

ESA RN37

PORTUGAL

VI MIDTERM CONFERENCE

# BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

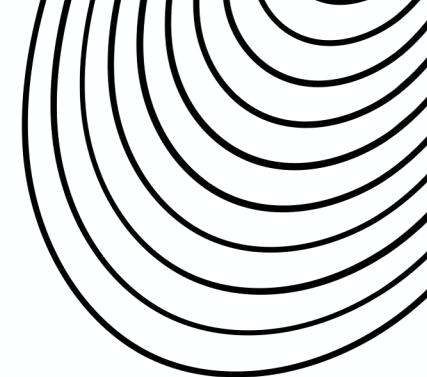
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# DECENTERED CITIES

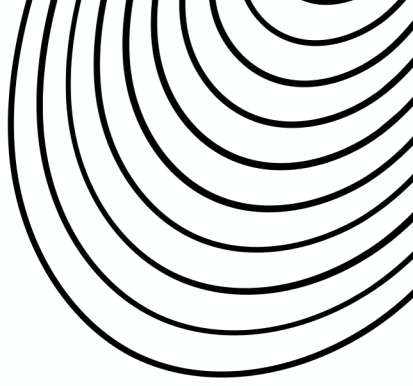
OVERLOOKED URBAN NARRATIVES  
AND SHIFTING CENTRALITIES





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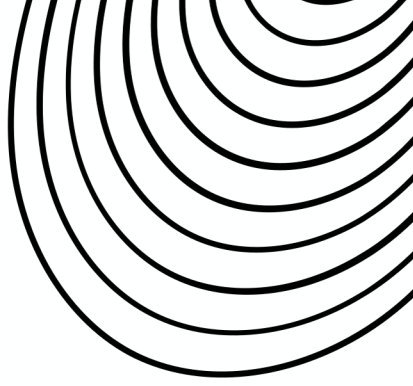
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# PAPERS & abstracts

## 1 Exploring Urban Peripherization in Europe Through the Lens Of Neighborhood and Neighborhood Effect

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### Gendered spatiality of neoliberal urbanization

*Hubert Szotek (Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland)*

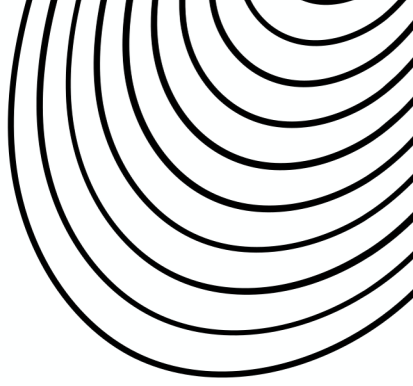
Over the past three decades, processes of urban sprawl — that is, extensive and uncontrolled urbanization — have been taking place around Poland's largest metropolitan areas. New suburban neighborhoods are typically characterized by car dependency, deficits in public services and green spaces, spatial fragmentation, and a lack of high-quality public and recreational spaces. This case study analyzes a newly developed neighborhood on the outskirts of Kraków. Employing an ethnographic approach, the author conducted participant observation, informal conversations, and in-depth interviews with residents. The research is grounded in the theoretical frameworks of Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey, Doreen Massey and Przemysław Śleszyński.

The study outlines the everyday life of the neighborhood, focusing on resident profiles and spatial practices. The central thesis is that suburban spaces produced under neoliberal urbanization not only reproduce economic inequalities but also deepen gender inequalities by embedding gendered divisions of labor into the material and social fabric of the neighborhood. The space emerges both as a product and a carrier of the neoliberal system. A key finding is the role of neoliberal spatiality in reproducing gender inequalities. Women engage more intensively with degraded public spaces, as the division between the public sphere of production and the private sphere of reproduction is replicated within the neighborhood. Consequently, low-quality public spaces are predominantly used by women, whereas high-quality road infrastructure appears male-centered, serving men who primarily treat the neighborhood as a bedroom suburb. This neighborhood effect reinforces both the dominance of neoliberal urban development logics and the traditional gendered division of labor.

### Residential mobility as a phenomenon of spatial inequality: the case of the urban peripheries of Madrid

*Pedro Uceda Navas (1), Margarita Barañano Cid (1), Daniel Sorando Ortín (1) and Carlos Rivas Man (1)*  
(1) (Complutense University of Madrid, Spain)

The main objective of this article is to analyze how residential changes make the metropolitan area of Madrid an unequal space, specially, the urban peripherals zones. To this end, residential movements within the city of Madrid have been studied, and movements to the peripheral municipalities in the metropolitan area have also been analyzed. Through quantitative and qualitative analysis, the relationship between the different parts of the city of Madrid has been demonstrated, as well as the phenomenon of expulsions from this city to more distant municipalities, for the period 2013- 2019. This work takes into account phenomena such as the social origin of people who change residence as well as urban phenomena such as the gentrification process or the price of housing to understand the development of movement trends that generate peripherals spaces of high and low added value. The results of this work show differentiated mobility patterns that determine the regrouping of different social groups in areas beyond the central city, reproducing segregation processes in the metropolitan area. The analysis presented is based on the results obtained from the COMURES project and on the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the ongoing funded projects VIARVU and VIVULBIE.



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### From ghetto to habitus factory

*Tommaso Bertazzo (1) and Vincenzo Romania (1) (University of Padua, Italy)*

Roma camps in Italy: An empirical extension of Loïc Wacquant's theorisation

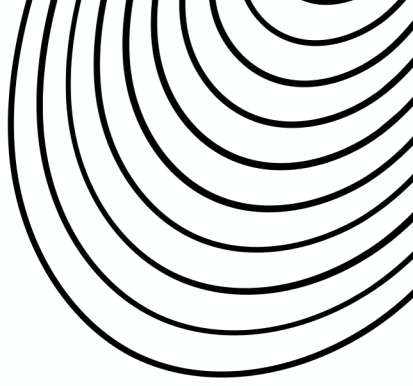
In this article, we apply Wacquant's conceptualisation of the ghetto to an analysis of interviews conducted with Roma people living in the state-enforced camps of Turin, Italy. We illustrate how the elements characterising a ghetto according to Wacquant (i.e. forcible relegation, ethnic homogeneity, mutual distancing and parallel institutionalism) decline in the reality of Italian camps. Interpreting the data we collected, we will confirm the great heuristic capacity of Wacquant's model; however, we will also argue for the need to revise and extend it. The results demonstrate that the Roma camp is not simply an urban area of spatial confinement and marginalisation. Above all, it is a place of symbolic ghettoisation. Indeed, in a Roma camp, dispositional habitus are produced and cemented, the effects of which surpass their own spatio-temporal boundaries. Furthermore, the Roma camp is a Janus-faced institution. It mixes social isolation with the positive aspects of emerging collective solidarity. Finally, we suggest that the importance of ghettoisation to the heterodefinition of stigmatised groups is significantly greater than the criterion of ethnic homogeneity proposed by Wacquant.

### Redefining Urban Peripheries in the Tourist City: The case of peri-urban agriculture in Naples (Italy)

*Antón Freire Varela (University of Naples "Federico II", Italy)*

Several cities in southern Europe are struggling with the repercussions of overtourism, which have led to substantial challenges, particularly within their historic centers, transforming these areas into tourist bubbles. In response to this phenomenon, several local administrations have explored strategies to redirect tourist flows away from the city center, creating new centralities within the city (Mansilla & Milano, 2022). Consequently, areas dedicated to peri-urban agriculture have the capacity to become pivotal assets for cities. This is attributable to both their potential to attract tourists by offering experiences derived from the production of agricultural goods and to the related ecosystem services they provide (Marshall et al., 2023).

In this context, the present research conducts a socio-spatial analysis of those neighborhoods with a notable presence of peri-urban agriculture in Naples (Italy), a city that has experienced a rapid process of touristification in the last decade. Through the use of secondary data, an effort was made, first and foremost, to map peri-urban agriculture in the Neapolitan context, and secondly, to synthesize a series of social, economic, and environmental indicators capable of analyzing a complex territory, a frontier between the city and the countryside, and between the city and the citizenship. The results indicate a significant prevalence of agriculture in highly urbanized areas, accompanied by a pronounced state of social, economic, and environmental vulnerability. This suggests an underestimation of a crucial resource for the tourist city, thereby relegating a substantial segment of the Neapolitan population to a state of deprivation and marginality.



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(1) University of Bologna, Italy

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### Desiring the Rural, Dwelling the Illegal: Urban Escapes in the Hobby Gardens of Menderes, Izmir, Turkey

*Damla Erenler (Izmir Institute of Technology, Turkey)*

This study investigates the emergence of informal and fragmented settlements in the Menderes district of Izmir Province, Türkiye, where hobby gardens with container houses have transformed into semi-permanent living spaces and alternative housing forms such as summer houses. Initially rooted in small-scale agricultural use, these spaces have transformed due to pandemic-driven urban flight and escalating housing crises, creating new rhythms of urban-rural life. Situated in the buffer zone between city and countryside, these settlements are neither entirely rural nor urban, exemplifying the fluid and relational nature of contemporary peripherization. Using a qualitative case study approach, this research draws on spatial observations, semi-structured interviews, and policy analysis to examine how these areas produce new neighborhood effects and socio-spatial exclusion. The destruction of fertile agricultural land, strain on local infrastructure, and erosion of rural social relations are considered within the framework of “gray space” (Yiftachel, 2009) and neighborhood disadvantage (Sampson, 2012). Theoretically, this study is grounded in urban informality (Roy, 2005), peri-urban hybridization (Adell, 1999), and counter-urbanization trends (Halfacree, 2007), offering a Mediterranean contribution to debates typically dominated by global North perspectives. It argues that such settlements illustrate planning gaps and shifting claims to space, lifestyle, and autonomy in peri-urban zones. By documenting this spatial transformation in post-pandemic Turkey, the study contributes to understanding how peripheries are redefined through informal urbanization, class-driven mobility, and new urban-rural temporalities.

### Displacement and residential mobility: the perverse effects of gentrification? The evolution of urban inequalities in contemporary Paris

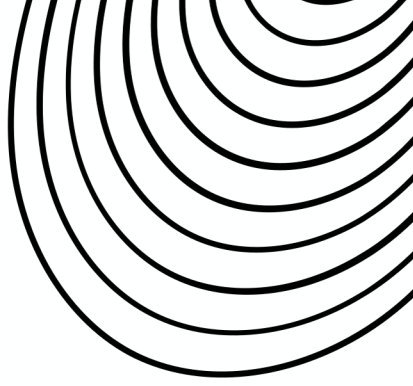
*Giovanni Castre (University of Turin / Milan, Italy)*

Displacement and residential mobility: the perverse effects of gentrification? The evolution of urban inequalities in contemporary Paris  
Global trends such as the liberalization of welfare policies, the financialization of housing markets, and increasing metropolitan expansion have made gentrification and embourgeoisement dominant forces shaping urban dynamics. After decades of debate, gentrification is widely acknowledged to produce displacement—often considered one of its most damaging effects. Yet most quantitative studies still struggle to capture this process convincingly. By analysing residential moves in Paris, this research aims to establish a direct link between gentrification and displacement, understood here as constrained mobility. It contributes to the challenge of “quantification in the battle against gentrification” (Easton et al., 2020). Using geo-referenced panel data from 2015 to 2022, built from annual census records and public tax agency datasets, I investigate whether, and how, gentrification influences the residential mobility of inhabitants.

The analysis is conducted at the IRIS level (French census tracts), allowing for a neighbourhood-based understanding of how local contexts shape mobility patterns. The study pursues two main objectives: first, to identify the socio-demographic, ethnic, and life-course factors associated with residential movements using a multilevel statistical model; second, to map the residential trajectories of different social and ethnic groups over time, capturing their spatial transitions across urban and suburban areas.

By shedding light on the mechanisms of displacement within the French context, this research contributes to a better understanding of how gentrification drives socio-spatial restructuring, intensifying segregation and promoting the suburbanization of poverty.





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### Suburbia: The Land of Forking Paths

*Maria Agustina Frisch (Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina)*

"Then I reflected that all things happen, happen to one, precisely now".

J. L. Borges

In his short story, *The Garden of Forking Paths*, Borges suggests a book that is at the same time an infinite maze, where each character's personal actions would unfold multiple outcomes not in space, but in time. However, the experienced time and space are crucial in his short story given that it is in the here-and-now record that the power to unfold infinite outcomes resides.

This story made me reflect upon my research findings. What is space if not a material support for the (inter)actions to take place, at the same time it is an infinite maze of multiple experiences? I realized that space is not just fragmented at a material level but also in our experiences: it unfolds in an unmeasurable multiplicity, where all things happen, happen to one, precisely now.

For the session, I propose a photo exhibition of unfolding daily mobility experiences in the suburbs of Buenos Aires. This exhibition will be accompanied by soundscapes corresponding to each of these spatial commutes throughout urban space. The documented location is part of my PhD fieldwork, one of the most unequal and heterogeneous suburban localities in Argentina. Gated communities coexist with poor neighborhoods, while the formal city is collapsing, in a landscape that urban scholars address as fragmented, dualized, segregated, where the privileged enclose themselves in wealth islands or bubbles right next to poor neighborhoods. After conducting my fieldwork, I concluded that these unequal social groups interact and even share common spaces. However, it is the social experiences in and across space that become incommensurably unequal. Here, I will focus on the experiences of moving through space ; or rather, on how to address space not as a fragmented territory, but as a constellation of unfolding spatial experiences.

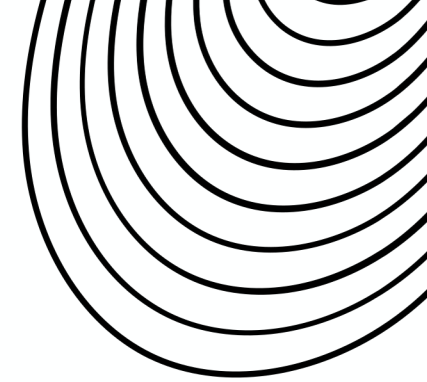
### "We Never Talk About Our Neighborhood Like This": Potentials of Co-Creation with Youth from Marginalized Territories

*Beatriz Lacerda (1), Lúcia Ferro (1) and Otávio Raposo (2)*

(1) (Universidade do Porto, Portugal), (2) (Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, Portugal)

Youth from peripheral urban areas are frequently portrayed homogenously, often associated with apathy, marginalization, and vulnerability. Such narratives, prevalent in media and political discourse, tend to obscure the agency of these young people, as well as their resistance and collective identity-building efforts.

Although Portuguese urban sociology offers a rich theoretical framework with a longstanding focus on housing and territorial inequalities, significant gaps remain in capturing the lived experiences and self-representations of youth in these contexts. When studied, these young individuals are more often defined by vulnerability and absence than by the cultural meanings they generate. Addressing this gap, the PERICREATIVITY: Youth, Arts and Public Policies in Segregated Territories project, conducted in Portugal's two largest cities—Porto and Lisbon—seeks to foster intersectional and participatory approaches that promote social emancipation and counteract youth marginalization. The project has implemented co-creation workshops with young residents of peripheral neighborhoods, exploring their processes of place-naming and local identity grounded in personal experience. This presentation focuses on the Porto case study, where a collaborative short film was developed over six months with participant involvement. Regular meetings facilitated dialogue, sharing, and co-construction of narratives centered on growing up in a marginalized social neighborhood. The resulting stories emphasize joy, territorial belonging, and resistance, revealing alternative collective imaginaries that challenge dominant discourses. The case highlights the crucial role of creativity and interdisciplinary collaborations tailored to diverse local languages in supporting more nuanced understandings of youth experiences in peripheral urban settings.



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### Literary, artistic and design visions of possible pasts and futures of Nowa Huta

*Kuba Pawlak (Doctoral School in the Humanities, Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland)*

Now only the easternmost peripheral district of the city of Kraków, Poland, Nowa Huta (eng. New Ironworks) was originally designed, built and developed through the 1940s and 1950s as a utopian Soviet city. It came to be as a manifestation of the Soviet Union's eager desire to apply social engineering in city planning; its layout was based on a totalizing industrial, ecocidal vision. Today, this Soviet heritage is being revisited in an abundance of artistic/literary/design works and practices. As an outcome of preliminary research, in this paper I compare three initiatives that speculatively explore possible pasts and futures of human-environment relations in Nowa Huta: *Bestiariusz Nowohucki* (2020, eng. Nowa Huta Bestiary) – poetic prose by Elżbieta Łapczyńska, *Archiwum Przedmiotów Wyobrażonych* (2024, eng. The Archive of Imagined Objects) – a doctoral project and design fiction by Szymon Zakrzewski, and the curatorial activity of *Dom Utopii* (eng. House of Utopia). I aim to present the contrasting ways in which these examples perform (re/present) aspects of Nowa Huta's possible pasts and futures: through synesthetic perspective in *Bestiariusz...*, innovative academic research of Zakrzewski, participatory naturecultural projects of *Dom Utopii*.

Methodologically, I combine hermeneutic approaches (analysis and interpretation of cultural texts and artifacts such as brochures, photographs and artistic/literary/design works) with discourse and practice analysis. I am interested in the varied forms and contents of these initiatives, in their materiality- and medium-dependence, as well as conditions and circumstances of their emergence, duration/vanishing and reception, especially in the context of today's climate and environmental uncertainty.

