



May 22-24, 2019

# RURALITY AND FUTURE-MAKING

Comparative Perspectives  
from Europe, the Middle East,  
and the Mediterranean

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# RURALITY AND FUTURE-MAKING

## Comparative Perspectives from Europe, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean

**May 22 – 24, 2019**

University of Cologne

Venue: Conference Room, Seminar Building 106

### Conference Timetable

#### **Wednesday, May 22**

Arrival and Registration (from 12:00)

13:30-14:00 Introduction by the Organizers

#### 14:00-15:30 **Panel I: Development & Infrastructures**

- »The mountain is our capital: Politics of future-making in the Swiss Alps«  
Danaé Leitenberg (Bern)
- »A lost urban: Reconstructing the port of Martil«  
Rosa Norton (Berkeley)
- »Environmental movement and Horon dance between the rural and the urban in Turkey«  
Sevi Bayraktar (Los Angeles)

Closing Panel Discussion moderated by Martin Zillinger

*Coffee Break (30 minutes)*

#### 16:00-17:30 **Panel II: Connectivities & Mobility**

- »Young people and future-making between Zanzibar and Oman«  
Franziska Fay (Frankfurt)
- »(Re)valuation of Land in Kurdistan«  
Katharina Lange (Berlin)
- »Rural southern Europe as a Black Mediterranean frontier: hints from Piana del Sele (Italy)«  
Giuseppe Grimaldi (Milano)

Closing Panel Discussion moderated by Andreas Streinzer

*Coffee Break (15 minutes)*

#### 17:45-19:15 **GSSC Public Lecture**

**»Connectivity and its discontents: The Sahara, second face of the Mediterranean?«**

Judith Scheele (Paris/Berlin)

#### From 19:15 **Reception with Vernissage**

»São Teotónio na drome« (Barbara Wimmer)

**Thursday, May 23**

**09:30-11:00 Morning Lecture**

**»Between the Alps and the Mediterranean: Reflections on the representations of the rural world«**

Dionigi Albera (Marseille)

*Coffee Break (30 minutes)*

**11:30-13:00 Panel III: Ecologies**

- »Back to modernity: How changing narratives of rurality have shaped a region's institutionally contested space«  
Erik Blasor (Cologne)
- »(Re)making Mediterranean forests: Exploring an ecological 'regionalism' in times of climate change and regional separation«  
Juliane Schumacher (Potsdam/Berlin)
- »Collapsing scales: Making rural futures in the face of global problems«  
Felix Lussem (Cologne)

Closing Panel Discussion moderated by Ulrich van Loyen

*Lunch Break (90 minutes)*

**14:30-16:00 Panel IV: Contested Identities**

- »The (un-)making of Kurdish peasant subjectivities during four decades of shifting rurality in Iraqi Kurdistan«  
Schluwa Sama (Exeter)
- »Rurality between pasts and futures in post-war contexts in Europe«  
Ana Aceska (Wageningen)
- »Between urban and rural imaginaries: Geographies of dispossession and indigenous futures in Palestine«  
Fadia Panosetti & Francesco Amoroso (Brussels/Exeter)

Closing Panel Discussion moderated by Katharina Lange

*Coffee Break (30 minutes)*

**16:30-18:00 Panel V: Imaginaries & Experimental Ethnography**

- »São Teotônio na drome: Documented stories between locality and globalization«  
Barbara Wimmer (Regensburg)
- »A sensory ethnography in Zayanderood in Isfahan Iran«  
Mahroo Movahedi (Bern)
- »Rurality as a national counter-narrative: Case of the Islamic Republic of Iran«  
Vedran Obućina (Regensburg)

Closing Panel Discussion moderated by Michaela Schäuble

**20:00 Conference Dinner** in an Italian-German brewery "Birreria"

**Friday, May 24**

09:30-11:00 **Morning Lecture**

**»Ordinary uncertainties: Remembering the past and imagining the future at times of rupture and mobility«**

Frances Pine (London)

*Coffee Break (30 minutes)*

11:30-13:00 **Panel VI: The Rural as Reserve**

- »Back to the future? Lived time and the production of anti-cosmopolitan sentiments in an Austrian alpine village«  
Annika Lems (Halle)
- »Towards a rural modernity: Rethinking the rural-urban divide in Kurdistan, Turkey«  
Clémence Scalbert Yucel (Exeter)
- »Village and tribal virtuality: The rural hinterland as strategic resource for future-making in the Eastern Nile Delta of Egypt«  
Christoph Lange (Cologne)

