have updated the forms of production of the territories of poverty, the dispute for urban space, the forms of production of housing demand, and the relationship with the State and different agents in the access to social housing. This research aims to

understand: (a) the institutional changes related to social housing and access to urban land in Brazil over the last decade at the national level — with the creation of the MCMV as a landmark, the creation of laws and regulations carried out in the Temer (2016 - 2018) and Jair Bolsonaro (2019-) governments; (b) the forms of popular organization and production of collective demand in the search for social/popular housing within land occupations; (c) which agents and scales are involved in these occupations and what are their relations with the State and civil society. The methodology is based on an ethnographic analysis of 3 land occupations (2014, 2016, 2020) struggling for home ownership in São Carlos (São Paulo), on literature review, analysis of legal documents, and housing policy performance.

Prem S. Vivek, University of Mumbai, India, psvivek318@gmail.com
Title: *Public Spitting: An Investigation into the Embedded Practice in Culture, Traditions and Lifestyle Issues in India.*
Abstract: Spitting is, quite simply, an emotive issue for many and unacceptably deviant. Today, of course, spitting is a comparatively rare and mildly deviant type of behaviour in the so-called 'advanced' or 'developed' nations of the West. The change happened slowly at first and spitting was resilient in many sectors but acceleration occurred at the end of the eighteenth century. I have attempted to situate and understand the nature of the risk and the attributed deviance that produces it in terms of its public display, that continue to have prolific public spitting, coexistent with high-profile anti-spitting campaigns. Although Elias describes such practices as a trend toward 'progress' in manners and the ability to restrain from such practices, it is important to note that while the elite and middle-class attitudes changed, spitting remained widespread among many for years. It must be noted that patterns of cultural taste are entangled within complex interacting forms of social and cultural power, and should not only be understood as connected to the aesthetic but as matters of moral, ethical and communal sensibility. Spitting is a widely practiced and embedded behaviour for a great many people in India (and indeed numerous other Asian countries), but it manifests each in totally different ways. In understanding the regulation of spitting, as a wider process of cosmopolitanism by an inclusive international culture, there lies a valuable explanatory power in deconstructing spitting as a public health risk. It concludes that public spitting may slowly diminish in the global South, but it should be recognised that it is neither inherently progressive or civil nor necessary for the prevention of disease. It will diminish because of the way its elite citizens impose their views on the many until it is the many that reimagine what is acceptable and preferred behaviour.