### The Picoto neighbourhood in Braga: a process of socio-spatial segregation and institutional racism

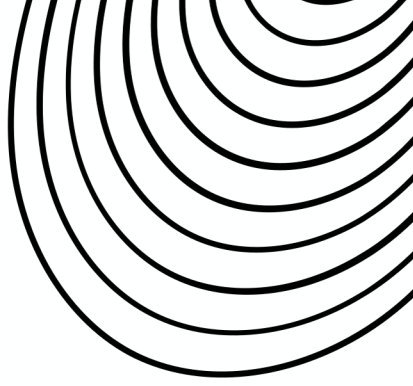
*Manuel Carlos Silva (1), Ana Jorge (1)*

*(1) (Interdisciplinary Center of Social Sciences, University of Minho, Portugal)*

Based on reflection and on fieldwork made in Picoto Housing Complex, a neighborhood inhabited exclusively by gypsy families in an urban (peri) urban area of Braga - which, although adjacent to the city, it remains segregated and degraded - we seek to understand and explain not only its emergence in the 1990s, but its existence to this day. We assume that political omission regarding poor housing conditions, infrastructure and basic facilities constitutes a form of institutional racism. In this regard, after posing the problem, we briefly revisit the different approaches to racism. In methodical-technical terms, in addition of socio-demographic data provided by the municipal company BragaHabitat and participant observation during various incursions into people's daily lives as part of fieldwork over three months, a survey and semi-structured interviews with people of different ages and occupations were carried out.

Empirical data is then presented not only in sociodemographic terms, but also on the processes of discrimination and institutional racism and everyday racism and their implications. The authors question about the why's of not only institutional inertia and omission act as a constant form of public policy, as well as the community's lack of initiative and collective action. By presenting data on the social situation, namely on housing, we reveal inhabitants' representations and the constraints/ strategies facing the lack of answers. The study emphasizes the absence of collective action or the adoption of individual and family's strategies within a framework both of ethnic-racial exclusion and segregation, and of patronising or clientelistic condescension.





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### Alternative city-making: Artistic Resistance in Neoliberal Milan

*Marianna d'Ovidio (University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy)*

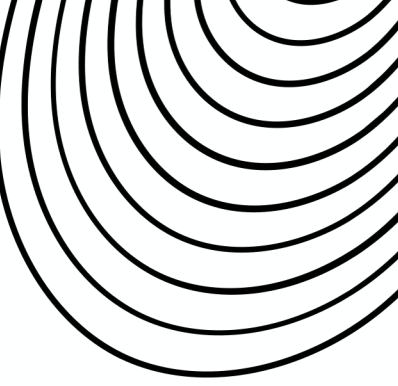
This contribution explores grassroots artistic practices in Milan that challenge the neoliberal model of the contemporary European city, with particular attention to the role of civil society in processes of city-making. Drawing on Doreen Massey's relational, heterogeneous and dynamic conception of space, and on a Polanyian understanding of the need to re-embed social relations in urban life, the research investigates how art-based interventions reclaim space, resist extractive urban logics, and experiment with alternative imaginaries.

Set against the backdrop of a city where welfare systems fail to protect the most vulnerable ones and land valorisation is aggressively pursued, the study focuses on artistic practices that use art and performance, and ultimately the body, as spatial and political tools. These include drag queen walks in peripheries, performances and DJ sets in marginalised neighbourhoods, and counter-events such as “utopiads” instead of mainstream mega-events. The key questions guiding the research are: What kind of space do these practices create? Do they enable alternative and shifting geometries of power? Do they foster heterogeneous relations and solidarities across diversity? As these practices are performed in open and public spaces, the research also focuses on the intentional and unintentional encounters between the performing bodies and the people who inhabit these spaces. We use an interdisciplinary and situated lens, working in close collaboration with the artistic practices we study, to propose artistic experimentation as an alternative way of storytelling of the urban margins that challenges traditional urban narratives and reclaims the right to imagine and inhabit urban alternatives.

### Against Deadly Certainties. Visualising Smog in Kraków's Public Spaces

*Mateusz Borowski (Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland)*

Plans for the greening of Europe, proposed in the face of the ongoing environmental emergency, involve among others the creation of ecological urban communities with the aim of reducing carbon footprint and enable urbanism independent of institutional constraints. However, these neoliberal initiatives rely on the obliteration of the growing amounts of toxicity in urban areas. In this respect the project of green municipal spaces supported by European and local governments is treated in the present paper as an example of what Peter C. Little calls “violent obsolescence”, a set of strategies of wiping out the traces of the catastrophes provoked in the wake of the introduction of modern and assumedly “green” technologies and urban environments. However, toxicity and pollution, with their wicked, unpredictable agency, disregard divisions of urban spaces into centres and peripheries. The paper tackles this problem in the context of non-textual/creative forms of representation of smog, with reference to the example of Kraków, a city plagued by this kind of pollution. The paper focuses on creative interventions in public spaces (like Smog Tower by Daan Roosegaarde, 2017 in one of the city's major parks) as well as grassroots online initiatives in the social media which counter the official narratives of greening of the city at the same time creating their own zones of care. I treat these communal efforts, employing Cajetan Iheka's category of “imperfect media” – the practices of representation which counteract the normalizing of ecological catastrophe in public discourse, at the same time undermining the certainty of scientific/statistical ways of knowing urban landscapes.



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### The S.R. 11 Grand Tour: From Abstract to Concrete Space

*Mersida Ndrevataj (1) and Guido Borelli (1)*

*(1) (Iuav University of Venice, Italy)*

This essay investigates the reification of space along SR. 11 (Strada Regionale 11) in Veneto, Italy, emphasizing how the commodification of space presents its concreteness only when the usual (in this case: automobilistic) modes of travel are abandoned. Inspired by Guy Debord's *dérive*—drifting away from functional travel to follow the terrain's impulses—the essay frames SR. 11 as an abstract space, both in John Brinckerhoff Jackson's sense of landscapes understood primarily through the windshield and in Lefebvre's *rhythmanalysis*, where space is ordered by invisible external forces. Building on Lefebvre's distinction between the carnal body and the social body, the essay seeks to unveil the material forces shaping SR. 11 through two complementary research methods. The first, *rhythmanalytical*, engages the researcher's liberated, non-motorised body to perceive the complex, often discordant rhythms of human and non-human actions that animate the landscape. These rhythms materialize in ruins—traces of spiritual erasure and morphological transformation.

The second method focuses on active listening to the soundscapes of SR. 11. Through field recordings, it reveals the interplay between sound, the built environment, and embodied experience, exposing how sonic elements—typically unnoticed—are integral to the production of space and reflect market-driven dynamics.

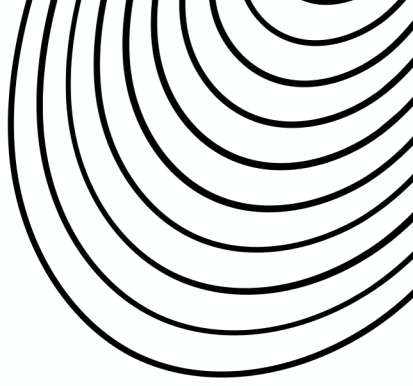
Ultimately, the essay argues that engaging the researcher's senses is vital to exposing how economic development shapes local societies through systems that disregard bodily rhythms, spaces, and temporalities, thus reinforcing the commodification of everyday life.

### Walking the Margin: A Protocol for Co-Creating Urban Knowledge in Le Lignon

*Nerea Viana Alzola (University of Geneva, Switzerland)*

This protocol stems from ethnographic research conducted in Le Lignon, a large housing complex on the outskirts of Geneva, and explores the potential of co-constructed urban walks as a method of producing and sharing situated knowledge in peripheral areas. Intended as a collaboration with local youth centers and framed within the *contrats de quartier* initiative, the protocol aims to engage young residents through a participatory process that combines storytelling, spatial exploration, and digital mediation. The objective is twofold: to reframe walking as a hybrid and collaborative research-practice, and to foster local agency by training participants to become guides, mediators, and narrators of their own territory.

Building on walking methods already explored in urban studies, this protocol adds a situated and experimental dimension by grounding the practice in participatory workshops and digital tools. Youth and social workers collect narratives, memories, and overlooked local landmarks, which are transformed into walking itineraries enriched with QR codes, audio recordings, and interactive maps. These asynchronous tools open up moments of peripheral revelation, in the spirit of Jacques Réda's poetics, challenging dominant representations and linear urban rhythms. The walks, co-created and co-led, also function as a transferable model for local urban tourism. Participants gain storytelling and public engagement skills, while the broader public is invited to encounter the periphery not as a void or margin, but as a layered and generative space of knowledge and belonging. By repositioning academic research as a public, embodied, and accessible practice, this protocol challenges text-based, extractive, or expert-centred forms of knowledge. It contributes to participatory urban research and public sociology by proposing a replicable model of place-based engagement that not only revalues urban margins, but reclaims walking as an epistemic tool.



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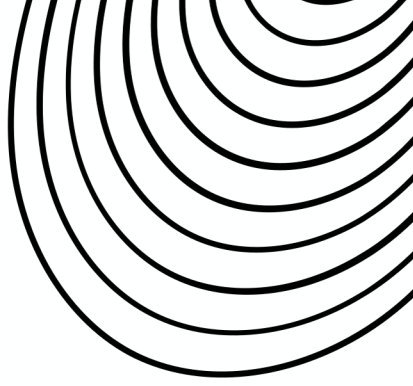
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### Creative Methods, Research Ethic and the Politics of Representation: Interrogating Knowledge Production and ethics in Urban Eviction Research

*Patrícia Pereira (Leiria Polytechnic, CICS.NOVA.ESECS.IP Leiria, Portugal)*

This presentation interrogates whether and how creative methodologies might transform the epistemological and ethical foundations of urban displacement research, questioning persistent tensions between academic representation and lived experience. Drawing on the HOME project (HOusing precarity and MEthodological design: exploring creative, participative and ethical approaches to urban evictions), yet to be implemented, it explores critical questions: Can arts-based approaches truly challenge what Spivak identifies as "epistemic violence," or do they risk creating new forms of symbolic appropriation? How might ethnographic practice be reimagined to move further away from extractivist knowledge production without romanticizing alternative methods? The aim is to discuss how methods such as critical cartography, performance, walking interviews, and visual storytelling might capture affective dimensions of displacement that conventional approaches struggle to articulate. In this context, key questions emerge: What happens when research shifts from studying "marginalized communities" to co-creating knowledge with them? What new ethical dilemmas surface when attempting to democratize methodological design? When working with decolonial urban theory and feminist epistemologies, tensions between academic legitimacy and community-controlled narratives become apparent. Can performance-based methods represent embodied experiences of eviction while avoiding spectacularization? How do visual approaches navigate between accessibility and analytical rigor? Do participatory frameworks genuinely redistribute epistemic authority or merely obscure continuing asymmetries? This intervention proposes that creative methodologies constitute potential sites of epistemological resistance, offering what hooks calls "oppositional gazes" that might disrupt hegemonic representations of urban margins. Yet they demand critical reflexivity about their capacity to reproduce power asymmetries through new forms of methodological fetishism, raising fundamental questions about representation, ethics, and knowledge ownership in urban research.





# PAPERS & abstracts

## 3 Creativity and Urban Regeneration: Building Inclusive Cities and Addressing Social Inequality and Insecurity

Chairs: Antonietta Mazzette (1), Daniele Pulino (1), Sara Spanu (1) and Madalena Corte-Real (2)  
(1) University of Sassari - OSCRIM, Italy, (2) ISEC Lisboa, CHAM-NOVA FCSH, Portugal

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### Environmental justice in the urban climate neutrality transition: The case of the European Mission Cities

*Caterina Bracchi (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, Italy)*

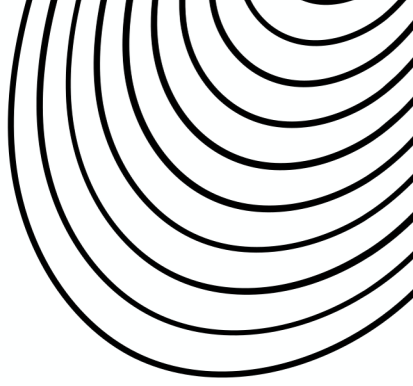
Cities and municipalities have become central actors for the transition to a greener and more just society. While cities are among the main polluters, as the estimates talk about 70% of greenhouse gases (GHGs) globally being produced in urban areas (IPCC 2022), they are also the most vulnerable to and directly impacted from the effects of climate change (Bulkeley et al. 2015). Policymakers worldwide are thus implementing new strategies to tackle climate change in the urban context. The goal of the present research is to investigate how cities are implementing climate change mitigation strategies, understood as the efforts to drastically reduce the concentration of GHGs in the atmosphere (Seto et al. 2021). While these efforts are often presented as a mainly technological and economic challenge, numerous studies show that smartness and technology for climate neutrality do not automatically produce social equity, but on the contrary can exacerbate already existing inequalities (e.g. March, 2022). The research thus focuses on questions of environmental and climate justice (Schlosberg 2007) in the transition to urban climate neutrality at the European level, in the framework of the Horizon Europe Mission "Climate-neutral and smart cities". Through a qualitative analysis of the discourse in the main policy documents developed by European cities selected for the Mission (i.e. Climate City Contracts), an attempt is made to understand what kind of sociotechnical imaginary (Jasanoff & Kim, 2015) for the climate-neutral city is envisioned by policymakers and what role, if any, issues of environmental and climate justice play in the urban transition to net-zero at the European level.

### Creative Class in the Gulf of Innovation: technological transformation and cultural and creative industries

*Marica Castaldi (University of Naples Federico II, Italy)*

This contribution aims to explore the neighborhood of San Giovanni a Teduccio, a historic area of Naples that was industrialized and later deindustrialized after World War II.

Through the triple helix model (Etzkowitz, 1997), the neighborhood has undergone significant changes since 2016, evolving into what is now called the "Gulf of Innovation," a technological hub. The role of the University of Federico II, the first Apple Academy in Europe located within the neighborhood, and various incubators and accelerators are key drivers of this transformation. In particular, the contribution highlights the role of the creative class (Florida, 2002), with young people serving as the engine of change. Through participant observation at the "Fabbrica Italiana dell'Innovazione" incubator, located in San Giovanni a Teduccio, the research explores how the incubation program focuses on cultural and creative industries. These industries, alongside purely technological startups, can drive urban regeneration and change (Zukin, 2020). One of the initial findings is that, unlike entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley, local startups here appear to have a "one-shot" opportunity. The incubation cycle is their main chance, but since the project is funded by the Municipality of Naples and the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy, not all entrepreneurs have the financial means to sustain their startups post-program. Furthermore, the study reflects on why young people choose to stay in their hometowns to start businesses and emphasizes the importance of such opportunities for urban regeneration and the creation of new prospects.



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### Intermediary Gatekeeping and the Right-to-Rent: Contesting Neoliberal Narration in Berlin's Rental Market

*Mingyue Li (Freie Universität Berlin, Germany)*

This study examines the division of labor among intermediaries—brokers, real estate agencies, and property managers—as agencies within the sphere of negotiating governance in Berlin's rental housing market. While policy-makers aim to retain prices while improving affordability, intermediaries exercise significant discretion in tenant selection, reinforcing socio-spatial exclusion. By situating this inquiry within the broader framework of urban governance, it explores how decision-making authority is contested within centralized interventions, market-driven mechanisms, and grassroots resistance, particularly in relation to civilian autonomy. Berlin's rental market reflects entrenched neoliberal logics, with interventions such as the Mietpreisbremse (2015) and Mietendeckel (2020) proving insufficient in counteracting speculative investment, constrained housing supply, and exclusionary selection practices. These dynamics disproportionately restrict newcomers, foreign residents, and international students from participating in urban decision-making processes. Meanwhile, grassroots movements such as Deutsche Wohnen & Co., Enteignen and Mieterverein Berlin advocate for expropriation and tenant-oriented governance; institutional actors, including the Senate Department for Urban Development and the Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs, and Spatial Development (BBSR), attempt to mediate competing claims and reveal fragmented nature of housing governance. Through a mixed-methods approach, integrating demographic and rental market data with a difference-in-difference (DiD) analysis, this study demonstrates how intermediaries shape socio-spatial inequalities. It argues that decentralized governance structures—divided among state, market, and civic actors—produce ongoing conflicts over housing accessibility. To foster equitable urban futures, the study calls for regulatory frameworks that integrate public oversight and bottom-up participation, challenging the predominance of neoliberal paradigms in urban housing policy.

### Decentered Well-being: Work and Social Inequality in Portugal's Urban Networked Territories

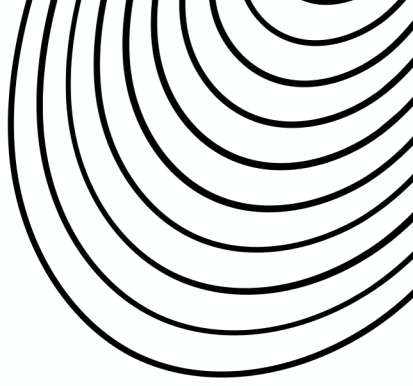
*Sara Franco da Silva (1), Rosário Mauritti (1), Maria do Carmo Botelho (1) and Nuno Nunes (1)*  
(1) (Iscte-Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, Portugal)

While growing inequalities and their consequences are evident across economic, social, and political dimensions of contemporary societies, existing research often prioritizes cross-country analyses, overlooking intranational disparities and their specific place-based expressions. This paper addresses this gap by offering a new perspective on Portuguese territories.

Drawing on official data from Statistics Portugal (INE), we conducted a multivariate quantitative analysis, employing both hierarchical and non-hierarchical cluster methods to Portugal's municipalities. This approach yielded a robust typology of territories, defined by 12 municipal-level indicators including social class, income, education, population density, and age structure.

The analysis identified five distinct territorial configurations within Portuguese society: «Industrial Territories in Transition», «Intermediate Territories», «Urban Networked Territories», «Innovative Territories» and «Low-Density Territories». These configurations reveal how spatial formations intersect with structural forces to shape differentiated patterns of inequality across the Portuguese municipal landscape. Focusing on Urban Networked Territories - characterized by dynamic work relations and socio-economic diversity - this paper explores the intersections between individuals' experiences and decent work, a key component of well-being. It analyses how categorical (sex, age, social class) and distributive (economic and educational) vectors of inequality mediate the experience of work, and how territorialized inequalities reinforce or mitigate access to decent labour conditions.