Closing Panel Discussion moderated by Simon Holdermann

*Lunch Break (90 minutes)*

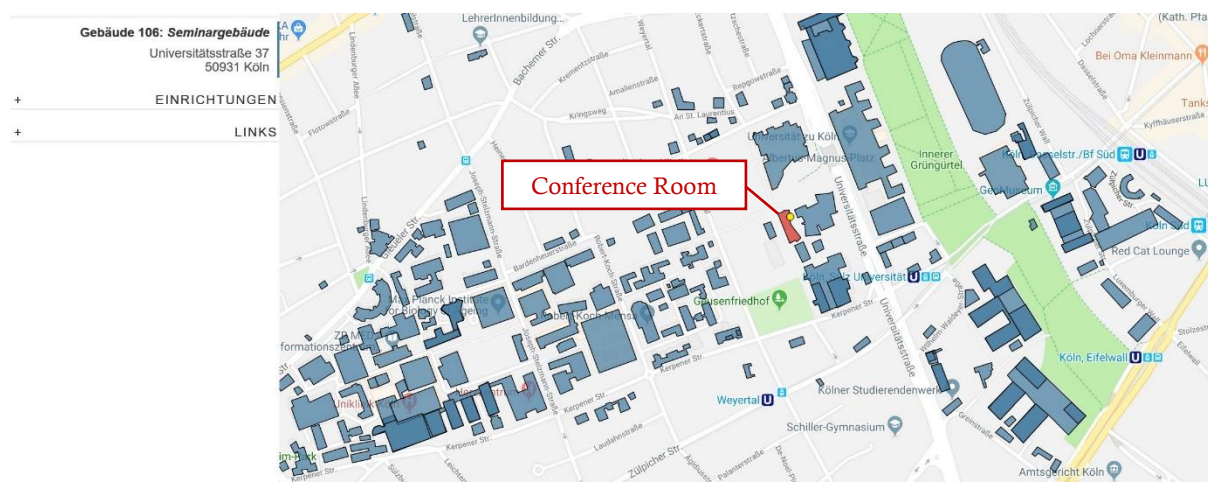
14:30-15:30 **Final Discussion & Farewell**

16:00-17:00 Meeting of the GAA Regional Groups



## Directions

The venue is located close to the University main building. It can easily be reached by public transportation with tram line 9 (direction “Sülz”). The stop is called “Universität”.



See also online: <https://lageplan.uni-koeln.de/#!106>

Connections for public transport can be checked on the website: <https://auskunft.kvb-koeln.de/kvb/cgi/page/ingabeRoute?lang=UK>

The Conference Dinner will be at the brewery “Birreria – Duexer Botschaft”  
Am Weidenbach 24, 50676 Köln  
<https://birreria-koeln.de/kontakt/>

## Emergency contacts:

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<p>May 22-24, 2019</p>	<p>VENUE NSG (Tagungsraum) Albertus-Magnus Platz University of Cologne</p> <p>CONTACT Christoph Lange <a href="mailto:rural-future-making@uni-koeln.de">rural-future-making@uni-koeln.de</a></p>
<p><b>RURALITY AND FUTURE-MAKING</b> Comparative Perspectives from Europe, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean</p>	<p>ORGANIZED BY DGSKA, TRR 228, GSSC, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Cologne Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO)</p> <p>CONVENERS Simon Holdermann (Cologne) Christoph Lange (Cologne) Katharina Lange (Berlin) Michaela Schäuble (Bern) Andreas Streinzer (St. Gallen/ Frankfurt) Jelena Tosić (St. Gallen/Vienna) Martin Zillinger (Cologne)</p>
	<p>FURTHER INFORMATION <a href="http://ethnologie.uni-koeln.de/RuralFutureMaking">http://ethnologie.uni-koeln.de/RuralFutureMaking</a></p>

## **Panel I: Development & Infrastructures**

### **"The mountain is our capital": politics of future-making in the Swiss Alps**

Danaé Leitenberg

Institut für Sozialanthropologie, Uni Bern

This paper explores the formation and circulation of future-making discourses and practices put forward by the tourism industry in a village in the Swiss Alps, as well as the evacuation of environmental issues.

While tourism accounts for nearly ten percent of the global CO2 emissions, the industry has shown no sign of deceleration. Billions of tourists travel every year to experience a break from the ordinary, thereby often actively participating in the process damaging the views and resources they enjoy. By looking at a new, contested cableway project, I examine the political use of temporality by a local tourism interest group (the Touristikers) to gain support for the “project of the century”. While doubts, anxieties and uncertainties abound amongst the villagers witnessing the transformation of the valley into a mass tourism destination, the Touristikers have generated a discourse claiming the “common interest” of the gigantic project “for the children of the valley”. I argue that it is by equating the future with economic touristic success, combined with the already dominant position of the hospitality industry in the region, that no alternative scenario could be proposed. Presented as groundbreaking and future-oriented, this project is in fact part of a century-old rhetoric of innovation where the rural, mountainous landscape is presented as a (mostly visual) “landscape of exception”. I show how, through its convening powers among villagers, Touristikers and tourists, the “landscape of exception” has been a mediating place where different actors meet and contradictory interests are negotiated. Paradoxically, the “landscape of exception” many cherish has rarely been conceived as impacted by the tourism industry and, more broadly, human activity. These issues question the conception of nature calling for unsustainable economic exploitation in the Capitalocene.

### **A Lost Urban: Reconstructing the Port of Martil**

Rosa Norton

University of California, Berkley

This paper explores the contemporary reinvocation and planned reconstruction of a vanished maritime world in the North African Mediterranean. Once the largest seaport and defensive hub of its kind, the port of Martil in northern Morocco ceased to operate in the early 1960s, shortly



after the country's independence and the departure of Spanish colonists from the area. Its closure was accompanied by the shutting down of the regional train system, and what was once an important hub of agriculture, trade, and warfare in the Mediterranean receded into a provincial backwater for the next several decades. Slated to be restored under the terms of a five-year, national regional infrastructural project ending in 2018, the vanished port figures in the contemporary memory and political landscape of northern Morocco as a lost space of urbanity, one that the Moroccan state is now reclaiming and promising to establish anew.