By examining micro-level experiences within these typologies, this research contributes to current debates on inclusive urban development. It highlights how territorial inequalities function as a structuring condition for labour insecurity and the uneven realization of well-being, thus posing critical challenges to the construction of more socially just urban futures.



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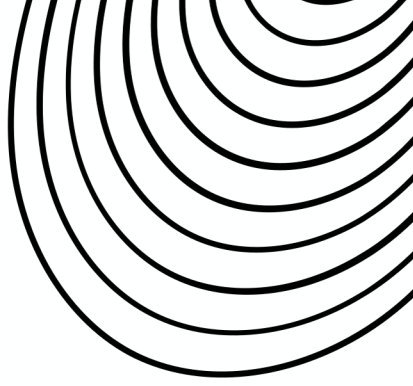
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### Intercultural Community Gardens as Spaces for Migrant Integration in Germany

*Zeynep Naz Oral (University of Genoa, Italy)*

Access to safe and inclusive spaces is essential for migrant integration, particularly in urban environments where displacement and social exclusion are common. Intercultural community gardens (ICGs) in Germany have emerged as participatory spaces fostering social inclusion, empowerment, and cultural exchange. Drawing on social capital theory and urban commons frameworks, this paper examines how ICGs function as bottom-up integration mechanisms, facilitating social cohesion, ecological awareness, and economic empowerment. Since the establishment of the first ICG in Göttingen in 1995, over 145 gardens have been created, supporting well-being and encouraging active citizenship. However, despite their contributions to urban regeneration and informal education, these initiatives face structural challenges, including limited political and financial support. Using case studies and policy analysis, this paper explores the role of ICGs in shaping inclusive urban environments, highlighting their potential to counteract marginalization and enhance migrants' agency. By situating ICGs within broader discussions on participatory urbanism and migration policy, this study underscores the role of community-driven projects in fostering an open and diverse society. Furthermore, the findings emphasize how these gardens serve as alternative public spaces, challenging traditional urban planning paradigms by prioritizing grassroots participation. As migration remains a defining feature of European cities, ICGs present a scalable and adaptable model for fostering intercultural dialogue and sustainable urban integration.





# PAPERS & abstracts

## 4 Wartime Cities: Resistance, Creativity, Resilience

Chairs: Oleksandra Nenko (1) and Olena Kononenko (2)

(1) Turku Institute for Advanced Studies University of Turku, Finland, (2) Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine

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### Emergent Urban Resilience amid Urbicide: Insights and Reflections from Ukraine

*Kostyantyn Mezentsev (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine)*

The concept of emergent resilience gains particular relevance in the context of wartime urbicide, mass internal displacement and refuge, and the (un)preparedness of local communities for resilient recovery. Ukrainian cities are confronting not only unprecedented destruction but also a sequence of overlapping crises rooted in socialist legacies and post-Soviet transitions. This complexity positions Ukrainian urban spaces as uniquely situated to inform and enrich the theorisation of emergent resilience. This study explores how resilience is conceptualised within Ukrainian academic discourse. While largely aligned with international interpretations, the Ukrainian perspective reveals features such as terminological ambiguity in translating "resilience," a shift in focus from national to community and urban scales, and an expanding relevance in response to ongoing war, infrastructure collapse, and climate change adaptation. Ukrainian scholars increasingly approach resilience through the lenses of path dependence, temporariness, inclusiveness, and digitalisation.

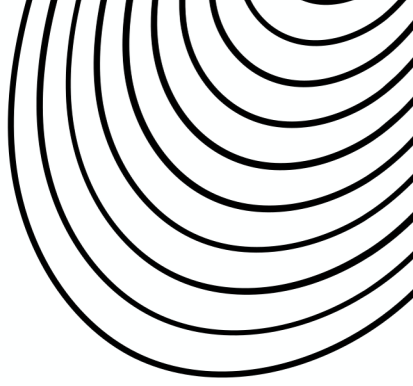
Whereas 'urbicide' results in the erasure of physical and cultural heritage, temporary urban phenomena—particularly those initiated by internally displaced persons (IDPs)—hold potential for generating new forms of tangible and intangible heritage. These temporary spaces embody diverse forms of agency, negotiation, and place-making, suggesting alternative urban development trajectories marked by "displaced place attachment" and engagement through temporality.

Ukraine's experience offers vital insights for global resilience research. It illustrates how cities affected by war and crisis can serve as dynamic laboratories for rethinking urban resilience—revealing emergent strategies and practices shaped by instability, improvisation, and transformation under extreme conditions.

### Mass housing estates in Ukraine: from post-war ruins to living heritage?

*Anastasiia Bozhenko (Leibniz-Institut für Geschichte und Kultur des östlichen Europa, Leipzig, Germany / V.N.Karazin Kharkiv National University, Kharkiv, Ukraine)*

Late modernist mass housing estates and micro-district planning represent a significant phase in the development of Ukrainian cities. Kharkiv and Zaporizhzhia, in particular, have been key sites for urban planning experiments. However, since the onset of Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, these residential areas have suffered relentless artillery shelling. The widespread destruction has often been framed as an opportunity to introduce experimental reconstruction technologies rather than to prioritize preservation or conservation. Yet, this moment of crisis also raises critical questions about the perception of these spaces as living heritage. Positioning mass housing estates within heritage discourse presents several challenges: their generic and prefabricated nature, Soviet origins amid decommunization efforts, and relatively recent construction. Nevertheless, emerging perspectives emphasize intangible values—including community-building, shared ways of life, and local identity. The lived experience of survival in these neighborhoods during the spring of 2022 further underscores their potential memorial value. This paper examines how different actors perceive Soviet mass housing estates, their roles in decision-making, and how heritage discourse influences reconstruction practices. Additionally, it explores the role of grassroots initiatives in the rebuilding process. How can "soft" urban structures—such as community, memory, and participatory practices—contribute to large-scale post-war recovery at the state and municipal levels? This discussion not only enriches academic debates on heritage transformation in times of crisis but also offers practical insights for rethinking mass housing estates beyond their utilitarian past, towards new models of urban resilience and cultural significance.



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### The invisible engine: how emergent urban resilience can drive reconstruction

*Myroslava Soldak (Institute of Industrial Economics, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine)*

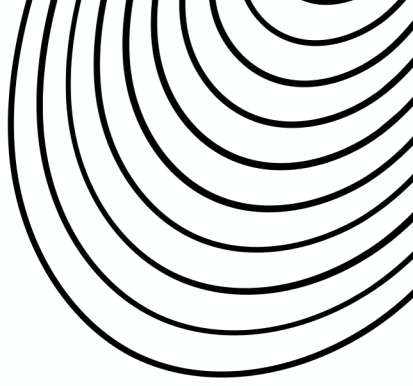
Full-scale hostilities have caused severe destruction of infrastructure, limited the capacity of Ukrainian businesses, and placed cities before the challenge of comprehensive reconstruction that must align with modern recovery approaches, such as the Build-Back-Better concept. Ongoing debates on recovery pathways highlight the need to adapt reconstruction strategies to the specific conditions and challenges of each city. Key topics in these discussions include the restoration of infrastructure and housing, mental health support, climate change adaptation, integration of advanced technologies, energy-efficient solutions, and circular development models to build the foundation for long-term economic resilience.

In this discourse, reconstruction is not only about rebuilding but about rethinking many aspects of urban development and making forward-looking choices informed by past experiences, current challenges, and long-term sustainability goals. Today, Ukrainian cities are not only spaces of destruction but also platforms of self-recovery, where amid a polycrisis, new forms of solidarity, adaptive local initiatives, and economic survival strategies are emerging. Emergent resilience arises from the bottom up, often spontaneously as a response of local communities to the absence or inefficiency of formal support institutions. Exploring its potential to shape trajectories and possible scenarios for urban and regional economic reconstruction helps identify new growth points, develop inclusive recovery models, and reconsider the role of communities in shaping reconstruction policies based on principles of sustainable development, social cohesion, and innovative adaptability.

### New toponymic landscapes in Vinnytsia, Ukraine: public inertia, adaptation, and resistance

*Oleksii Gnatiuk (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine)*

The war-induced massive change of street names in Ukrainian cities since 2014 and especially since 2022 represents just another challenge for urban communities in the country. Employing a mixed method approach, which includes a social experiment with the passersby on the streets of the city, analysis of the real estate advertisement and a series of interviews with the citizens, the research reveals various practices of everyday use of new and old street names as a public response to the officially imposed city-text. The findings indicate that the transition from the old to the new toponymic system after the ideologically-driven toponymic cleansing does not represent an immediate and a single-step action, and should be considered a long-lasting, protracted and multi-staged process that requires several years or even decades. The gradual introduction of a new place name into various spheres of public life represents a kind of heterochronic coevolution driven by the collision of top-down vs. bottom-up interests. Another finding is that public inertia towards the new toponymic landscapes may be driven almost totally by motivations that have no direct relationship to ideology and politics. It has been found that the actual communicative practices after the renaming depend on a variety of predominantly local factors and actors, including the specific place, place name, communicative situation and characteristics of the interlocutors. The findings are discussed in the framework of social sustainability, pointing at the need for clearly articulated and coherent municipal politics aimed at familiarising the community with newly introduced place names.



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### Emotional places and emotional landscape of a wartime city

*Oleksandra Nenko (1), Olena Kokonenko (2) and Anatolii Melnychuk*

*(1) Institute for Advanced Studies University of Turku, Finland, (2) Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine*

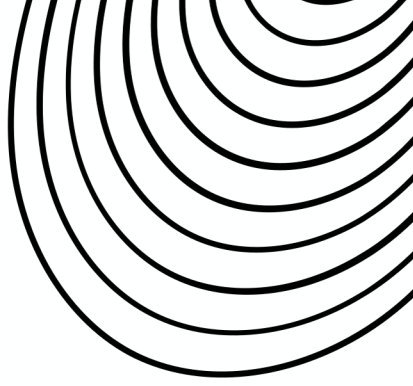
This paper focuses on rebuilding place identities in urban landscapes during and after wartime, using the example of Kyiv city. Through autoethnographic introspection, combined with a participatory mapping approach, four types of emotional places were identified which are associated with highly-charged memories of the dreadful events and everyday practices of wartime: dangerous and safe places, and places of dignity and trauma. The emotional landscape of the wartime Kyiv consists of personal, intimate places, such as home, but also public spaces - streets, squares, metro stations, museums, monuments - which change not only their appearance and function during wartime, but also their emotional load and meaning for the city's inhabitants. The blurring of boundaries between personal and public, safe and dangerous, contributes to the coherence of collective and individual local identities as they are rethought and rebuilt. The study shows that the practices of rebuilding what was destroyed as well as creating safe spaces are important for restoring a sense of place and identity. The grassroots actions of citizens allow them to use their subjectivity and creativity to restore their everyday world.

### Art as Reconstruction in the Perilous Territory of Not-Belonging

*Leah Modigliani (Temple University, USA)*

In his essay "Reflections on Exile," Edward Said claimed that "just beyond the frontier of 'us' and the 'outsiders' is the perilous territory of not-belonging." If war is the suspension of space and time and the aggressors' violent manifestation of a desire to erase the "other's" existence and history, art is a hopeful and defiant practice of reestablishing the world anew for oneself and others. Art is an activity that manifests human longing as presence, one that takes up space through a denial of absence, and artists are often the first to imagine what can be built out of the ruins of war. Said discussed the threshold of belonging and not belonging in the late twentieth century as one located on a border between affiliations and counter-affiliations with nationalism(s). While neo-colonial nationalist movements continue to drive revanchist wars and nativist obsessions with immigration and migration, the threshold of belonging and not belonging is now broader, influenced by the climate crisis and digitally enabled social solidarities beyond state borders. What does the territory of not-belonging look like in this context? Might it be a kind of extranational ground upon which to build new social and spatial imaginaries? What role does art play in these speculative futures? This paper attempts to build a theoretical and spatial landscape of not belonging through an analysis of visual artworks produced by artists-from-elsewhere.





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### Struggles and solidarity on the way of finding a new home: On forced migrants' access to housing in Berlin and Potsdam

*Nina Amelung* (1) and *Hanna Blank* (2)

(1) (Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lisbon, Portugal), (2) (Inwole e.V. Potsdam, Germany)

supporting them. The usual way to housing for forced migrants begins with an initial reception center; various forms of additional temporary housing solutions exist that can follow afterwards; until at some point permanent solutions may be found. Contesting the “permanent regime of temporary solutions” (Laksevics et al. 2022) and “the internal migration industries” (Bernt et al. 2023) of the shadow housing market, civil society actors advocating for migrants' rights are at the forefront to provide assistance navigating this complicated path. Solidarious civic action motivated the creation of alternative approaches. In this paper, we give specific attention to migrants' need oriented, inclusive and participatory approaches to finding housing solutions. The focus lies on migrants' lived experiences and the support of NGOs to assist migrants to access safe and fair housing, a major pillar to substantially create a new safe home and get integrated in the host society.

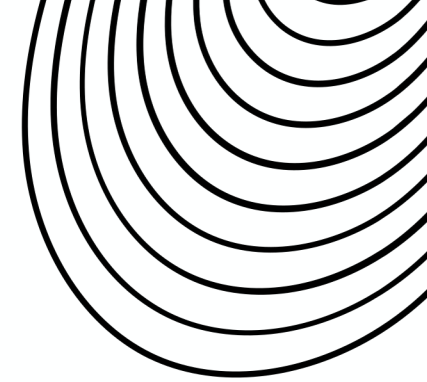
We begin with (1) a historic overview of the policy development and housing market evolution for forced migrants in Potsdam and Berlin, and show how this has manifested an infrastructure of precarious, temporal and provisional accommodation solutions. We continue to (2) explore selective approaches that give priority to migrants' needs based on principles of solidarity including collaborative housing projects such as share houses, collaborative and creative forms of solidarious assistance to access to housing, and participatory forums to discuss and explore migrants' experiences, needs and visions to get access to fair and permanent housing. We conclude with a discussion on the benefits and challenges to strengthen participatory and inclusive approaches on a wider scale.

### Cultural Urban Policy During Wartime: The Case of Tel Aviv

*Noga Keidar* (1), *Beery Livnat* (1)

(1) (Tel-Aviv University, Israel)

In times of war, culture and the arts are often among the first to face budget cuts and censorship. Yet, cultural policy does not simply disappear; it is reconfigured, taking on new roles and meanings. This paper examines how municipal policymakers in Tel Aviv navigate cultural policy during wartime, both as a case study and as a basis for developing a typology of the roles culture assumes in such contexts. We ask: What does ‘culture’ become in a time of war? and explore how city officials adapt strategies, reallocate resources, understand and redefine the place of culture in the urban fabric. Through an analysis of policy documents, municipal initiatives, and interviews with policy actors, we seek to identify key ways in which Tel Aviv's policymakers are responding to the current multifaceted crisis in Israel—a time of military conflict intersecting with severe internal socio-political conflicts. We examine how policy actors position culture as a tool for fostering solidarity, manage shifting priorities, and negotiate the city's evolving identity in wartime. In particular, we investigate how the City of Tel Aviv balances its reputation as a liberal, cosmopolitan hub with its role in the national struggle, exploring potential tensions between maintaining cultural openness and demonstrating patriotic commitment. Situating Tel Aviv's case within scholarship on urban cultural policy in crisis, global cities in wartime, and liberal cities operating within states experiencing democratic backsliding, this study develops a typology of cultural policy responses to war. As conflicts continue to shape urban governance worldwide, this framework offers a comparative perspective on how municipalities respond to the cultural challenges of wartime.



# PAPERS & abstracts

## 5 Culture, Urban Regeneration and Peripheries: Rethinking a Complex and Ambiguous Relationship

Chairs: Marxiano Melotti (1) and Simona Totaforti (2)

(1) Niccolò Cusano University, Rome, Italy (2) "Dante Alighieri" University of Reggio Calabria, Italy

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### From Mass to Elite: Applicability of Paul DiMaggio's Theoretical Framework to the Street Art Field

*Anna Garbaruk (University of Konstanz, Germany)*

This study aims to rethink the applicability of Paul DiMaggio's classical concept of dividing the cultural field into mass and elite sectors in the context of street art. According to the traditional perception, street art is predominantly a "democratic" and anti-elite form of art, which is aimed fundamentally at a mass audience. However, in recent years, the field has become more complex: works have appeared that are oriented not towards the "mass viewer", but towards an internal artistic community or a culturally "prepared" recipient.

The study is based on empirical material collected from online publications about street art in open Telegram channels and Instagram accounts of authors and curators from St. Petersburg (Russia) for 2023-2025. The St. Petersburg field is used as a case for a broader theoretical discussion. It allows us to trace the differentiation within street art by aesthetic strategies, channels of legitimation and intended audiences. The paper raises the question: is it possible to talk about the emergence of an elite segment in street art in the spirit of the DiMaggio model? How do new forms of institutional mediation (in particular, digital platforms) affect the stratification and symbolic hierarchy within the field? Preliminary analysis shows the presence of new and diverse strategies of symbolic addressing, differing in the degree of cultural complexity, which tentatively allows us to use the proposed model in the study of street art - with a number of clarifications related to the features of modern digital cultural production.

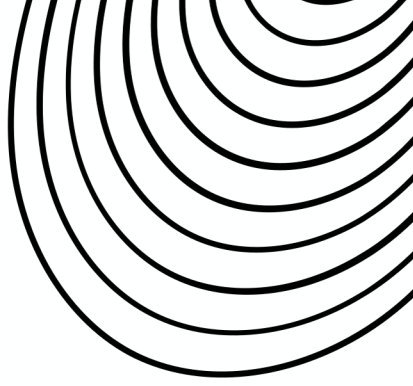
### Decentering Alfama: Musical Plurality and Informal Nightlife Practices in a Central Lisbon Neighborhood

*Chiara De Dominicis (1), Manuel Garcia-Ruiz (2), Marco Roque de Freitas (1)*  
(1)(INET-md, Portugal), (2) (CIES-ISCTE, Portugal)

Amid processes of overtourism, heritage commodification, and urban restructuring, Alfama stands as a symbolic and contested space within Lisbon's cultural geography. While long associated with fado and tradition, the neighbourhood has become increasingly central to the city's tourist economy. Beyond its iconic casas de fado, however, a variety of musical expressions—jam sessions, informal gatherings, and community-based concerts—continue to animate the area's everynight life. This ongoing ethnographic research (2024–present) focuses on the surroundings of the Church of Santo Estêvão to examine how musical practices emerge in relation to, and sometimes in tension with, dominant narratives of heritage. Combining participant observation with in-depth interviews, sonic registration, and photography, the study investigates the social and spatial dynamics of live music. It pays particular attention to how performances are created, shared, and experienced by long-term residents, international newcomers, musicians, and tourists.

Rather than portraying Alfama as a static repository of tradition, the research approaches it as a fluid and contested urban space where alternative musical identities, uses of public space, and forms of belonging are continually negotiated. By foregrounding often-overlooked sonic practices, the study highlights how music operates as a mode of urban engagement—mediating emotions, responding to socio-spatial transformation, and sustaining collective life. It contributes to sociological debates on everyday cultural production, gentrification, and the reconfiguration of central urban areas.





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(1) Niccolò Cusano University, Rome, Italy (2) "Dante Alighieri" University of Reggio Calabria, Italy

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### Ephemeral Centralities in Florence's Peripheries: Schizoanalytic Mapping of Rhizomatic Resistance

*Edison França da Silva Filho (University of Florence, Italy)*

The present study investigates how marginalized neighborhoods in Florence's peripheral areas, specifically the Le Piagge community in the west outskirts of the city, construct ephemeral centralities — temporary spaces of collective autonomy that challenge the city's culturalized regeneration policies. The theoretical framework combines Gilles Deleuze's and Felix Guattari's schizoanalytic cartography with Henry Lefebvre's rhythm analysis, to trace how self-organized practices create alternative urban centralities and resistance through improvised spatial routines despite state-sanctioned cultural and spatial displacements. These sites reveal how peripheries become relational hubs through rhizomatic tactics: informal economies forge transnational networks, while temporary occupations reclaim time as a communal resource. To better understand this process, the methodological approach will be based on critical spatial ethnography, emphasizing the transdisciplinary and overarching complexity of the production of space in ephemeral centralities. Applying schizoanalysis framework (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013) to inform how exchange value-driven urban policies tend to homogenize and regulate the production of subjectivities in space, emphasizing the research on key aspects such as micro-politics, desire and multiplicity. The expected results will: 1. Advance creative justice theory by framing peripheries as sites of emancipatory collective subjectivities; 2. Propose schizoanalytic urban methods to document state-resistant spatial practices; 3. Expose how Florence's "cultural regeneration" systematically erases grassroots cultural production while appropriating its aesthetic signifiers. The study ultimately reframes ephemerality not as precarity, but as a potential strategic urban praxis for marginalized communities to demand their right to the city.

### Reconfigurations of working-class culture: Contrasting regeneration trajectories in two post-industrial neighbourhoods in East Berlin

*Julia Greve (1), Talja Blokland (1) and Urszula Woźniak (1)*

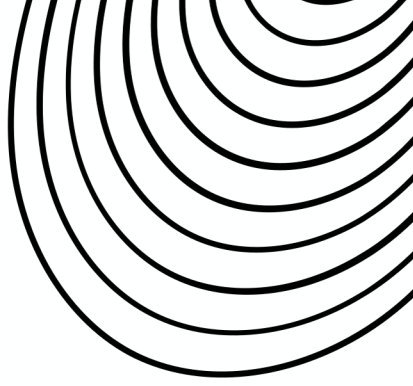
*(1) (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Germany)*

Studies of regeneration of deindustrialized urban areas often contain singular cases critically discussing the displacement of and exclusionary effects for marginalized groups. Less is known about how regeneration logics reshape everyday working class formations: the spatial practices and symbolic negotiations of class that are reconfigured within transformed urban infrastructures and neighborhood locations. Through an exploratory, comparative study of two East Berlin neighborhoods with common industrial decline but divergent renewal pathways, this paper addresses this gap. While one district followed a culture policy agenda centered on creative hubs and heritage branding, the other developed a concentration of retail, marketed for its "exotic" culture.

Drawing on preliminary analyses of data from policy documents, mapping of neighborhood 'ordinary spaces', focus groups and ethnographic walk along observations, this paper traces how the representation of place in policy discourse relates to changes in ordinary spaces for long-term working-class residents: how has the accessibility of ordinary places, practically and symbolically, been impacted? Moreover, what can be said about their experiences of change of the urban space through which they practice belonging and (group) identifications, and what is the remaining value of 'class'? What, might this suggest, more generally, about the relationship between deindustrialization and the reconfiguration of class (e.g. at the intersection of race)?

By foregrounding classed experiences of ordinary spaces rather than just the (potentially) exclusionary aspects of flagships of cultural regeneration policies, we advance debates on cultural regeneration, post industrial urbanism and the sociology of class. We argue that regeneration pathways not only redistribute people, but also reconfigure working class identities.





# PAPERS & abstracts

## 5 Culture, Urban Regeneration and Peripheries: Rethinking a Complex and Ambiguous Relationship

Chairs: Marxiano Melotti (1) and Simona Totaforti (2)

(1) Niccolò Cusano University, Rome, Italy (2) “Dante Alighieri” University of Reggio Calabria, Italy

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### Peripheries and diffuse musealization: public art, mobility, and urban participation

*Giorgia Ciolli (Niccolò Cusano University, Rome, Italy)*

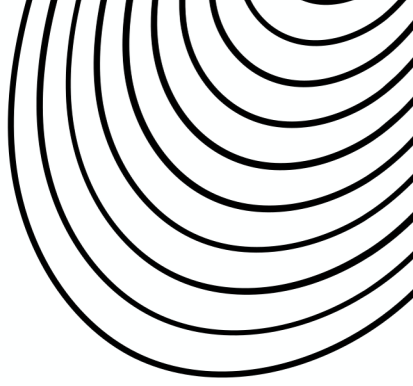
This paper examines the processes of musealization of transit spaces in Italian peripheral areas, with particular attention to artistic practices that intervene within everyday public environments. Through a documentary analysis of calls for projects, catalogues, and project materials, it investigates the ways in which these initiatives are integrated into spaces habitually traversed by local communities, raising questions about the cultural transformation dynamics they engender. Within this framework, the study explores the mechanisms that reconfigure metro stations as “obligatory museums” and reflects on the potential of site-specific practices in constructing alternative urban narratives. In Rome, the festival 1 Metro Sotto la Metro, promoted by Fusolab 2.0 for Roma Culture, has transformed five stations along Metro Line C through new media art installations, reinterpreting their architecture as thresholds toward new urban experiences. In Naples, the project Lo Scambiapassi, promoted by the Fondazione Plart at the Piscinola–Scampia station, translates the concept of the “obligatory museum” theorized by Bonito Oliva (2004) into a public art intervention aimed at activating intangible heritage and stimulating proximity-based participatory practices. However, in the absence of genuine participatory mechanisms, these interventions risk producing top-down narratives, thereby reproducing aestheticizing logics and dynamics of symbolic marginalization (Harvey, 2008). The tension between cultural appropriation and effective participation thus emerges as a critical issue within processes of urban regeneration. Through a critical analysis, the paper aims to reflect on the potential and limitations of diffuse musealization practices, proposing approaches that recognize and enhance the memories and lived experiences of local communities.

### The Role of Materiality in Transforming Urban Industrial Heritage into Cultural-Environmental Heritage

*Marta Smagacz-Poziemska (Jagiellonian University, Institute of Sociology, Poland)*

In this presentation, I will address the role of (post-)industrial materiality in urban transformation, situating the analysis within the framework of practice theory (Schatzki 2002) and drawing on the concept of material arrangements (Schatzki 2010). Social practices, as the main analytical category, are understood as bundles of what people do and say, reproduced through routinization. The organizational structure of practices consists of general understandings (e.g. ideas) and teleoaffective structures. In this theoretical context, an urban crisis can be understood as a crisis of everyday practices, intensified by the inadequacy and/or uselessness of existing understandings of fundamental concepts (e.g., security, local development), and by the exhaustion of positive emotions and motivations necessary to (re)orient daily actions. Schatzki (2010) argues that materiality - with its biological-chemical, physical, and energetic properties - is inseparably woven into social practices. He distinguishes four types of relations between practices and material arrangements: causality, prefiguration, constitution, and intelligibility. Exiting a crisis and regenerating a city based on culture (understood as a weave of symbolic and material elements that “tell” about the values and norms of a community) requires (re)interpretation of the past and present. In the case of post-industrial cities, this means culturally reinterpreting the chemical, physical, and energetic properties of land, minerals, water, and air. In the paper, I will present the results of qualitative research conducted using a case study methodology in City X in southwestern Poland, once a thriving center of coal, textile, and ceramic industries, and, due to border changes, migration, and resettlement, also a city with a multicultural history. At the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, it experienced a deep socio-economic crisis, manifested in one of the highest unemployment and poverty rates in the country, infrastructure degradation, and environmental pollution. Based on in-depth interview materials collected in the city, including with former miners now working as guides in a mining museum and cultural center, I will show, first, how industrial heritage (coal heaps, post-mining and industrial infrastructure, animals formerly present in mines: rats, canaries) is being transformed into cultural-environmental heritage, and second, how the relations between materiality and everyday practices are being recreated or newly formed.

References: Schatzki, T. R. (2002). *The site of the social: A philosophical account of the constitution of social life and change*. Penn State Press. Schatzki, T. (2010). Materiality and social life. *Nature and culture*, 5(2), 123-149.



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## 5 Culture, Urban Regeneration and Peripheries: Rethinking a Complex and Ambiguous Relationship

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### Reimagining the Urban Margin: Spatial Interventions, Cultural Regeneration, and Neighbourhood Governance on China’s Urban Waiting Lands

*Ying Liu (Sciences Po, Paris, France)*

Destruction and redevelopment have been at the heart of Chinese urbanism during the past three decades of the market-oriented reform era. After multiple rounds of urban redevelopment, available land in city centres has become extremely scarce. Almost all profitable plots have been auctioned off, leaving behind small, marginal areas that are either too limited to be profitably redeveloped under current planning regulations or entangled in complex land and property ownership issues. Yet these areas remain crucial, as thousands of people—particularly low-income and marginalized groups—continue to live there. At the same time, these “ungovernable” informal spaces have become a challenge for local governments seeking ways to intervene, often through culture-led spatial strategies. Against this backdrop, this study explores the spatial politics of urban margins in contemporary China by analysing the governance, socio-material transformations, and community dynamics of the “waiting land”—urban ruins caught between demolition and redevelopment. This research builds on ethnographic fieldwork, including nearly a year of participation in an architecture- and creative culture-led urban regeneration program initiated by architects, designers, artists, and researchers. The program was situated in a semi-demolished informal settlement long inhabited by low-income migrants, ethnic minorities, and street vendors. Through interdisciplinary collaboration, stakeholder negotiation, and resident participation, the program seeks to reimagine and reconfigure this long-neglected urban space. The research foregrounds lived experiences and contested agency at the urban margins, offering insights into the role of grassroots spatial practices in navigating the tensions between informality, governance, and urban regeneration.

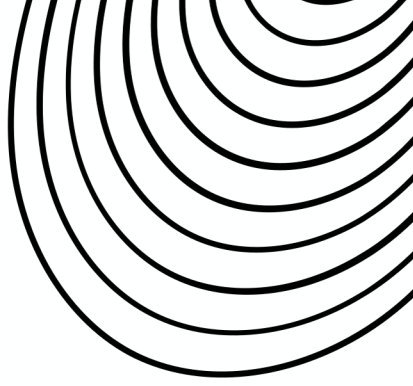
### The role of independent music scenes in neoliberal cities. A multi-sited ethnographic approach to the screamo practices of resistance to gentrification in the Italian context

*Valeria Marina Borodi (University of Milano-Bicocca)*

Neoliberal urbanism is an open-ended phenomenon that exploits and (re)produces uneven socio-spatial differences. It is marked by geographical variability, trans-locality and multi-scalarity (Brenner, Peck & Theodore, 2010). One mechanism not only unleashed by neoliberal urbanism, but also a symbol of it is gentrification – understood both as a process of urban renewal, attracting higher-income residents, and as a metaphor for processes of mainstreaming and commodification of everyday life and culture, leading to the marginalization of critical culture through a widespread exercise of discrediting, exclusion, and censorship (Kern, 2022).

The independent screamo music scene in Italy, particularly in Milan (one of the European cities where the effects of neoliberal urbanism are most visible), offers a compelling case study for understanding both processes. As a popular music genre, screamo – an offshoot of hardcore punk – is more susceptible to the dynamics of commodification and mainstreaming, yet it simultaneously risks promoting social hegemony in neighborhoods undergoing urban renewal. I will present the results of participant observation conducted at 44 music events across Italy in 2024, using a multi-sited ethnographic approach. I will examine the urban features that shape music scenes and their agency in shaping cities, urban contexts and boundaries. My focus will be on how music scenes can be understood as fields of struggle between processes of gentrification and commodification, on the one hand, and practices of resistance to them on the other. In this way, they can constitute a subtle social critique of the expulsive mechanisms of cities (Raffa, 2024) and processes of cultural commodification.





# PAPERS & abstracts

## 6 Intervening in the Urban World. Residents, Activist Groups and General Public as Stakeholders in the Processes of Civic Participation

Chairs: Maja Biernacka (1) and Paweł Starosta (2)

(1) University of Białystok, Poland (2) University of Łódź, Poland

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### Citizen Participation in Smart Urban Mobility Plans: The Case of Spanish Mid-Sized Cities

*Bernardo Velente (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona / Universidade de Lisboa, Spain)*

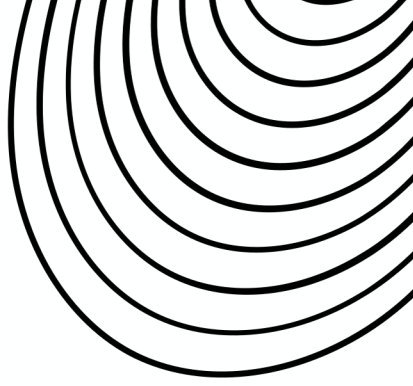
The added democratic value of citizen e-participation initiatives is vastly discussed in the literature on planning studies, urban sociology, public policy and many other scientific areas related to cities' governance. Many factors can influence the success and engagement of citizens in public e-participation projects to formulate public policy. This article explores how four factors – method of participation, actors involved, challenges responsiveness and technology level - can impact the implementation of these projects. Over the past decade, based on European, national, and regional legal frameworks, several citizen e-participation initiatives have been implemented in mid-sized Spanish cities, transitioning to more innovative governance models. This phenomenon established a network of actors to support the goals of this participatory model, and stakeholders have played a central role in shaping the dynamics of citizen e-participation. Therefore, by examining and assessing the urban mobility plans from Spanish municipalities included in the Spanish Network of Smart Cities through a mixed-method approach, this paper aims to track patterns on the four factors mentioned above that will help categorise different models of citizen e-participation and understand the success or challenging features behind these initiatives. The conclusion of this article draws recommendations for future research paths on the features necessary to achieve successful citizen e-participation in urban environments.

### Outreach as protest, solidarity, and bearing witness to institutional neglect: Supporting unhoused migrants in Paris

*Carrie Ann Benjamin (CY Cergy Paris Université, France)*

In 2020, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that asylum seekers in France were subjected to 'inhuman and degrading living conditions'. While the French state has an obligation to provide housing to people going through the asylum process, the prevalence of tent encampments across the city over the last decade attests to the state's failure to meet this legal requirement. To support state efforts and create an image of Paris as a 'city of refuge', the municipal government has relied heavily on civil society participation to provide care, supplies, and information to unhoused migrants. As a result, multiple networks of informal collectives and official associations have formed to welcome and provide support to people across the capital. In this paper, I focus on the maraudes, or mobile outreach activities, of Solidarité Migrants Wilson (SMW), a non-hierarchical collective of activists who cook, package, and distribute hundreds of meals around the northern edges of Paris. Donning hi-vis vests with the slogan 'abusive state, citizens in solidarity' printed on back, SMW activists navigate the nooks and crannies created by transport infrastructure to deliver hot meals where people camp, socialise, or beg. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork conducted between 2019-2023, I explore the importance of mobility in providing care for an increasingly invisibilised and dispersed urban population. I argue that, beyond a method for moving around, walking on maraude is an act of care for one's neighbours that is rooted in solidarity, protest, and bearing witness to state neglect and border violence.





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### A Reading of Brescia's Winged Victory Statue through Chicago School Human Ecology

*Emanuele Stochino* (1) and *Gabriele Manella* (2)

(1) (University of Milan, Italy), (2) (University of Bologna, Italy)

By means of a bibliographical approach, this research study aims to adopt the concept of human ecology as used in *The City*, to read artistic and social phenomena linked to the Winged Victory statue in Brescia, Italy (henceforth WV).

In this analysis, chapter one of *The City* has been used for Park's general vision, and chapter three, to outline a philological meaning of human ecology.

Brescia is at the centre of our focus since it is one of the first Italian cities to boast a strong industrial identity, the fact that it hosts a significant number of migrants (approximately 19% of the population) and because, in recent years, the city has also developed a system to promote its cultural heritage. An example of this is the expansion of the city's museum district and its recognition, alongside Bergamo, as the Italian Capital of Culture, 2023.