The rhetoric of the coalition of neighborhood associations (*jama'iyat*) which launched the port of Martil project onto a national spotlight in 2014 evinces a keen awareness of the region's gathering prominence and wealth in the broader nation; in petitions to the parliament and monarch, its members articulate a position grounded in civic effort and responsibility vis-à-vis a national patrimony in need of elevation and protection. Here, the language of progressive state development merges with a very particular claim surrounding the region's colonial and precolonial urban pasts: under the aegis of a more democratic and visionary national government, the citizens of the region are at last in a position to restore Martil to its urban and broader cosmopolitan Mediterranean roots. I examine how these broader problems give shape to and are negotiated by practices of civic participation and remembrance mobilizing the port's resurrection. What productive force do the invocation and material recrafting of a colonial and precolonial coastal urbanity wield in contemporary infrastructural development plans run by the Moroccan nation-state?

## **Environmental movement and Horon dance between the rural and the urban in Turkey**

Sevi Bayraktar

University of California, Los Angeles

My research focuses on the circulation of folk dance across the Black Sea area and examines how local communities, such as Pontian-Greeks, the Hemshin, the Laz, Georgians, and Turks, claim their authenticity and nativeness by transmitting and transgressing their traditional dance narratives and styles. I use a combined methodology including archival research, oral history, ethnography, and choreography. By exploring the dance—its varying aesthetics, contested narratives, and transnational circulation—I engage with the embodied histories of migration which are not legible otherwise in the historical and cultural anthropology of the sea.

In this paper, I specifically look at *horon*, a circle dance rooted in Turkey's northeastern Black Sea region. I examine women's role in the transmission of *horon* through recent political protests against neoliberal and developmentalist "mega-projects" leading to ecological damage in the

region. My case study is a highway project called “Green Road” through which I will examine how rural and urban protesters deploy *horon* to resist against the project. The dance performed both in the local protests and their solidarity demonstrations in Istanbul creates ties between activists from the city and the villages of the Black Sea, showing that tradition does not move unidirectionally from the rural to the urban but requires a bilateral action between the two locations in order to effectively register as communal agitation.

In anthropology, folk dance has long been considered part of a “residual culture” that while practiced in the present, bears the traces of previous social formations identified with the rural and the exotic (Williams 1978). Dance studies scholars have critiqued such nostalgic approaches and investigated dynamic relationships between folk performance, gender, representation, and state power. My research significantly contributes to and fills a gap in this discussion by re-contextualizing folk dance as an urban as well as a rural practice.

## **Panel II: Connectivities & Mobility**

### **Young people and future-making between Zanzibar and Oman**

Franziska Fay

Cluster of Excellence ‚Normative Orders’, Goethe University Frankfurt

Whether to stay in Zanzibar or to leave the archipelago has become a central question for young people between 18-35, who find themselves stuck in what Alcinda Honwana has adequately termed ‘waithood’. With the half-autonomous state’s economic instability making financial independence and almost unattainable goal for Zanzibari youth, many turn to either ‘going rural’ – to escape the city’s additional financial demands – or ‘going abroad’ – which in recent years has increasingly meant following personal heritage paths to Oman to attempt at more promising future-making over there. This presentation offers some preliminary insights into what makes young Zanzibaris opt in or out of rurality, and considers the effects that cultural identity has on these decision-making processes.

### **(Re)valuation of land in Kurdistan**

Katharina Lange

Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin

This paper aims at an ethnographic exploration of shifting valuations of land in the Kurdistan Region of Northern Iraq, using biographical and family history interviews as well as participant observation. Due to the region’s violent recent history, agricultural production has declined significantly over the last four decades. Today, the rural sector is still marginal compared to the booming urban conglomerations and the fast-paced development of the petroleum industry. Further reasons for the decline of rural life are intergenerational changes in symbolic valuations and lifestyle aspirations, lack of agricultural knowledge, but also structural political decisions which pursue an urban development model, neglecting the countryside. Nevertheless, land prices rise in rural as well as urban settings. What are the reasons for this development; for which purposes is agricultural land being used, how are property rights in land (re-)distributed in a given rural location, and to which extent can, or must, the material or economic value accorded to land be contextualized with cross-cutting other (symbolic, political, or social) valuations? How can the answers to these questions enrich our ways of thinking about the (re-)valuation of material resources?

## **Rural southern Europe as a Black Mediterranean frontier: hints from Piana del Sele (Italy)**

Giuseppe Grimaldi

Dipartimento di scienze umane per la formazione Riccardo Massa, University of Milano Bicocca

The relation between transnational migrations and agriculture is nowadays a central topic in the Southern European space. The restructuration of global capitalism and the economic effects of the global agricultural system are obviously playing a major role in the understanding of the present southern European agriculture. Local processes reproducing the agricultural landscape on a social, political and moral point of view structurally entangle with this supranational system producing specific social configurations. The paper aims at working on the migrant presence in the agricultural landscape of the Piana del Sele – a global agricultural enclave in Southern Italy – as a form of territorial management on a macro, meso and micro scale. Specifically, the paper will focus on the relation between the local refugees' reception system and the reproduction of a racialized agricultural labor force. The paper will analyze this phenomenon within the analytical perspective of the Black Mediterranean, as a way of understanding the contemporary relation between the African and European space. The analysis of the relation between migration and agriculture in Southern Europe, I argue, may be a powerful tool to explore the ways the Afro-European frontier is re-configuring in present times.