Park's vision of human ecology includes three concepts which, in a variable way, coexist and which are formed according to context, namely: the concept of physical traits defined solely by their "objectivity", the economic concept linked to an increase in resources, and the concept of society as a way of transmitting culture, art and tradition. Through this study we are outlining these three concepts of human ecology with respect to the effect that WV has exerted and does still exert on Brescian society.

### From Politicization to Depoliticization: Civic Participation in the Struggle for A Coruña's Waterfront

*Iago Martínez Duran* (University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain)

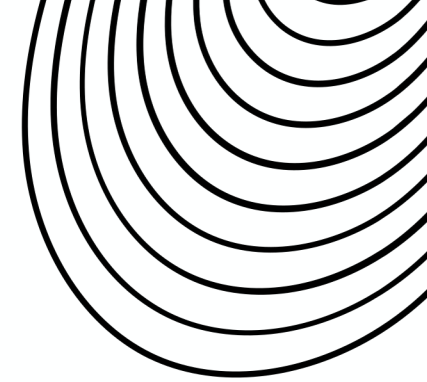
This presentation analyses the political dynamics and the shifting role of civic participation in an ongoing urban conflict in A Coruña, a medium-sized city in northwestern Spain.

Since 2004, a speculative megaproject has targeted over 450,000 m<sup>2</sup> of port land reclaimed from the sea, with plans for privatisation and the construction of hotels, shopping centres, and unaffordable housing. Although it has not yet been implemented, the project has been — and continues to be — the subject of political and social struggle for two decades.

Between 2015 and 2019, A Coruña was governed by a municipalist platform that emerged from Spain's post-2011 cycle of social mobilisation. The waterfront project became a central battleground in its political agenda. The new left-wing local government ended a decade of little or no contestation around the issue, halted the privatisation process, launched a broad participatory planning initiative, and challenged dominant narratives of urban development.

While it ultimately failed to institutionalise a lasting alternative, this strategy politicised the issue, reshaped the local policy debate, and forged new consensuses within the city's political culture. After the municipalists' defeat, however, the conflict has been reframed as a technical and institutional matter, sidelining political contention and transforming the role of participation.

Drawing on ongoing in-depth qualitative research — including policy and planning documents, electoral manifestos, media coverage, and semi-structured interviews — the presentation explores the shift from politicization to depoliticization in civic participation, and reflects on the tensions and limits of participatory strategies in radical urban regime transformation.



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## 6 Intervening in the Urban World. Residents, Activist Groups and General Public as Stakeholders in the Processes of Civic Participation

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### From Streets to Stage: Urban Tensions and Socio-Spatial Critique in Terceira's Carnival

*Josélia Fonseca* (1), *Andrea Mattia Marcelli* (2)

(1) (Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade dos Açores, Portugal) (2) (Universitas Mercatorum, Rome, Italy)

The Carnival of Terceira Island (Azores, Portugal) is acknowledged by scholarship as a sui generis expression of social and moral activism. Following its investigation as an informal educational ecosystem, this research leverages on ethnographic data collected between 2020 and 2025 to explore the connection between such a heritage practice and the increasing urbanization of the island.

First, historical data show that Terceira islanders' changing relationship with space impacted the development of the Carnival as a cradle of activism. Concerning this, two cases are examined: (1) urbanization dynamics of the proximal space (e.g., improvement in the transportation system) affected the organization of the Carnival; (2) changes in migratory habits ('distal urbanization') triggered the evolution of Carnival practices.

Second, contemporary ethnography of Terceira's Carnival (2020–2025) shows that its 'bailinho'-type of 'danças' [dances] act as the cornerstone of a refined system to express criticism about an increasingly urbanized space. More specifically, the Carnival puts the rural/urban divide on stage, and 'bailinho' jokes help bringing debatable political decisions to the attention of the public. Concerning this, three cases are addressed: (1) Carnival criticism of urban public seating; (2) mockery of the delays in restoring roads connecting neighbourhoods; and (3) conceptual criticism of the "urban way" of performing the 'espada' type of 'dança' on behalf of rural 'bailinho' groups. In sum, Terceira's Carnival is understood as a dispositif whose current practice results from its practitioners' changing relationship with space, which now showcases a heated debate on the recurring theme of the island's urban development.

### Negotiating Urban Ecologies: Activists, Authorities, and the Struggle over Environmental Narratives

*Katarzyna Krzemińska* (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Ecology has become mainstream, no longer limited to niche attitudes or specific institutional orientations. It has embedded itself in everyday life. However, the meaning of being ecological remains ambiguous. Different actors attribute diverse definitions, raising a question of power: whose interpretation ultimately prevails and becomes normative?

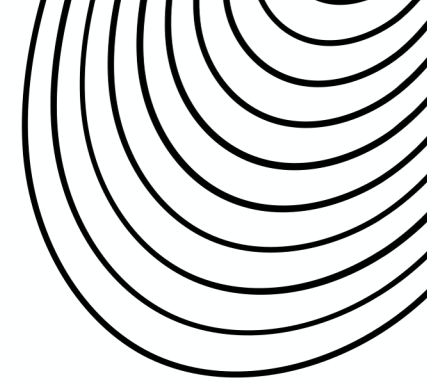
The aim of this presentation is to examine how urban environmental policies are negotiated between local authorities and activist groups. I investigate how ecological narratives are created and whether the definitions proposed by cities promote new, non-anthropocentric ways of thinking about human–non-human relations.

This presentation draws on qualitative research — a comparative case study of two Polish cities: Kraków and Wałbrzych. Methods include in-depth interviews, expert interviews, and the analysis of secondary data (statements by 2024 mayoral candidates, strategic documents). The theoretical framework is social practice theory (Schatzki 2002), which helps to explain mechanisms of change in urban policymaking.

Ecology in cities brings together a range of challenges, and what is recognized as "ecological" legitimizes official urban policies. Authorities promote their activities as ecological, while activists either support or contest these visions, shaping mutual relations. In both cases, ecology lacks a radical character and leans more toward greenwashing than genuine transformations beyond anthropocentrism.

This presentation offers insight into why, despite widespread ecological narratives, we continue to struggle with the "anthropocene lethargy" (Bińczyk 2018). Bińczyk, E. (2018). *Epoka człowieka. Retoryka i marazm antropocenu*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN. Schatzki, T.R. (2002). *The Site of the Social*. University Park: Penn State University Press.





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## 6 Intervening in the Urban World. Residents, Activist Groups and General Public as Stakeholders in the Processes of Civic Participation

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(1) University of Białystok, Poland (2) University of Łódź, Poland

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### The Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Incident through an Urban Sociological Lens

*Meriç Kırmızı (Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey)*

On 18 March 2025, Istanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu's university degree was revoked by the Istanbul University administration. The next day, he was detained and then arrested together with other managers of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality on corruption and terror charges. These incidents led to a huge series of continuous public protests both in Istanbul and other Turkish cities against the perceived attack on democracy and people's right to vote.

There are several aspects to this event. First, it is an unequal political struggle in which the candidate of the rival Republican People's Party for the next presidential election has been eliminated with this legal move. Secondly, it is a struggle for the economic resources of Istanbul as a major metropolis. The battle is also cultural and symbolic. The current Turkish state is rewriting Turkish history in its own terms and all concepts such as democracy, justice, patriotism, and truth are given their 180-degree opposite meaning and imposed on the public through institutional mechanisms such as education, law, politics, economy, media and security forces.

My aim is to look at the IMM incident of 2025 Turkey in its broader political-economic and internal socio-cultural conjuncture through an urban sociological lens and document analysis, drawing on Bourdieu's concepts, including symbolic violence, symbolic capital, and his trilogy of physical, social and symbolic space as proposed by Wacquant (2022) to understand the dynamics of cities versus authoritarianism in the contemporary era.

Reference: Wacquant, L. (2022). Bourdieu in the City: Challenging Urban Theory. Polity.

### Tensions in Urban Nature: Understanding Resident Feedback to the City of Helsinki

*Jenni Erjansola (1) (2), Mikko Niemi (2), Veikko Eranti (1)*

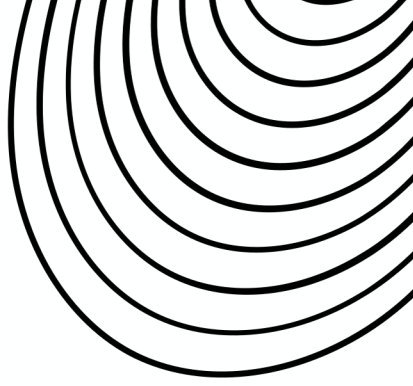
*(1) (University of Helsinki, Finland), (2) (City of Helsinki, Finland)*

Urbanization is increasing pressure on green areas in growing and densifying cities. In urban communities, more and more people, with their diverse habits and values, are also spending time in urban natural areas. This increasing use of urban nature creates tension among residents and towards local authorities administering urban environment. In this research we address the question of how the value of urban nature is defined in feedback to the City of Helsinki. Helsinki provides a distinctive study site as a Nordic capital in which forests of high ecological value exist alongside the built environment.

Our data consists of resident feedback regarding nature submitted to the municipality during the years 2015–2023. We consider this feedback to be a form of political action, whereby residents urge the city to strengthen order in nature. Using topic modeling on this vast textual data, we delve into the matters citizens consider important in their everyday lives. These focus on disturbances that appear in neighborhoods, such as fallen trees or trash.

Although previous studies have shown that urban nature has ecological value, we will show that resident feedback to the city is centered around claims related to managing harms experienced in urban nature, justified by the civic right of urban residents to use nature for the right kind of recreation. To arrive at a nuanced understanding of the tensions related to these disturbances we rely on pragmatic political sociology, scrutinizing the arguments in defining nature's worth.





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(1) University of Białystok, Poland (2) University of Łódź, Poland

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### Performing the City: Skateboarding, Spatial Appropriation and Civic Engagement

*Paul Klausning (Max Weber Centre of the University of Erfurt, Germany)*

This contribution explores how the pursuit of meaningful relations to urban space drives subcultural street skateboarding communities to engage in formal and informal urban placemaking processes. It reveals both strategies and tensions involved in subcultural participation in urban development and the dealing with spatial conflicts.

Based on qualitative fieldwork conducted in Malmö, Munich, and Bordeaux, the study shows that skateboarders consistently prefer informal, self-appropriated “skatespots” over purpose-built skateparks. Drawing on Hartmut Rosa’s relational sociology and his theory of Resonance, I argue that this preference stems from a search for urban Resonance—moments of successful Self–World connection, spatial autonomy, and self-efficacy that counteract urban alienation through embodied spatial appropriation.

The unregulated practice of skateboarding challenges functionalist planning, dominant spatial regimes, and conventional participation formats by reclaiming public space for self-directed, performative use. These practices often provoke conflict with primary stakeholders such as property owners and city administrations, resulting in bans or defensive architectural interventions.

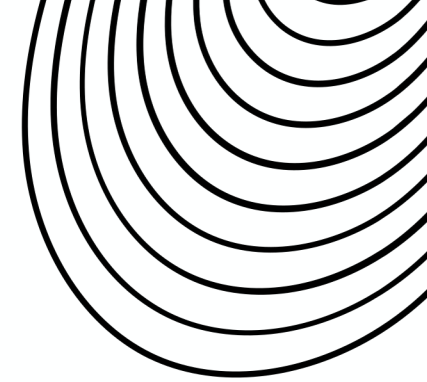
Through a comparative analysis, I examine community-based strategies developed to navigate these tensions. These range from grassroots advocacy and temporary interventions in Munich to permanent, formalized dialogue with municipal actors in Malmö and Bordeaux. The cases illustrate how street skateboarders negotiate recognition and legitimacy for their spatial practices across different urban contexts.

Overall, the study shows how non-institutional actors like street skateboarders articulate urban demands and shape the city through everyday spatial practices within and beyond conventional participation formats. As secondary stakeholders, they intervene in the urban world through contested yet meaningful engagements with public space.

### Top-down participation in urban planning and design: the role of consultants

*Terezie Lokšová (Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Czech Republic)*

In the case of top-down public participation, the role of secondary stakeholders in shaping the city is, among other factors, often influenced by the professional actors – consultants. While the academic debates generally agree that consultants play a crucial role in the current urban policies, the governance-related academic debates focus on the institutional shift towards “consultocracy” (Ylönen and Kuusela 2019), and the debates in urban planning and design tend to focus on the intermediary role of individual consultants (Eriksson et al. 2022). My research aims to bring these debates together through 27 semi-structured interviews with consultants, NGO representatives, architects, public administrators and politicians who open Czech urban planning and design projects for public participation. The presentation will show the normalised role of consultants within the Czech institutional urban setting and how it co-defines the position of secondary stakeholders, especially how their inputs, demands and objectives will be interpreted and incorporated into urban space.



# PAPERS & abstracts

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### Sustaining sites of learning beyond the university: pedagogical reflections from IIHS' Inclusive Housing Programme

*Rashee Mehra (1) and Ruchika Lall (1)*

*(1) (Indian Institute for Human Settlements, India)*

Discussions on the role of the university for public good place emphasis on the need for universities to engage in processes of knowledge co-production and co-learning, and to expand learning beyond the classroom. Other discussions draw attention to the need to unsettle the form of the university as the privileged site of knowledge production, and to engage beyond with other sites of learnings, with diverse learners that face systemic barriers to enter sites of higher education. In this paper we ask how such academic-community interventions sustain over time, where thinking about the sustenance of practice beyond the site of the university is also a question of equity and the public role of the university.

Since 2015, IIHS has been co-teaching and co-learning with housing rights activists across Indian cities, to build curricula, develop teaching tools and also co-produce research. This initiative seeks to expand the role of higher education to build capacity and learn from networks of community activists, researchers, and practitioners, who live and work within communities on housing and allied rights. This pedagogic experimentation has evolved incrementally over the years, and in its most recent form has been further structured to support the learning needs of cohorts of community activists who are working within their own communities on critical challenges of housing, planning, infrastructure and access to basic services.

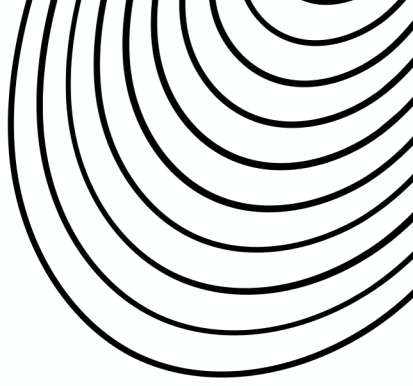
This paper reflects from the recent-most iterations of this training initiative, as a series of workshops structured over 9 months with cohorts of community activists— in Delhi (2023-24) and Indore (ongoing 2024-25) in India. We reflect from the recent iterations in both cities and from our own experience of designing, co-teaching and implementing this programme. We seek to share ways in which universities can meaningfully engage with diverse learners, who are engaged in critical practices to transform urban inequalities.

### Decentralizing Social Movements: A Look Beyond Brazil's Major Urban Centers

*Thalles Breda (1) and Fabio Sanchez (1)*

*(1) Federal University of São Carlos, Brasil*

This contribution explores how social movements emerge and operate in medium-sized Brazilian cities, focusing on São Carlos and Araraquara, municipalities with approximately 250,000 inhabitants each, located in the state of São Paulo. The aim is to analyze differences in political agendas and strategies compared to those of movements based in major urban centers. The theoretical framework draws on the field of New (or Brand new) Social Movements (Castells; Santos; Scherer-Warren; Alonso), emphasizing networked activism, broadened demands, and the construction of plural subjects. Methodologically, the research includes analysis of local news reports, academic literature review, and interviews with activists and scholars. A spatial mapping of movements is also being conducted using the MyMaps tool. Preliminary findings suggest that social movements in decentralized contexts often struggle to diversify their agendas in relation to broader urban movements, revealing the limits of New Social Movements theory. However, both local and translocal networks are emerging. In cases where movements are active in both large and medium-sized cities, agendas and strategies tend to be adapted to the local context. One major barrier to the expansion of intersectional claims—such as those related to race, gender, and sexuality—is the limited number of active participants, who are often only able to sustain the core issue initially proposed by the movement. These findings suggest a need to revise dominant theoretical models in light of the constraints and specificities of decentralized urban dynamics.



# PAPERS & abstracts

## 7 Exploring Financialisation and Urban Austerity in Ordinary Cities: A Global to Local Perspective

Chairs: Mattia Fiore (1), Carolina Mudan Marelli (1) and Maria Grazia Montesano (2)

(1) University of Bologna, Italy (2) Pacte, University of Grenoble Alpes, France

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### **Assets and wages in the urban realm: financialization and rentierization in a Southern periphery**

*Ana Drago (Centro de Estudos Sociais da Universidade de Coimbra, Portugal)*

In the last decade, debates on financialization and rentierization of housing have often mingled to account for present-day neoliberal capitalism. However, the role of labour regimes in prompting these processes has received less attention. Building on a dialogue between theoretical proposals on financialization, rentierization and post-Keynesian perspectives, this presentation explores if analytical purchase can be gained by conceiving financialization and rentierization as two different growth regimes that emerged from post-crisis austerity as labour devaluation. With this approach, the presentation discusses Portuguese economy post-crisis passage from a property driven debt-led financialization to a property-led rentierization, scaffolded on external demand and low-paid rent-led economic activities, such as tourism. Relying on this analysis, I also discuss the limits of all-encompassing perspectives on financialization and rentierization and their asymmetrical geographies in the context of the political and institutional arrangements of the Eurozone.

### **Poverty Business and Housing Precarity: Financialised Housing and the Urban Politics of Poverty in Brno**

*Kateřina Čanigová (Masaryk University, Czech Republic)*

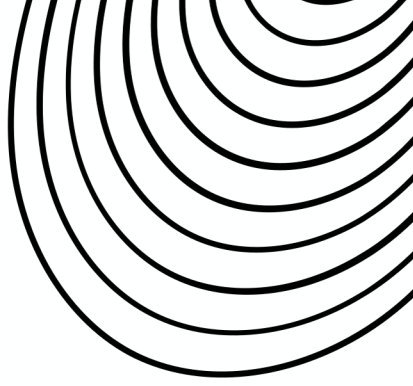
This paper examines how financialisation and urban austerity regimes materialise in the ordinary city of Brno, Czech Republic, through the phenomenon of “poverty business.” Based on ethnographic fieldwork with Roma women and local stakeholders, it explores how the rental of substandard “private hostels”—largely financed by housing benefits—illustrates the spatial consequences of financialised housing systems. In Brno, austerity is not only economic but moralised, shifting from social protection to punitive governance under the guise of “fighting poverty businessmen.”

The commodification of inadequate housing and the rise of predatory debt practices—facilitated by welfare transfers—constitute a structural form of urban exploitation. These policies intensify housing precarity, particularly for racialised and gendered populations, and reflect a broader neoliberal logic in which welfare functions less as support and more as a tool of social control.

While the state presents itself as a regulator, it simultaneously enables and sustains exploitative housing markets. Brno’s shifting policy landscape—from progressive housing initiatives to punitive reforms—reveals how financialisation penetrates local governance, even outside global city contexts.

This study demonstrates how observing financialisation and austerity in ordinary cities offers critical insights into how global economic logics are embedded in everyday urban practices and policies. By centering participatory visual methodology and the lived experiences and strategies of Roma women, the research highlights both the impacts of and resistance to these processes. It offers a grounded lens on how urban value, governance, and agency are contested in marginalised spaces under financial capitalism.





# PAPERS & abstracts

## 7 Exploring Financialisation and Urban Austerity in Ordinary Cities: A Global to Local Perspective

Chairs: Mattia Fiore (1), Carolina Mudan Marelli (1) and Maria Grazia Montesano (2)

(1) University of Bologna, Italy (2) Pacte, University of Grenoble Alpes, France

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### Who shapes urban innovation through the triple helix model, and how?

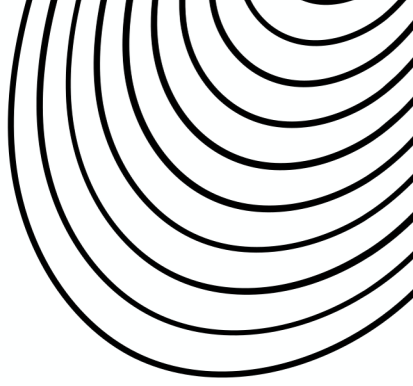
*Şüheda Köse (Izmir Institute of Technology, Turkey)*

The Triple Helix has emerged as a key conceptual model for understanding how the interaction between universities, industry, and government fosters innovation and drives socio-economic transformation. While majority of the existing literature focuses on its theoretical foundations, implementation methods, and contributions to innovation systems, the relationship between the model and urban innovation remains relatively underexplored. This paper investigates how urban innovation is shaped by knowledge interactions among the Triple Helix actors and theorizes how these actors participate in its governance.

Drawing on the roles of local actors, the paper proposes a typology of three distinct generations to understand the evolving nature of the Triple Helix interactions in urban innovation. The first-generation triple helix model is defined direct interaction among the three primary actors. The second-generation expands upon this by incorporating multiple layers of interaction among the three main actors and intermediary institutions. The third generation is characterized by circular, networked interactions that build on second-generation structures to enable more complex, iterative innovation processes.

Throughout this generations, the study contributes to understanding who shapes and governs urban innovation through the Triple Helix model. It also sheds light on practical insights into how these dynamics can be applied across various urban context - from ordinary cities to global urban hubs. Ultimately, the paper contributes to the conceptual foundation for the sustainable development and localized adaptation of Triple Helix models in diverse urban environments.

This presentation is funded by TUBITAK 2214-A.



# PAPERS & abstracts

## 8 Life Course Dynamics and Contemporary Residential Mobilities: People, Places and Practices Across Urbanized and Urbanizing Spaces

Chairs: Katarzyna Kajdanek (1) and Cornelia Toppel (2)

(1) University of Wrocław, Poland (2) Research Institute for Regional and Urban Development - ILS, Dortmund, Germany

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### **It just worked out that way...' Residential multilocality as a voluntary and involuntary practice of the inhabitants of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship**

*Barbara Jaczewska (University of Warsaw, Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies, Poland)*

After the constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, people's mobility has picked up again. At the same time, new trends have emerged, such as the rise of remote working and the search for alternative, often multilocal modes of residence that balance work and personal time. However, not all shifts towards multilocal and mobile living arrangements are always voluntary; sometimes they are linked to spatially unequal access to labour resources, affordable housing or the natural environment.

In this presentation, I take a closer look at the phenomenon of multilocal residence considered as "vita activa" carried out in two or more locations. I discuss the practices of three groups of respondents declaring a multilocal residency: those who are determined to live in one place and give up multilocality; those who are unsure of their future place of residence; and those who want to continue living multilocally. I intend to answer the question: what are the differences and similarities between the different groups in terms of motives, spatial behaviour, local involvement and perceptions of their situation.

The presentation is based on a CAWI survey (n=996) conducted in 2023. The analyses showed that a substantial proportion of respondents treat multilocality as a temporary and not fully voluntary practice, which does not go unnoticed in their declarations related to spatial behaviour, motives, engagement and assessment of their situation. Respondents point in particular to the importance of spatial inequalities in access to the labour market, housing and education, forcing multi-local residency.

### **Suburbanisation from a Life Course Perspective**

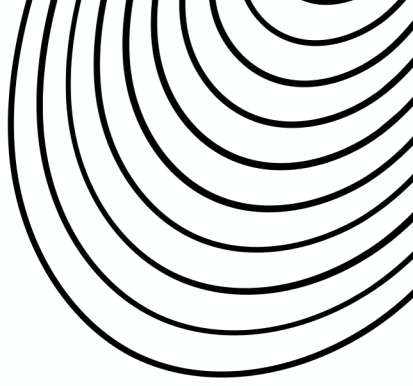
*Márton Bagyura (1) and Adrienne Csizmady (2)*

*(1) (University of Pécs, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Communication and Media Studies; HUN-REN Centre for Social Sciences, Hungary) (2) (Institute of Sociology, HUN-REN Centre for Social Sciences, Budapest, Hungary)*

Over the past three decades, suburbanisation has become one of the most significant socio-spatial phenomena in the metropolitan regions of Central and Eastern Europe. To understand the transformation and development of suburban villages, several research projects have investigated the drivers and motivations behind migration from cities to surrounding rural settlements. These studies suggest the presence of both 'push factors' that drive people out of cities, and 'pull factors' that attract them to suburban areas.

While the life course perspective is frequently employed in migration and mobility research, it is rarely applied in studies focusing specifically on urban-to-suburban migration. This study explores how life course events influence residential mobility from cities to suburbs, using the Budapest Metropolitan Area (BMA) as a case study. The analysis is based on 40 semi-structured interviews conducted with residents of suburban villages in the BMA, collected in two waves: in 2012 and 2021.

The research yielded three key findings: (1) moving from the city to suburban areas is often triggered by two major life events: marriage (or the intention to start a family) and the birth of a child; (2) while these events shape the intention to relocate, economic considerations, such as lower housing prices in the suburbs, also play a significant role in the final decision; and (3) individuals with rural backgrounds often use these life transitions as an opportunity to return to a more rural environment.



# PAPERS & abstracts

## 8 Life Course Dynamics and Contemporary Residential Mobilities: People, Places and Practices Across Urbanized and Urbanizing Spaces

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### Digital Transition and Shifting Urban Hierarchies: Remote Work, Residential Mobility, and Socio-Spatial Inequalities in Post-COVID Estonia

*Raul Garcia Estevez (University of Tartu, Estonia)*

Estonia's rapid digital transition, pioneered through public-private sector collaboration since its post-socialist independence, has positioned it as a unique case-study for examining how remote work reshapes residential mobility and urban hierarchies. Focusing on the precedent of the COVID-19 pandemic as a driver of telework, this longitudinal study investigates how Estonia's residential patterns differ by life-course dynamics and partner interdependencies in relation to the Digital Transition. Through a longitudinal panel dataset, this research studies the socio-demographic profiles (ethnicity, income, gender, and marital status) of individuals most and least impacted by the DT, defined by their telework capacity, and the distinct shifts in terms of residential mobility between Estonian urban hierarchies using multinomial regression modelling, and spatial analysis. Preliminary results reveal divergent residential patterns between non-teleworking and dual-teleworking couples, and between genders (male-only vs. female-only teleworks). Teleworkers are significantly more likely to locate in suburban environments compared to non-teleworkers, reflecting remote work's decentralizing effect. Gendered asymmetries further shape outcomes: male-teleworking couples disproportionately locate in rural areas, whereas female-teleworking couples tend to remain in urban/suburban settings. This could reflect existing gender inequalities where non-teleworking men are able to anchor teleworking women in urban or suburban environments, whereas male-teleworking couples counter urbanise. This research contributes to debates on shifting urban centralities by detangling how the DT reconfigures monocentric systems like Estonia, creating new peripheries and hybrid urban-rural practices. Furthermore, the socio-economic variables included in this study characterise the Digital Divide in Estonia and its effect on residential mobility.

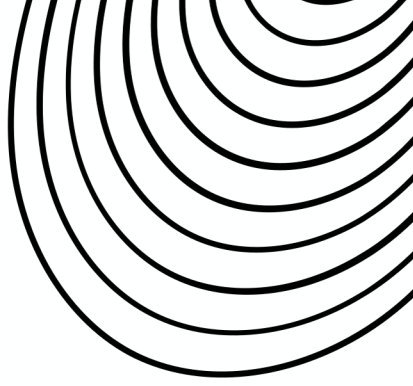
### Urban Growth and Housing Permanence: The Case of 18'ler Apartment in Ankara's Balgat Neighborhood

*Cicek Coskun (Baskent University, Turkey)*

David Harvey (2000: 211) argues that capitalism constantly reshapes geographical spaces to ensure its sustainability. This dynamic is clearly visible in Ankara's Balgat neighborhood, which has transformed from a rural village into an urban district—initially as a residential area, and later dominated by business centers. Amid this transformation, the 18'ler Apartment stands out as a rare case of resistance. Built nearly 50 years ago and named after its 18 residential units, it has retained its residential function despite being surrounded by private schools, corporate offices, and heavy traffic. Some families have lived there for three generations, with descendants of former residents returning to live in the building. This study examines why residents choose to remain in this rapidly changing environment, using the 18'ler Apartment as a case study. In-depth interviews with 12 residents reveal that the main reasons for staying are the building's central location and its unusually large garden. Surrounded by mature fruit trees, the garden provides a valuable outdoor space—especially for elderly residents—and supports small-scale gardening, preserving traces of Balgat's rural past. From the perspective of ecological theory, Balgat's commercial transformation reflects a natural pattern of urban evolution. However, the continued residential use of the 18'ler Apartment highlights that housing and community life can persist even amid intense urban pressure. This study shows that spaces of continuity and resistance can exist within rapidly transforming urban landscapes.

References: Harvey, D. (2000) Spaces of Hope. University of California Press





# PAPERS & abstracts

## 8 Life Course Dynamics and Contemporary Residential Mobilities: People, Places and Practices Across Urbanized and Urbanizing Spaces

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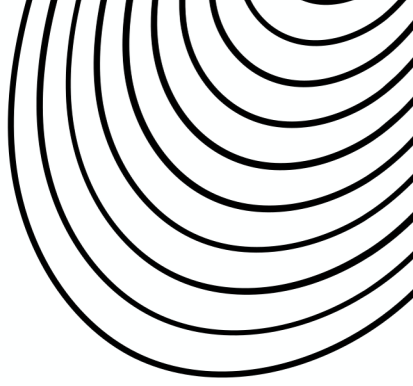
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### Migrants city-making in medium-sized cities in Northern Italy: the case of Legnano

*Bianca Turati (University of Urbino "Carlo Bo", Italy)*

The installation of migrants in Italy has expanded into previously less-affected rural and urban areas, notably in Lombardy's Alto Milanese region. Increasingly, small and medium-sized municipalities, beyond Milan's borders, now host migrant populations exceeding 10%, driven by asylum policies and migrants' choices for settlement. This creates a "superdiversity," characterized by varied origins, legal statuses, language skills, ages, and durations of residence, as described by Vertovec. Concurrently, these cities are becoming interconnected within globalization processes, experiencing deindustrialization and transitioning toward the tertiary sector. Urban development involves transforming former industrial sites into residential and commercial spaces, with a trend toward financialization, marked by increased private investment and decreasing public involvement.

This paper forms part of a three-year PhD project examining how migrants engage with neoliberal urban transformations in Legnano, situated in the Alto Milanese region, aiming at emphasizing their dual role as influenced and active participants in city development. Grounded in Çağlar and Glick Schiller's framework, it views migrants as city-makers—social actors shaping urban regeneration through their emplacement, which links space, power, and social processes. The research aims to evaluate the relevance of emplacement and city-making concepts in contexts like Legnano, which operate at a different scale than cities studied previously but are similarly affected by neoliberal restructuring and the search for a post-industrial identity. A literature review and critical analysis of migrant settlement trajectories in Alto Milanese will inform understanding of how migrants contribute to urban change and economic competitiveness amidst ongoing social and spatial transformations.



# PAPERS & abstracts

## 9 Digital Neighbourhoods, Overlooked Communities? Online Communication, Social Capital, and the Reconfiguration of Social and Spatial Distances

Chairs: Jan Üblacker (1), Niccolò Morelli (2), Nerea Viana Alzola (3) and Maxime Felder (4)

(1) University of Applied Science for Housing and Real Estate, Bochum, Germany, (2) University of Genoa, Italy, (3) University of Geneva, Switzerland, (4) Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne - EPFL, Switzerland

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### Who Uses Digital Neighborhood Platforms - And for what? Results from a Survey in Munich

*Jan Üblacker (1) and Michael Hanslmeier (2)*

*(1) (EBZ Business School, Bochum Germany), (2) (Nuremberg Technical University of Applied Science, Germany)*

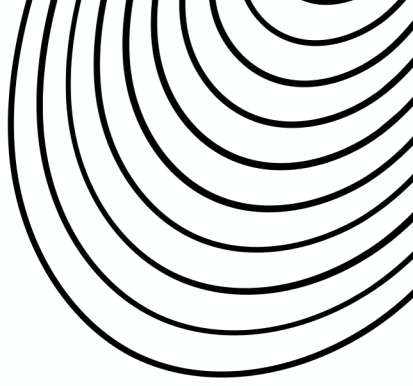
Online neighbourhood groups and digital neighbourhood platforms are increasingly recognised for their potential to promote local social capital and cohesion. However, little is known about who uses these platforms and under what conditions they facilitate social support and access to neighbourhood information. This paper addresses this gap by examining individual and contextual predictors of digital neighbourhood platform (DNP) use and the different purposes for which they are used. Our analysis draws on data from a representative 2021 survey of Munich residents (N = 7,073; response rate 34%), conducted in twelve languages and accessible by mail or online. The survey captured four different forms of DNP use using a multi-item scale: (1) exchanging goods, (2) giving/receiving help, (3) meeting neighbours and (4) attending events. Four logistic regression models show that predictors of platform use vary by type of engagement. Key findings include: people in more deprived situations are more likely to use DNPs; previous experience with using digital services strongly predicts use, highlighting the importance of digital skills; and families with children are frequent users, but not necessarily to meet neighbours. Migrants are more likely to use DNPs to get to know their neighbours, while people with low perceived social support appear to use DNPs as a compensatory strategy to meet new people and give/receive help. There is little evidence that the 'objective' neighbourhood context is important. While subjective perceptions of neighbourhood social cohesion are positively associated with the use of digital neighbourhood platforms, 'objective' criteria such as the unemployment rate or the proportion of foreigners in a neighbourhood are not significant.

### 'You know you're from Le Lignon if...' Negotiating neighbourhood belonging on social media

*Maxime Felder (1) and Nerea Viana Alzola (2)*

*(1) (EPFL - Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne, Switzerland), (2) (University of Geneva, Switzerland)*

Online neighbourhood groups and digital neighbourhood platforms are increasingly recognised for their potential to promote local social capital and cohesion. However, little is known about who uses these platforms and under what conditions they facilitate social support and access to neighbourhood information. This paper addresses this gap by examining individual and contextual predictors of digital neighbourhood platform (DNP) use and the different purposes for which they are used. Our analysis draws on data from a representative 2021 survey of Munich residents (N = 7,073; response rate 34%), conducted in twelve languages and accessible by mail or online. The survey captured four different forms of DNP use using a multi-item scale: (1) exchanging goods, (2) giving/receiving help, (3) meeting neighbours and (4) attending events. Four logistic regression models show that predictors of platform use vary by type of engagement. Key findings include: people in more deprived situations are more likely to use DNPs; previous experience with using digital services strongly predicts use, highlighting the importance of digital skills; and families with children are frequent users, but not necessarily to meet neighbours. Migrants are more likely to use DNPs to get to know their neighbours, while people with low perceived social support appear to use DNPs as a compensatory strategy to meet new people and give/receive help. There is little evidence that the 'objective' neighbourhood context is important. While subjective perceptions of neighbourhood social cohesion are positively associated with the use of digital neighbourhood platforms, 'objective' criteria such as the unemployment rate or the proportion of foreigners in a neighbourhood are not significant.