## **GSSC Public Lecture: »Connectivity and its discontents: The Sahara, second face of the Mediterranean?«**

Judith Scheele

Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin / École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS), Paris

Braudel once called the Sahara ‘the second face of the Mediterranean’: a region also marked by a history of connectivity, but on a ‘colossal’ scale that inverted the density of the Mediterranean, turning it into an ‘anoekumene’ where ‘the superabundance of empty space condemns societies and economies to perpetual movement’ to the point where ‘towns exhaust themselves’. This Braudel explicitly contrasted with the Western Mediterranean, marked by abandoned villages: the loss of rurality in one region throwing into relief the inability to go beyond it in the other. The Sahara’s shadow also overlooks Horden and Purcell’s Corrupting Sea, less keen on such contrasts, but whose promise to treat it in a second volume, *Liquid Continents*, still stands unfulfilled; and it is at the heart of contemporary imagination as Europe’s most vulnerable (and deadly) boundary, in terms that would speak to Braudel’s darker side. Horden and Purcell’s ideas about ‘Mediterranean connectivity’ make intuitive sense in the Saharan context, where movement comes before place, diversification is key, and micro-regions coalesce in often unexpected ways, throwing historic shadows over contemporary events and in some cases – regional jihad for instance – indicating an imagined future. But, as is perhaps inevitably the case with a model derived from mathematics, it lacks moral and political depth. Connectivity might be a fact of life, but, as Horden and Purcell recognise in their title, it is not necessarily always equally welcome, or equally good. Openness might spell corruption and vulnerability, and closure represent a desirable although impossible goal. Villages and towns might be ecologically similar, but they are morally distinctive. ‘Exchange’ takes the form of trading, but also of raiding or taxation; the emphasis can be on predation and structural disequilibrium as much as on reciprocity. This lecture proposes to take arguments from connectivity one step further, and describe different moral micro-ecologies in the Sahara, how they coalesce, or indeed refuse to do so, and what the political, analytical and methodological implications of this might be.

## **Morning Lecture: »Between the Alps and the Mediterranean: Reflections on the representations of the rural world«**

Dionigi Albera

Institute of European Mediterranean and Comparative Ethnology (IDEMEC), Aix-Marseille University

In this presentation I will address the topic of rurality by following the thread of the research I have done in the Alps and the Mediterranean. Mountain societies have often been seen as prototypical manifestations of a quintessential rural world, conceived as backward, inert and isolated from the main currents of civilization. Since the beginnings of my career, ethnographic and historical research I carried out in several sectors of the Western Alps led me to discover a quite different situation. This suggested the need to revise some facets of the common wisdom on Alpine society, proposing a more nuanced view that, for instance, gives more importance to different types of mobility and forms of connectivity in the long term. I pursued the same line of reflection in further comparative work on the place of the mountains in the history of the Mediterranean world, suggesting for example a reconsideration of the influential vision of the mountains as a “fabrique d’hommes à l’usage d’autrui” proposed by Fernand Braudel. As a whole the presentation will suggest the need to avoid simple binaries, like those opposing the mountains to the plains, rural milieu to urban context.



### **Panel III: Ecologies**

#### **Back to modernity: How changing narratives of rurality have shaped a region's institutionally contested space**

Erik Blasor  
University of Cologne

The Portuguese Alentejo region in the Southwestern corner of the European peninsula has as long history of being seen as the epitomization of the 'rural'. The specific ideas linked with the rurality of the region though, have changed frequently. Only in the last century the region went from 'backwards and forgotten' to the 'breadbasket of the nation', just to turn into 'Europe's poorhouse' a decade later. Riding the wave of the 1992 Earth Summit, conservationists managed to turn the region's long coastal strip into the *Southwest-Alentejo and Vicentine Coast Nature Park*. The underdevelopment and backwardness was seen as a chance to preserve the 'traditional' landscape of the region. The recent years though have seen a renewed surge of agricultural activities in the middle of the park area. International companies have sprung out of the ground, selling their produce exclusively to Northwestern European markets. Almost all loan workers come from Nepal, Bangladesh, India, and Thailand. Numbers of foreign workers are expected to exceed 20k in 2019, while the region's capital Odemira has a native population of 26k. The rapid growth of these global companies clashes directly with the objectives of conservationists. In order to grow year-round, vast areas have been covered with thousands of plastic tunnels. *Charcos mediterraneos*, small water ponds, characteristic for the region's ecosystem are being destroyed, and activists have pointed out the use of chemicals and fertilizers. The rapid growth of intensive agriculture in the region poses a number of questions: How is this development in the middle of a nationally protected Nature Park even possible in the first place? How do the region's two dominant institutional systems, the Nature Park and the Municipality of Odemira, respond? What effects does it have on the region's social, cultural, economic, and political structures?

#### **(Re)making mediterranean forests: exploring an ecological 'regionalism' in times of climate change and regional separation**

Juliane Schumacher  
University of Potsdam/Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO), Berlin

Mediterranean forests are considered as one biom or ecoregion – this 'regionalism' dates back to the early 20th century, where biologist and ecologists tried to classify different ecosystems

according to their climatical conditions. But the definitions and its limitation is not as appeared as the biological term suggests. The thread of deforestation has been discussed since 2000 years; restoration and (re)forestation projects have shaped the appearance and function of forests, representing and materializing changing visions of the future and the role forests should play.