# PAPERS & abstracts

## 9 Digital Neighbourhoods, Overlooked Communities? Online Communication, Social Capital, and the Reconfiguration of Social and Spatial Distances

Chairs: Jan Üblacker (1), Niccolò Morelli (2), Nerea Viana Alzola (3) and Maxime Felder (4)

(1) University of Applied Science for Housing and Real Estate, Bochum, Germany, (2) University of Genoa, Italy, (3) University of Geneva, Switzerland, (4) Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne - EPFL, Switzerland

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### Digital Spaces, Local Places: Understanding Online Neighborhood Groups as Local Networked Publics

*Simon Liebig (1) and Jan Üblacker (2)*

(1) (ILS - Research Institute for Regional and Urban Development gGmbH, Germany), (2) (EBZ - Europäisches Bildungszentrum der Wohnungs- und Immobilienwirtschaft, Bochum, Germany)

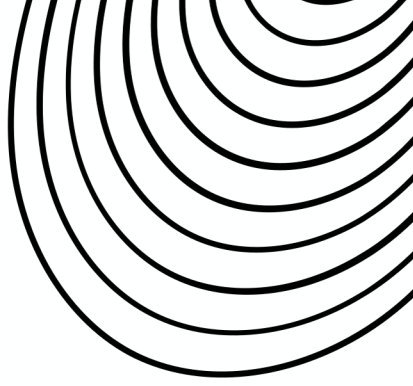
Online neighborhood groups have become increasingly important spaces for local communication and interaction. Using theoretical lenses of networked publics and geographies of encounter, we aim to improve conceptual understanding of these digital spaces. Based on 20 qualitative interviews with residents in Cologne-Ehrenfeld, we analyze how imaginations of space shape group accessibility and how interactions occur under conditions of virtual co-presence. Our findings demonstrate that online neighborhood groups represent a specific form of local networked publics, where the defining characteristic is the reference to a geographical location. This location serves as both a symbolic link between group members and the content-related focal point of communication. The geographical reference establishes boundaries for participation and shapes communication norms within these digital spaces. This research contributes to both encounter research and digital neighborhood studies by offering conceptual insights for understanding online neighborhood groups as distinct spaces of local interaction and communication, revealing the complex relationship between virtual co-presence and physical space in urban contexts.

### Digital Neighbourhoods, Overlooked Communities? Points for discussion

*Niccolò Morelli (University of Genoa, Italy)*

Building on the insights from the three preceding research presentations—as well as his own work—NM will introduce key points for discussion on how digital technologies are reshaping neighborhood relations. He will open the floor for a collective dialogue on what the widespread use of locally oriented social media, messaging apps, forums, and online neighborhood groups means for urban sociology—particularly in terms of methods and approaches to studying social ties, community, and place.





# PAPERS & abstracts

## 10 The Relationship between Urban Social Infrastructures and the Public Life of Cities

Chairs: Meriç Kırılmaz (1)

(1) Ondokuz Mayıs University, Samsun, Turkey

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### “Pieces of a really positive jigsaw... in a microcosm of madness”: Social infrastructure provisioning and austerity in decentred urban geographies

*Liz Edwards (Liverpool John Moores University, United Kingdom)*

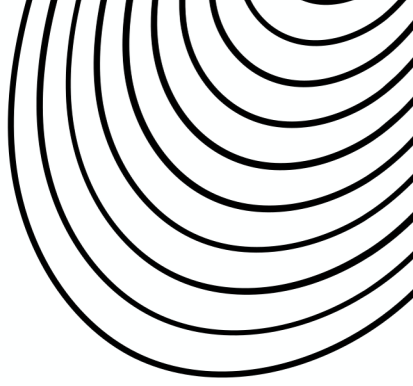
This paper empirically examines the impact of neoliberal urban governance on social infrastructure in Bootle, a deindustrialised town on the periphery of Liverpool, Northwest England. Towns and their unique social dynamics have gained significant importance in UK urban policy due to recent political flashpoints. These events exposed regional inequalities and the plight of ‘left behind’ neighbourhoods, with Brexit and the rise of political populism summarised by Rodríguez-Pose (2018) as the ‘revenge of places that don’t matter’. Using a mixed methods place-based case study approach, the research examines the nuanced effects of austerity measures on Bootle’s social fabric. Social infrastructure is used as a conceptual framework to foreground the issue of provisioning, investigating how local authority, commercial, and community-led public spaces coalesce as infrastructure within a distinct, decentred urban geography. In conjunction with other methods, auto-photography is utilised to capture residents’ lived experiences, providing visual insights into valued spaces including ‘under-the-radar’, informal social infrastructures. Findings reveal multiple ways in which austerity reshapes not only the governance, funding, and provision of social infrastructure, but also how it is accessed, valued and experienced by citizens. Although rooted in its own context, as a holistic representative case, Bootle shares key urban challenges of deprivation, visible decline, and competition for resources with other deindustrialised, periphery towns, making the findings relevant to similar geographies. This analysis contributes to the discourse on neoliberal urban governance, regional inequalities, and social equity, emphasising the critical role of diverse social infrastructures in sustaining community wellbeing and resilience amidst austerity.

### Social Infrastructures and Urban Livability in Urban Space “in the middle”: Insights from an Ongoing Comparative Study in Italy

*Antonello Podda (1) and Marcello Cabria (1)*

(1) (University of Cagliari, Italy)

This contribution presents preliminary findings from a research project funded by Italy’s PRIN program “GC-LIFES. Grounded cities. Liveability, Foundational Economy and urban Space of cities in the middle”, focusing on three Italian medium-sized urban areas: Cagliari, Catania and Lecce. The project aims to address a significant gap in urban studies: the limited attention given to medium-sized cities, particularly those outside major economic and technological innovation flows. These “middle” spaces—neither rural nor metropolitan—are often overlooked despite their social and cultural vitality. Adopting a theoretical framework grounded in the principles of the Foundational Economy, the research explores how social infrastructures—alongside income and essential services—serve as critical pillars of urban livability. Our empirical analysis investigates the availability, accessibility, and perceived quality of social infrastructures in the selected cities, assessing their impact on citizens’ well-being and everyday life, using a mixed-method (quanti-qualitative) approach. This includes in-depth interviews with key local actors, survey data collected from residents, and the analysis of both local and national databases. Through this methodology, we aim to capture both the material availability and the lived experience of social infrastructures. By examining these dynamics through a comparative lens, the study sheds light on how local transformations, global/local competition, and urban space usage intersect to shape the lived experience of residents. Ultimately, the research seeks to identify conditions that can enhance livability and promote a just transition in urban areas that are “in the middle”—spatially, economically, and socially.



# PAPERS & abstracts

## 10 The Relationship between Urban Social Infrastructures and the Public Life of Cities

Chairs: Meriç Kirmızı (1)

(1) Ondokuz Mayıs University, Samsun, Turkey

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### Lifelong learning in the cultural institution and in the space of the city: availability, identity and opportunities

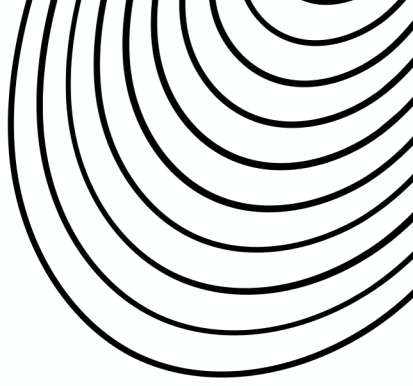
*Helena Jedrzejczak (Educational Research Institute - National Research Institut, Warsaw, Poland)*

Lifelong learning is one of the key elements of modern life and a condition for building social capital. In the study I carried out, I assumed that it is also one of the aspects of using the city. Therefore - like other public services - it should be universally accessible. The study which I'll present was concerned with the role that cultural institutions, the city as an organism and its space itself play in adult learning. Eight Polish cities were analysed, in which a total of 40 walking interviews, 51 IDIs and 4 FGIs were carried out. The participants were representatives of cultural institutions and people using their offer. In this paper, I will present one of the cities – Łódź (ca. 600,000 inhabitants). I will present the image of the city of Łódź as a space for learning, supported both by cultural institutions and selected elements of the space. I will show how institutions and the city space itself build and at the same time reflect the city's identity, the accessibility of selected institutions and the opportunities they create for its inhabitants. On the other hand, I will also present atypical places, indicated by the respondents as related to their personal learning: 'forbidden' gates on the main street, an old cinema, or a square which revitalisation leaves much to be desired. I will refer to the concept of lifelong learning (OECD 2007), Chicago School (Wirth, 1938; Park, 1925) and urban theories related to the use of the city (Gehl, 2014).

### Neighbour relations in Helsinki

*Jukka Hirvonen (City of Helsinki, Urban research and statistics, Finland)*

Neighbour relations form an essential part of human social networks. Good neighbourly relations can be of great importance to the residents' quality of life, mental health, and sense of security. Neighbourly relations are typically so-called weak ties, based more on acquaintance than on deep friendship. This paper examines neighbour relations based on extensive survey data collected in Helsinki. In our survey, we asked about chatting relations and neighbourly help. Mutual neighbourly help represents a micro-level self-organization of residents. It is local, spontaneous and voluntary. It cannot be planned much from above. We used logistic regression analysis to investigate which background factors and features of respondents predicted the prevalence of different types of neighbour relationships. In addition, we examined the prevalence of neighbour relations in different types of residential areas: socio-economically disadvantaged vs. well-off neighbourhoods, or peripheral vs. centrally located neighbourhoods. Chatting relations with the neighbours were common: more than half of the respondents chatted at least once a week with their neighbours. Chatting relations were the most common among people of retirement age, those who have lived in the area for a long time, owner-occupiers, terraced house occupants and two-parent families with children. Neighbourly help was quite common as well: 30 percent of the respondents participated in it at least once a month. Participation in neighbourly help was the most common among terraced house occupants, middle-aged residents and two-parent families with children.



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## 10 The Relationship between Urban Social Infrastructures and the Public Life of Cities

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### Geographies of Fear: Student Perceptions of Sexual Harassment and Informal Social Infrastructures Around the University of Coimbra

*Daniela Sofia Neto* (University of Coimbra, Portugal)

Sexual harassment in higher education (HE) has become a central concern in recent feminist and sociological research, particularly for its role in shaping access to and experiences of public space related to HE. This paper examines how undergraduate students at the University of Coimbra perceive sexual harassment in the urban areas surrounding the campus, drawing on the concept of the geography of fear and a feminist framework. Sexual harassment is understood as unwanted sexual attention (MacKinnon, 1979) and is often normalized in public spaces, despite being a form of gendered violence. It functions as a spatial and social mechanism of control that limits women's presence, safety, and sense of belonging in everyday life (Bowman, 1993). This study is based on a thematic analysis of focus group discussions held in two periods (2019/2020 and 2024/2025), involving gender-specific and mixed groups. While women describe navigating public spaces through fear, hypervigilance, and avoidance strategies, men often express unawareness of these constraints. The temporal comparison highlights both continuities in how fear is experienced and the emergence of new concerns shaped by social movements (e.g., #MeToo, Slutwalks) and the digital circulation of narratives on sexual violence. This paper conceptualizes gendered fear as part of an informal social infrastructure that silently organizes how urban public spaces are used, avoided, and narrated. By framing harassment as a territorial and collective process, it contributes to debates on public life, visibility, and the right to the city. It also calls on universities to extend protective strategies beyond campus boundaries.

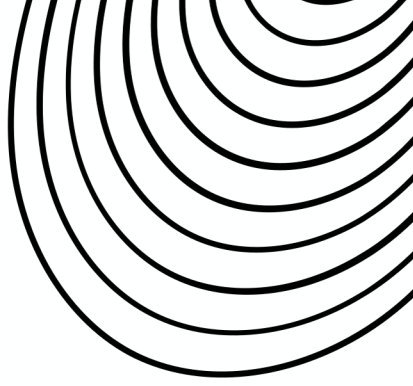
### Urban Health Infrastructures and the Remaking of Publicness: Mapping Care in Rome and Bologna

*Sara Vallerani* (1) and *Maddalena Crotti* (2)

(1) (University of Geneva, Switzerland), (2) (University of Bologna, Italy)

This paper investigates how health becomes a dimension of urban public life by analysing processes of mapping urban care infrastructures in two Italian cities—Rome and Bologna. These mappings identify and visualise the distributed landscape of formal and informal care resources across urban territories, serving both operational and political functions. Moving beyond epidemiological frameworks and institutional healthcare systems, the study conceptualizes urban health infrastructures as social infrastructures: dynamic assemblages of actors, spaces, practices, and representations that shape access to care and urban life. Theoretically, the paper draws on scholarship on social infrastructure (Fourier, 2006; Hall, 2020; Klinenberg, 2018), publicness (Korn et al., 2019), and public sociology (Bifulco, Borghi, 2023). It argues that urban health infrastructures are not merely service delivery systems but socio-political configurations in which the meaning of “public” is constantly reshaped. The research adopts a qualitative case study approach focused on two mapping initiatives: one led by a local health authority in Rome, and one developed by the university in Bologna. Data collection combined participant observation, semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and participatory workshops. These mappings are not only technical tools but processes that produce visibility, negotiate legitimacy, and activate local knowledge and political imagination. Preliminary findings suggest that mapping becomes a generative practice that reconfigures relationships among institutions, communities, and urban space, opening new fields of collaboration and conflict. Building on this, the paper shifts from the modern infrastructural ideal (Graham & Marvin, 2001) to an analysis of infrastructuring as a dynamic process. This perspective shows how infrastructures intervene in fragmented urban realities or emerge from alternative practices (De Nicola, 2024). By focusing on mapping as a situated practice of infrastructuring, the paper highlights how cities can become laboratories for reimagining care (Alam and Huston, 2020), participation, and public value.





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Chairs: Meriç Kirmızı (1)

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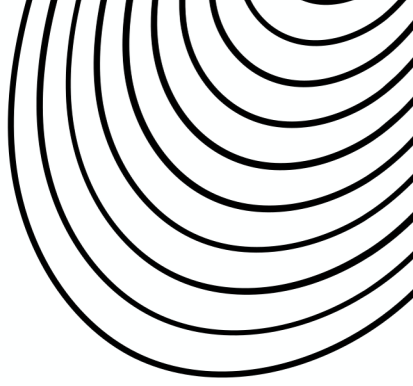
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### The public life of Braga's Market. A place of memory, liminality, imagination and conviviality

*Helena Pires (1) and Zara Pinto-Coelho (1)*

*(1) (Universidade do Minho / CECS, Portugal)*

Contrary to the imperatives of speed (Didi-Huberman, 2017; Virilio, 2000)., functionality and financial sustainability (Canclini, 1983), there are many strategies, both individual and institutional, that have been adopted to protect the public places in cities that are still open to leisure, to being with others, to the communion of the senses, to the reinvention of culture (Black, 2012; Blackledge & Creese, 2019; De La Pradelle, 2006; Lindenfeld, 1985; Martín-Barbero, 1981; Mayes, 2014; ). Alongside the affinities that allow us to discuss markets in their various associations of meaning, we discover, in each of these places, a unique and moving way of producing a sense of place (Malpas, 2009; Massey, 1994; Relph, 1976/2008; Tuan, 1983), based on the routine practices of planting, distributing, selling/buying, and ultimately of nurturing, feeling and being in common (Stavrides, 2016/2021). With this proposal, we aim to highlight the role of markets in producing the common sense of public life, in urban contexts, and the many senses of place that are reinvented there. In particular, the main results of an ethnographic fieldwork, developed by the authors between January 2021 and July 2022, during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown, in Braga's Market, will be discussed. Our research illustrates that Braga's Market is a place of memory (Candau, 2005/2013; Halbwachs, 1925/2006) liminality, imagination and conviviality (Illich. 1973). A place where multiculturalism and common sensuality emerge. Going to the Market, selling in the Market or working there means more than just fulfilling a functional purpose, more than just surrendering oneself to the mechanics that organize and structure everyday life.



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## 11 Spatial Discontinuity and Urban Identity

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### A taste of place. How mobility practices, social positions and national belonging shape individuals' local preferences in border regions.

*Alexis Gumy (Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research - LISER. Luxembourg)*

Quantitative research on spatial mobility in European border regions has traditionally focused on its consequences for either (trans)national belonging (Van Houtum 2004) or socio spatial inequalities (Edzes 2022), thereby overlooking the interdependencies between these two domains. However, the enduring presence of historical, institutional, economic, and territorial differences in close proximity provides an original opportunity to investigate how local belonging stems from social inequalities and their materialization in physical space, as well as the mere presence of a border nearby (Clément et al. 2023). This contribution follows this program from an urban studies perspective and relies on a substantial, transnational survey (N = 3'206) conducted in the Greater Geneva, the Lille-Kortrijk-Courtrai Eurometropolis and the Basque Eurocity. This is achieved by examining a vignette experiment (Hainmueller et al. 2015) in which respondents were assigned the task of recommending places to live on either side of their border regions, based on various profiles with different expectations presented to them. These recommendations derive from sorting practices that manifest individual tastes for respondents' cross-border environments and delineate a local hierarchy between (un)suitable places. To what extent does this process of categorization superimpose itself on national boundaries? Two complementary hypotheses will be examined. (H1.) The scope of place recommendation can be (trans)national depending on everyday mobility patterns, given the latter socialization effects. (H2.) Individual spatial preferences translate social inequalities and uneven dispositions towards cross-border integration or national belonging. Exploring these hypotheses will ultimately question the (un)boundedness of the population's tastes of places in cross-border regions.