In the last decades, the creation of the European Union, agricultural and economic policies and the installation of new borders have cut ties that had linked forests in the north and south of the mediterranean, leading to a separation between northern (european) mediterranean forests and their southern and eastern parts. The exodus of the population from rural has led to a ,rewilding' of forests in the northern Mediterranean, with increased risk of wildfire; while in the southern Mediterranean forest policy is still concerned with the supposed ,over-exploitation' through local communities. Increased interest in urban ecology has blurred the distinction between rural and urban ,forests', opening up the traditional definition of mediterranean forests as an ,rural' phenomenon. International environmental and climate policy and the specific role forests play in international climate policy have further complicated the picture.

At the same time, the concept of ,mediterranean forests' has recently seen a ,revival', since 2010 several institutions have been installed and new cooperations established. Drawing on an ethnographic and document-based study of mediterranean forest policy, this paper wants to explore ,Mediterranean Forests' as a category, explore how this ,imaginative category' was (re)made over the last decades, how it is linked to broader socio-economic developments and what its effects and implications are.

## **Collapsing scales: Making rural futures in the face of global problems**

Felix Lussem  
University of Cologne

What if the uncertainty of the future becomes an exigent problem in the present? In my field site, a rural lignite extraction area near the western German city of Cologne, various actors try to navigate between/across different spatial and temporal scales. While industrial mining activities have been ruining the local landscape for decades, this destruction of rural integrity for (urban) energy demand is increasingly connected to discourses and localized signs of global climate change by a heterogeneous field of environmental activists and citizen groups. Their worries about a livable environment for future generations intertwined with desires for a better quality of (human and nonhuman) life in the present directly confront corporate interests as well as worker's job security in the near future. This local iteration of a global crisis demonstrates that rurality does not

necessarily coincide with marginality as the rural locality itself becomes a symbolic center for conflicting articulations of future-making on a larger scale.

Anthropogenic climate change renders the progress-narrative of industrial modernity problematic because it already seems to be too late to prevent the crisis which came into being unnoticed and haunts the present as a fear of events to come. This collapse of temporal scales results in a pressure to act immediately. Thus, hope has given way to a sense of urgency as the prevalent mode to relate to the future. I try to show how this sense of urgency animates local actors to make use of the rural as a resource to create visions of a sustainable future. Instead of pursuing the modernist model of scalable i.e. universally reproduceable development to deal with the pending changes in the area, they focus on local idiosyncrasies and non-scalable human-environment relations, thereby constructing the rural as more than the not-yet-urban.

## **Panel IV: Contested Identities**

### **The (Un-)making of Kurdish peasant subjectivities during four decades of shifting rurality in Iraqi Kurdistan**

Schluwa Sama  
University of Exeter

Presenting textures of present everyday life in rural Kurdistan, I shall explore the making of Kurdish peasant subjectivities. Thereby, I draw out and connect the ways in which the Iran-Iraq war, international sanctions and the project of building an autonomous Kurdish de-facto state have materialized in social relations and the production of today's peasant subjectivity.

I shall introduce two peasants, their livelihoods and oral memories while connecting and tracing continuities and changes within social life in their villages from the 1980s until today. As I will demonstrate, the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988) created a type of rurality in which life outside the reach of the state became possible. Therefore, the two villages (and other villages in especially mountainous, inaccessible territories) became the place for people who were 'Harib min al-khidma al askari'- meaning those who objected to fight in the Iran-Iraq war. This meant that different political parties and their Peshmerga (fighting forces) took this 'opportunity' of war to challenge state power from a rural position. It was not only the geographical position in the mountains but also the possibility to engage in agriculture that allowed for this type of rurality. Working the land, peasants ensured not only their own reproduction but also that of all those who challenged Ba'athist state power.

This changed drastically during the following decade of international sanctions in which agriculture as a central feature of social and economic life was attacked, only to be rendered valueless after the US-invasion in 2003. Narrating this period through peasants' own memories and livelihoods shall illuminate the textures of everyday life that give shape to the present peasant subjectivity.

### **Rurality between pasts and futures in post-war contexts in Europe**

Ana Aceska  
Cultural Geography Group, Wageningen University

Based on ethnographic data, this paper will look at the ways in which rurality and urbanity are associated with different ideas of "pasts" and "futures" in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina. Contrary to the common views that rurality is associated with senses of togetherness and community, this paper will show how self-proclaimed urbanites in the divided cities of Sarajevo and Mostar have constructed "rurality" as the locus of everyday practices, meanings and representations that (re)produce senses of ethno-religious segregation in the war-torn country – and as such can

associated only with the “past”. While in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina “the city” is the main terrain upon which the ethno-religious groups struggle for power, these post-war discourses portray “the village” as the real source of ethnic divisions.

Based on secondary literature on post-war Germany, this paper will offer a comparative perspective of these two post-war contexts. Unlike in Sarajevo and Mostar, city dwellers of post-war Berlin used to see rurality and “the village” as the ideal landscapes for their future lives away from the war-torn city.

### **Between urban and rural imaginaries: Geographies of dispossession and Indigenous futures in Palestine**

Francesco Amoruso  
European Centre for Palestine Studies, University of Exeter

Fadia Panosetti  
Centre for International Cooperation and Development (CECID), Université Libre de Bruxelles

The primary objective of a settler-colonial endeavour is the accumulation of a maximum of lands with a minimum of indigenous inhabitants on it. This paper looks at how the Israeli settler state (re)produces a material and symbolic divide between urban and rural spaces as a means for managing Palestinian surplus population.

Two case studies are presented in order to, firstly, bring light on how the rural-urban binary as well as the settler-native binary, which are both outcome and means of settler colonial dispossession, are operated along lines of race, class and gender; secondly, to look at how boundaries between the urban and the rural are contested – but also maintained and reproduced - by Indigenous practices. Drawing on field research conducted between March and November 2018, the authors focus on two case studies: the rural village of Wadi Fukin and the new Palestinian city of Rawabi. In the first part of the paper, the authors focus on the ongoing suffocation and isolation of Wadi Fukin, acted through dispossession of agricultural lands to expand or build new Israeli settlements and restrictions on livelihood activities. Here, the authors highlight how villagers have imposed their steadfast presence on the land through livelihood adaptation and transformation of agricultural practices. The second part of the paper is dedicated to the analysis of the construction of indigeneity in Rawabi, the first modern Palestinian planned city, which embodies the implementation of neoliberal planning practices. The authors explore its role in the articulation of new Indigenous futures and urban imaginaries in a context of ongoing settler colonisation/decolonisation.

Through these case studies, the paper analyses the complex set of power relations that produce and maintain settler colonial modes of domination but also to shed light on the current struggles for imagining decolonised futures in Palestine both in rural and urban spaces.

## **Panel V: Imaginaries & Experimental Ethnography**

### **„São Teotónio na drome - São Teotónio never sleeps“: Documented stories between globalization and locality.**

Barbara Wimmer  
Regensburg

The Portuguese inhabitants of a village with approx. 3.500 people, located near the National natural „Parque Natural do Sudoeste Alentejano e Costa Vicentina“, find themselves lost in the sudden agricultural industrialization within the park. Together with the multinational enterprises came already and still come thousands of farmworkers from all over the world.

Moreover and parallel there is an ongoing elaboration of agricultural tourism within the natural park, which creates an absurd situation: the landscape close to the sea, is more and more to become a horizon of plastic greenhouses for the production raspberries etc., whilst tourists are looking for untouched and pure landscapes. Two industries started to be in competition about a cultural heritage: the natural park.

The population is confronted with a wide range of foreigners: farmworkers, tourists and moreover people from Central Europe, who settled - mostly in a complete structural isolation - in the rural landscape in the whole district. This creates a perplex situation for the Portuguese inhabitants of Sao Teotónio: the loss of control of their rurality.

As an anthropologist and a photographer my objective was, to show people in Central Europe a wide range of the themes I have personally experienced. I started to photograph the traditional shops in center of the village, which are about to close as their owners pass away, and continued to visualize the new shop culture: Indian, Bulgarian, Nepalese shops and fast-food restaurants were opened to serve new demands. Conducting interviews with experts from school, from the commune integration project and with politicians, talking to people on the street, I started to understand how people are reacting as an actor due this sudden change in their lives and environment. The search for treasures within their culture, started to become important in the village culture and in the political discourse.

Recognizing this and remembering my theoretical background, I focused on discourse analyses and observed the behavior of cultural management in the institutional area. Combing all this package of different methodology and perspectives, such as visual entrances to the field, anthropological methodology, creative writing, art, observatory, as well as positioning myself as a former immigrant, led my project into a multiplex show of a controversy situation at one locality. My objective is to show emotions and to give a voice to people who are incorporated in a globalization process, encountering local resources.



## **A sensory ethnography in Zayanderood in Isfahan Iran**

Mahroo Movahedi

Graduate School of the Arts, University of Bern

### **Location and Matter of Issue**

Zayanderood River that literally means “The Live giving river” is the largest river in the centre of Iran. It is the livelihood source and the main factor of fertility in Isfahan which plays an important role in providing drinking, industrial and agriculture water in the province of Isfahan. This river flowed from the Zagros Mountains which is located in the west and south of Isfahan. Zayanderood has divided the city into western and eastern parts and many historical bridges have been built on this river such as Khaju Bridge (Belongs to Safavid dynasty period), Si-o- se pol (33 Bridges), Marnan Bridge, Shahrestan Bridge, Zaman Khan bridge.

Zayanderood is symbol of alive history in Isfahan and the city has taken its original identity from it as well as it is considered as part of the identity of the Isfahan citizens. Since eight years ago in 2009 the river faces a drought problem and the river that once was known for its fertile fishery has been dusted and all things have been replaced by dirt and stones.

The drought in Iran recently became one of the most serious problems in the country which is the consequence of several fundamental factors such as rising temperatures and evapotranspiration and increased consumption patterns. Many believe, the central government diverted the river’s flow to provide water to drier provinces nearby such as Yazd and Kerman, as part of its environmental mismanagement in the country is another big root cause of the river drought.

**The drought phenomena had its negative economic, cultural and psychological effects from the very beginning and have been refreshing for years. It has shown in studies that the amount of social interactions and vitality of Isfahan citizens has been significantly decreased.**

### **Aim and questions of the research**

The project “A Sensory Ethnography of the Live River” is a research project which involves observing, analyzing and documenting the ways in which people experience and remember the location and the culture through their senses. This research aims to investigate socio-cultural, political and ecological transformation of environment in Isfahan. The research explores the diverse relationships between people in their activities, and how senses and their memories affect their behavior and feelings.

This study will therefore follow the research questions

*How the inhabitants perceive this change in the city through sensory experiences?*

*How does the absence of this phenomenon impact on the memory of the habitant’s senses? How many senses are involved to remember the presence of river?*

***How the disappearance of river causes the different changes in cultural habits of inhabitants?***

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In this project the river will consider not only as a character or an element through an immediate bodily experience but also as a character of thinking process to embody how people imagine this character in past, present and future. The character of the river and the encounter character with this drought phenomenon is one of the main survey of this research. Being observant between the liveliness and droughtiness of Zayanderood has created different senses. These personal views and sensory experiences can be considered not only as an oral history but also it will represent how the residents encounter with this drastic change. It will consider the way the habitants create their own history with this place in different times. This sensory approach explores how the inhabitant as daily traverse experience a new atmosphere and create a new habitual body in the city. This research will combine the disciplines of social anthropology, psychology, ecology, cultural geography, in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of Zayanderood absence and its effects in the city.

**Methods and Data Analysis**

The methods of sensory ethnography enable me to construct a model of memory as an emplaced and embodied multi-sensory ability, rather than an internal archive. In one hand, this sensory ethnography research attempts to achieve a new level of multisensory of other people's experience with sharing the observations, memories, imagination and practices and on the other hand, it creates the new level of awareness through the participant's experiences.

***Observation, self reflection, photography and artistic approach, qualitative research in semi- structured interviews, using open-ended, experiencing through participant observation, sharing their experiences, examining through the analysis of data are all the tools for this sensory research.***

In this research the narrative will demonstrate the real place more than an abstract place through the various sensory experiences. Moreover, listening, communicating and body interaction encompass the different sorts of engagement. A learning process through participating, thinking and communicating about the drought and discussing the questions verbally and sharing the walking experiences became a rich medium for this sensory ethnographic research.

The method of this participatory experience actualize a new level of sensory awareness relating to the memories of participants and their connection and interaction with this locality. It also enables the participants to consider the changes over time in the environment. The questions involve the participants to rethinking and recreating their sensory experiences and memories of the river.

The various literature reviews are considered to ground the topic of this interdisciplinary study. According to Sarah Pink “Sensory ethnography” is a way to rethinking of ethnographic methods with attention to sensory perception, experience and categorization. It goes beyond the reliance on text in ethnographic representation, can be regarded looking towards art. This sensory research combined with artistic approaches which brings a new level of understanding in social anthropology and it provide meaningful ways to connect this field for more corporative works.

### **Rurality as a national counter-narrative: Case of the Islamic Republic of Iran**

Vedran Obućina

Study Group for Turkey and the Middle East, Institute for European and Globalisation Studies, Croatia / University of Regensburg, Germany

The official cultural narrative in contemporary Iran, made mostly within the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Affairs (Ershad), focuses on the Shi’a martyrology, Twelve Imams and overall Shi’ite Islamic topics coupled with the memories of Islamic Revolution and Iran-Iraq War. While many Iranians share these narratives, they are also drawn to the national historical myths, such as those attached to the famous poets. This forms strong counter-narratives that are semi-official in its expression (as seen in the numerous murals in Tehran). The focus of such national narrative, Persian in its essence, is in rural places and nature. Symbolic landscapes of Iran are a source of imagination and pride, and a vivid reminder of the national mythologies such as Shahnameh.

Creative content for the cultural scene in Iran, as well as the spearhead of tourism development, is to be found in the traditional country houses, with Persian gardens, pomegranates and cypress trees, where Islamic and Zoroastrian heritages mix. An aura of mysticism and freedom is further attainable in the deserts, seashores and mountains of Iran, where societal norms are more relaxed and where rural landscapes paradoxically turn conservative values to more liberal ones.

This topic is based on a research stay on Iranian social semiotics. The author had spent a total of year and a half in Iran and is author of a book “Political System of the Islamic Republic of Iran”.

## **Morning Lecture: »Ordinary uncertainties: Remembering the past and imagining the future at times of rupture and mobility«**

Frances Pine  
Goldsmiths College, University of London

In this paper I look at the idea of uncertainty in relation to memories of the past and imaginings of the future. I am particularly interested in the way the remembered past is used, and often re-imagined, at times of rupture and crisis. Drawing on my own ethnographic material from Poland beginning in the late socialist period, as well as on the work of other anthropologists of the region, I argue that uncertainty is a fairly constant factor in people's every day and ordinary lives, particularly in rural areas. I suggest that it not necessarily a negative factor; uncertainty can generate creativity, and can create the conditions for change. Living with uncertainty as a part of their ordinary, people evoke particular pasts, and imagine various futures, in order to manage the present. In agricultural areas, uncertainty is always present, in the form for instance of weather, crop failure, technological, political and economic change and so on. Recently, increasing levels of migration and mobility have added to the underpinnings of day to day uncertainty for individuals, families, households and communities, adding scope for revisiting pasts of movement and stillness, and imagining different futures.

## **Panel VI: The Rural as Reserve**

### **Back to the future? Lived time and the production of anti-cosmopolitan sentiments in an Austrian alpine village**

Annika Lems

Max-Planck Institute of Social Anthropology, Halle

In this paper I aim to engage with the conference's call to deploy a focus on rurality as an opportunity to explore different forms of future-making. I will argue that this "rural lens" necessitates both, a sensitivity towards rural-urban divides that have relegated many places in the European countryside to the economic and cultural periphery of a globalised world, and the often deeply exclusionary and anti-cosmopolitan projects inhabitants of rural places have developed in response. I will do so by shedding light on the ways people from a small village in the Austrian southern Alps that is characterised by long histories of global interconnection on the one hand, and support for reactionary political movements on the other, experience, narrate, perform and struggle over the future. I will show that their practices of future-making are inextricably linked to local, everyday understandings of history that create clear distinctions between self and other, indigeneity and foreignness, entitlement and preclusion. By taking these exclusionary engagements with the future *through* the past seriously, I aim to explore in how far a focus on rural, anti-cosmopolitan projects of future-making allows us to shed light on the anxieties of living in a globalised, "overheated" (Eriksen 2016) present.

### **Towards a rural modernity: rethinking the rural-urban divide in Kurdistan, Turkey**

Clémence Scalbert Yucel

Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, Exeter

This paper questions how the evolution of both the Kurdish countryside and the Kurdish movement's organisation and claims help us rethink the rural/urban divide in Kurdistan-Turkey. The understanding of modernity is at the heart of this divide and of the way the future of the countryside and the city are imagined. Based on an analysis of secondary and primary literatures and ethnographic fieldwork, the paper proposes a historical overview of the construction of this divide by both the actors and the academic literature as well as an analysis of the recent policy projects that aimed to go beyond the divide in order to rethink new relationship between cities and countryside.

The paper first deals with the de-ruralisation and de-peasantisation by different means: migrations, war, agricultural policies, privatisation, uses of statistics. In parallel, the «ruralisation of the cities» has been described, in particular by the media and politics, as impeding the progressive development of modernity. Yet, heritagisation of the country life as well as new global images of the peasant movements are recently domesticated showing that alternative modernities emerge.

The paper then deals with Kurdish movement's initiatives in rethinking a modernity in which countrysides and cities are in close interaction. Inspired by the social ecology thinker, Murray Bookchin, the Kurdish movement stresses the need to rebuild organic relationships between cities and villages. This modernity is not only a utopia for the future but has deep roots in a real or imagined past.

Finally, the paper examines different projects of reconstruction of the rurality and rural practices in Kurdistan (villages reconstruction; organic farming projects; communal urban gardens) and shows how ideas take shape, are co-produced by different actors, and evolve through practices. It also highlights renewed practices of domination on the peasant world by the Kurdish movement itself stressing the difficulties of the application of new visions of rural modernity.

### **Village and tribal virtuality: The rural hinterland as a strategic resource for future-making in the Eastern Nile Delta of Egypt**

Christoph Lange

Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Cologne

In order to examine the entangled notions of the »rural hinterland« and practices of »future-making«, the paper focuses on two ethnographic episodes from my fieldwork in Egypt's Eastern Nile Delta during 2015 and 2016.

Firstly, I will accompany the Tahawi Bedouins – one of the landowning and economically most influential social groups in the Eastern Delta – on their successful election campaign during Egypt's Parliamentary Elections in 2015. Here, the aim is to shed light on the strategic use of tribal solidarity and obligation networks to, on the one hand, mobilize supporters and voters. On the other hand, the same tribal networks were also used to invoke and perform the necessary tribal unity in front of the peasant (*fellahin*) population. Especially the painstaking process of the unanimous agreement on only one single Tahawi candidate for the parliamentary election, not only caused internal controversies and fractures but also left an image that the democratic vote was already decided and forestalled by a few tribal sheikhs and elder authorities.



Secondly, I introduce sheikh Mohammad al-Tahawi who became one of my main interlocutors during the fieldwork. In ethnographic reciprocity, I slowly turned into a collaborator for his historic and folklore research on and his cultural activism for the Tahawi tribe. His most ambitious future project is transforming his personal archive into a Tahawi museum and Bedouin theme and riding park, not only for serving the Tahawi's cultural self-representation in the Eastern Delta but as well strengthening the whole province by developing local tourism.

The paper will conclude that both cases can be seen as concrete examples of future-making in a rural setting, whereas the specific constraints, possibilities and meanings embedded in the rural as resource and reserve unfold very differently and reach always beyond. Furthermore, with recourse on the virtual but nonetheless real and effective character of a historically imagined and politically performed tribal identity in a highly industrialized rural hinterland the paper emphasizes the diverse practices and hybrid connectivities *in-between* the traditional binary nexus of periphery-center/rural-urban/village-city, and finally, local-global.

LECTURE 22.05.19, 17:45-19:15

Connectivity and its discontents: the Sahara, second face of the Mediterranean?

(Judith Scheele, Paris/Berlin)

RECEPTION & VERNISSAGE 22.05.19, 19:15

EXHIBITION: São Teotônio na drome — Documented stories between locality and globalization

(Barbara Wimmer, artist)

LECTURE 23.05.19, 09:30-11:00

Between the Alps and the Mediterranean: Reflections on the representations of the rural world

(Dionigi Albera, Marseille)

LECTURE 24.05.19, 09:30-11:00

Ordinary uncertainties: Remembering the past and imagining the future at times of rupture and mobility

(Frances Pine, London)

#### VENUE

Neues Seminargebäude (Tagungsraum)

Albertus-Magnus Platz

University of Cologne

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#### FURTHER INFORMATION

<http://ethnologie.uni-koeln.de/RuralityFutureMaking>