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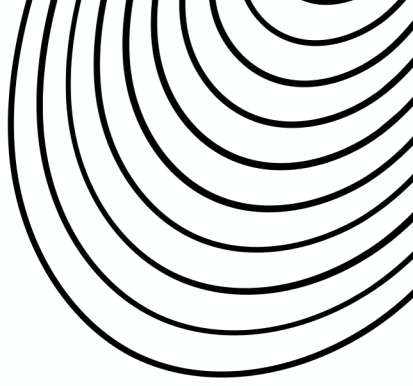
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van Houtum, H., van der Velde, M., 2004. The Power of Cross-Border Labour Market Immobility. Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie 95, 100–107. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0040-747X.2004.00296.x>

### From Collective Retreat to Curated Desire: Shifting Urban Imaginaries in Post-Socialist Housing Advertisements

*Dalia Čiupailaitė-Višnevskā (Vilnius university, Lithuania)*

This presentation analyzes advertisements for housing projects in Vilnius, Lithuania as spatial and narrative structures shaped by the transition from state socialism to market-driven urban development. Drawing on Henri Lefebvre's triad of space, housing projects are examined as representations of space—not merely as material shelters, but as sites of ideology, aspiration, and social ordering, as media through which values, social imaginaries, and urban practices are constructed. Advertisements are treated as cultural texts that reflect and shape collective values and identities, offering visions of desirable urban life and informing understandings of home, city, and community. The dataset consists of 420 housing projects from two periods (2000–2013 and 2014–2022), whose promotional websites were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Findings show a sharp increase in gated developments, with enclosure present in 95% of projects built between 2014–2022. Early themes include social homogeneity, privatized control, and the framing of housing as a self-contained, managed environment, separated from the perceived disorder of the city. Privatism emerges as the dominant urban logic. In the later period, discourses shift toward post-material values—individualism, eco-luxury, and slowness—while spatial separation remains central. Imaginaries of the city shift from fear to curated urban desire. In both periods, representations of nature are salient but evolve in meaning. These findings highlight how privatization reconfigures urban space, contributing to fragmentation and spatial discontinuity, and reshaping narratives of belonging in the contemporary city.



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### Memory and Loss as Urban Resistance: Spatial Discontinuity and the Afterlife of Bairro do Relógio

*Denise Santos (1) and Graça Cordeiro (2)*

*(1) (CIES-Iscte / NOVA FCSH & Iscte-IUL, Lisbon, Portugal), (2) (Iscte-IUL, Lisbon, Portugal)*

This paper investigates how memory and loss shape urban identity in the aftermath of spatial discontinuity, focusing on the case of Bairro do Relógio, a Lisbon neighborhood demolished nearly thirty years ago. Originally constructed in the 1960s to temporarily house families displaced by infrastructural development, the neighborhood was never meant to endure. Yet for its former residents, it remains a vital emotional and symbolic territory. rounded in urban ethnography, archival research, interviews, and digital fieldwork, the study explores how memory becomes a means of countering the loss of physical space. Since 2011, former residents have used online platforms and community gatherings to reanimate the shared experience of place, reconfiguring belonging through acts of remembrance. These practices do not merely recall the past; they actively resist the erasure of collective identity. In this context, memory and loss are not opposites, but co-constitutive forces: loss provokes the activation of memory, and memory gives meaning to loss. Together, they produce a narrative continuity that challenges the rupture caused by demolition. This case reveals how the affective and social dimensions of memory can reconstruct urban identity even in the absence of built space. et against the broader backdrop of Lisbon's urban redevelopment and displacement dynamics, this paper, based on a master dissertation (Santos, 2024) offers insight into how marginalized communities preserve their histories and negotiate symbolic survival. It calls for renewed attention to memory work as a response to spatial fragmentation and as a form of everyday urban resilience.

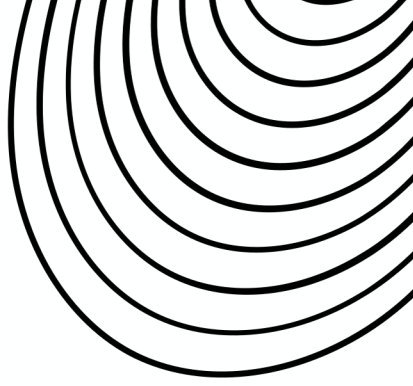
### Issues of spatial (dis)continuity. Terceira island and its Carnival

*Marxiano Melotti (1) and Francisco Sousa (2)*

*(1) Niccolò Cusano University, Rome, Italy, (2) (University of the Azores, Interdisciplinary Center for Social Sciences, CISC.UAc/CISC.NOVA.UAc, Portugal)*

"There are eight islands in the Azores and an amusement park." With this ironic phrase the local people refer to Terceira, an island that stands out for its rich festive culture, especially the Carnival. This "festive identity" supports a dynamic network of relations: between the parishes of Terceira, with its main city Angra do Heroísmo, through the Azores and beyond, to mainland Portugal and the whole world. Its Carnival, included in the national inventory of Portuguese intangible cultural heritage and proposed to UNESCO's list of intangible world heritage, is a good lens to examine the treatment of peripherality, insularity and global membership. The roughly circular shape of Terceira promotes internal mobility and reduces divisions between urban and rural realities, contributing to a spatial continuity reflected by carnival performances. For four days, theatrical performances (known as "danças" and "bailinhos"), which combine satire, music and dance, are staged in more than 30 locations on the island, with a large participation of the community. This continuity was interrupted in January 2024, when an earthquake severely damaged the coastal road between Serreta and Raminho (the only uninhabited stretch of the island), interrupting a symbolic and practical ring. Analyzing video recordings of the 2024 and 2025 Carnivals, this paper explores how the community responded with satire and performance, to discover how local expressions of humour and criticism reflect changing spatial dynamics, cultural identity and power relations within the island and beyond.





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### Narrating the Good Area: Class, Memory, and Moral Maps of Rio de Janeiro

*Isabel Feix (Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Portugal)*

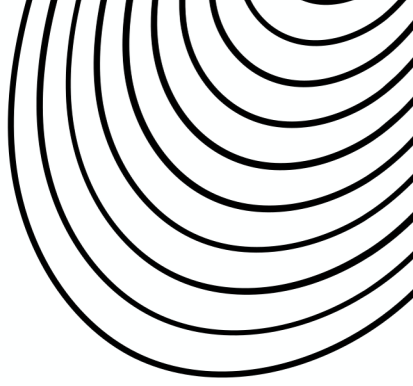
This paper investigates how elite narratives construct and legitimize spatial hierarchies in Rio's urban landscape. Building on Simmel (1971 [1903]) and Park (1915), and extended through Harvey (1973, 2012) and Lefebvre (1974), it theorizes the city as a moral geography in which symbolic capital and classificatory logics assign moral value to urban space. In Brazil's context of entrenched social inequality, elite discourses label select neighborhoods morally superior "good areas" inhabited by "decent people," thereby naturalizing uneven geographies. Empirically, we analyze semi-structured interviews with 27 elderly South Zone residents (born 1924–1952). Their memories are interpreted as collective representations (Durkheim, 1898; Halbwachs, 1950), and also reflect a legacy memory, which is related to personal projections and identities (Pollak, 1992). Preliminary findings show that the South Zone's prestige is rooted in beachfront leisure, elite consumption, and iconic social venues—stages of distinction in Bourdieu's (1984) terms—and that consumption practices both reflect and shape social relations and cultural production (Miller, 1987). While informants affirm spatial hierarchies, their accounts also reveal ambivalences and tensions amid urban change and perceived decline in the last years. By foregrounding memory and symbolic distinction as elite agency, this study contributes to urban sociology and critical geography, demonstrating how moral imaginaries and cultural practices operate as instruments of power, shaping the social value of space and defining urban belonging.

### City-making dynamic: territorial transformations in Lisbon's inner-city

*Madalena Corte-Real (1) and Duygu Cihanger Ribeiro (2)*

*(1) (ISEC Lisboa; CHAM-NOVA FCSH, Portugal), (2) (Middle East Technical University, Turkey; University of Aveiro, ICS Lisbon University, Portugal)*

urban transformation, and urban regeneration policies. This research aims to provide a comprehensive examination of the shifting territorial dynamics within this territory, emphasizing mobility as a defining phenomenon in contemporary urban life. Grounded in the theoretical framework around the (re)definition of space, we explore the processes through which various social groups claim, negotiate, and transform space. The primary goal of this study is to analyze the distinct developmental trajectories observed within different areas of Mouraria. To achieve this, we adopt a methodological approach that bridges sociology and urban planning, allowing us to illustrate the spatial patterns of concentration, densification, and differentiation that have emerged over the past years. Our focus is particularly directed towards areas where contrasting developments are evident. One, increasingly referred to as "Banglatown," has become a hub for the Bangladeshi community, while the other has shown significant signs of gentrification, particularly following the implementation of an intervention led by the municipality that started in 2011. By considering the social and spatial transformations of the area—based on official statistical data, visual mapping, and media analysis — this paper aims to present a comprehensive study exploring the intricate intersections that highlight the complex forces that shape contemporary urban life.



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## 11 Spatial Discontinuity and Urban Identity

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### Belonging-in-Mobility: Waiting, Platform Labour, and the Reconfiguration of Urban Identity

*Muhammet Esat Tiryaki (Technical University of Berlin, Germany)*

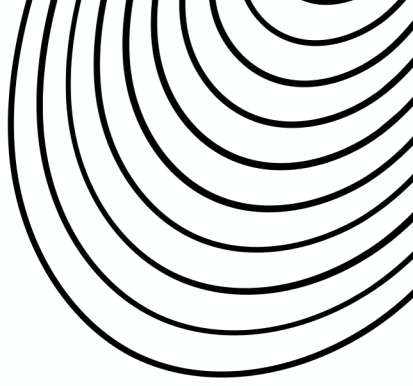
This paper develops "belonging-in-mobility" as a theoretical framework for rethinking urban identity in the context of platform capitalism. Drawing on the sociology of mobility and mobilities studies, it challenges static, place-based notions of belonging by arguing that identity and belonging are constituted through movement, spatial regulation, and digitally mediated practices—particularly in the lived experiences of taxi and Uber drivers. Waiting, as practiced in urban mobility infrastructures such as taxi ranks, is not a passive gap between movements, but a constitutive act through which mobile workers claim space, build informal networks, and generate a sense of belonging within conditions of constant movement. The paper theorizes taxi ranks as liminal yet central spaces where waiting acquires visibility, legitimacy, and political meaning. In contrast, platform-based drivers such as those working for Uber are often excluded from these infrastructures, resulting in spatial marginalization and infrastructural invisibility. Drawing on preliminary observations and planned ethnographic fieldwork in Berlin and Istanbul, the paper contrasts these spatial conditions to explore how different regimes of mobilities affect workers' urban experiences and claims to space. By centring waiting as a constitutive element of belonging-in-mobility, the paper reframes spatial discontinuity not simply as a rupture or loss, but as a condition under which new urban subjectivities and forms of belonging emerge. It contributes to debates on urban transformation and the contested geographies of platform labour by theorizing how movement—and its regulation through informal infrastructures—can sustain affective ties and spatial routines within fragmented, decentred urban landscapes.

Keywords: Belonging-in-mobility, waiting, platform labour, urban visibility, mobility justice.

### Our Metropolis? Spatial Discontinuity and Creation of Metropolitan Identity in Upper Silesia: A Media Discourse Perspective

*Zuzanna Neuve-Église (Univesity of Silesia in Katowice, Institute of Sociology, Poland)*

The contemporary metropolisation process can be characterised by 'multiplexity,' arising from the ongoing interplay of spatial-functional, political-institutional and cultural-symbolic factors. Beyond spatial transformations, metropolisation reshapes local communities by challenging traditional territorial and political divisions as well as deeply rooted social structures. The process may, therefore, spark a 'sense of discontinuity' or renew rootedness, thereby fostering a collective identity that renders metropolitan space a shared realm of experience, emotions and imagination for its inhabitants. To grasp this dynamic fully, it is worth exploring the symbolic dimension of metropolisation, specifically how discourse and mass communication shape collective representations of the metropolis and shared urban narratives. This perspective guided a frame analysis of regional press articles on the GZM Metropolis (Górnośląsko-Zagłębiowska Metropolia, Poland) between 2007 and 2018, presenting how such discourse may nurture a socially lived space (Frémont 1976). GZM offers an instructive example, being Poland's only legally sanctioned metropolis to date and a novel governance structure within the Silesian region – one that has undergone profound social and economic shifts since 1989, alongside significant territorial-administrative reforms at the metropolitan level. Over time, metropolitan discourse has reframed this area's social space, providing a compelling point of reference for local communities. The author's original research highlights the potential of metropolitan discourse in shaping the vision of the metropolis as a common good for the region. It underscores how discourse can demystify the political-administrative sphere, unite residents around shared beliefs and enable a collective re-imagining of place. These insights contribute to debates on spatial (dis)continuity and identity tensions in urban areas undergoing intensive transformation.



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## 12 Beyond core and periphery: Relational histories, urban heritage, and postcolonial geographies in Portugal and beyond

Chairs: Paulo Peixoto (1), Madalena Corte-Real (2) and Beatriz Lacerda (3)

(1) Centre for Social Studies, Faculty of Economics of the University of Coimbra, Portugal, (2) ISEC Lisboa - Higher Institute of Education and Sciences; CHAM – Centre for the Humanities, (3) Institute of Sociology, University of Porto, Portugal

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### Revisiting the Bica Neighborhood: Ethnographic Archives and relational Urban Memory in Lisbon

*Rita Cachado (1) and Graça Cordeiro (1)*

*(1) (CIES, ISCTE - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, Portugal)*

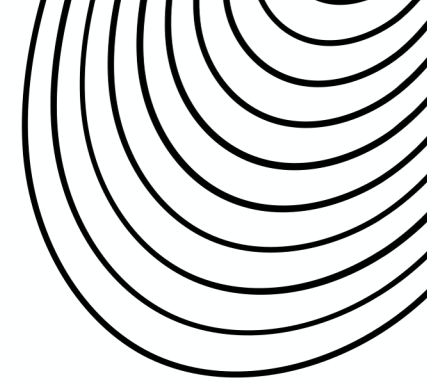
This paper revisits an ethnographic archive from the early 1990s, produced by anthropologist Graça Cordeiro during extended fieldwork in Lisbon's Bica neighborhood—a historic and socially complex area in the city's center. The archive includes handwritten fieldnotes, audio-recorded interviews, and photographs that document everyday life and social dynamics during urban transition. Framed within a broader inquiry into urban ethnography and the memory of cities, this presentation explores how such primary data can contribute to urban history in general and to the histories of Lisbon's neighborhoods in particular. We examine: (1) the materiality and current state of the archive — its formats, preservation, and location(s); (2) the ethical challenges of safeguarding ethnographic archives; and (3) possibilities for giving this archive a "second life" (Leopold 2008), through sharing selected data-sets. Beyond its documentary value, this revisitation offers methodological insight into the embodied practices and hesitations of an urban ethnographer navigating a space marked by ambiguity — neither fully central nor peripheral. Through this case, we aim to reflect on the role of ethnographic archives in confronting the temporalities of urban knowledge production and the memory of historical neighborhoods in post-colonial cities like Lisbon.

### Mutations to Neoliberalism in Turkey: Exploring Ethno-Racial Citizenship Regimes through Urban Neoliberalism in Izmir and Diyarbakır

*Yağmur Çağatay (University of Cambridge, United Kingdom)*

This paper is part of a broader doctoral research project examining the gendered effects of urban neoliberalism in Turkey. Adopting a relational-comparative framework, it analyses the divergent articulations of neoliberal urban governance in two Turkish cities: İzmir and Diyarbakır. Drawing on Aihwa Ong's concept of "neoliberalism as exception," the study challenges the notion of neoliberalism as a uniform process, arguing instead that it refracts differently across regions. In İzmir, neoliberalism manifests through entrepreneurial urban planning that prioritises global competitiveness, whereas in Diyarbakır, it is intertwined with state militarism and securitisation. The paper advances the debate on "mutations of neoliberalism" by examining how these urban strategies generate differentiated regimes of citizenship through inter-subaltern colonialism framework. Central to the analysis is how local and central authorities deploy tools such as privatization and expropriation in distinct yet racially coded ways, reinforcing socio-spatial hierarchies. By situating these practices within the historical and ongoing colonial oppression of Kurds in Turkey, the paper illustrates how neoliberal policies are embedded within racialized state strategies. Ultimately, it argues that urban neoliberalism not only restructures cities but also reconfigures citizenship and belonging along ethno-racial lines.





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## 13 Cities from Below: Local Dynamics of Change and Belonging

Chairs: Gabriele Manella (1), Madalena Corte-Real (2) and Beatriz Lacerda (3)

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### Making it work on the ground: social workers' leeway in Roma housing integration in Venice and Bologna

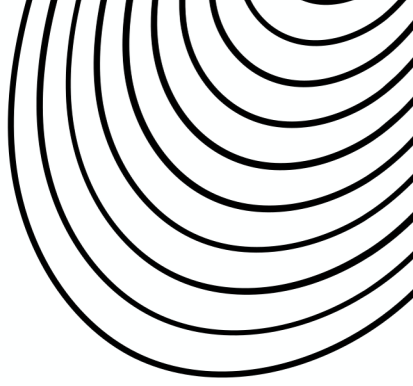
*Anna Maschietto (University of Bologna, Italy)*

In 2012 Italy adopted a national strategy to promote the social inclusion of marginalised Roma people with the priority of improving their housing conditions by overcoming “Roma camps”. This study examines the implementation process at the local level of those policies in two Italian cities. In Venice, the transition took place in social housing specifically targeted for this purpose, supported with an active employment policy. This transition was implemented by a multidisciplinary team composed of municipal educators and third-sector labour market professionals. Currently there are no longer Roma camps and all the families live in homes. In Bologna, a camp was overcome through micro-areas (introduced by regional law 11/2015), temporary accommodation and social housing. The intervention was managed by a team of social educators from third sector cooperatives with a mediated relation with the municipality. There are still two Roma camps with no plans to overcome. The Street Level Bureaucracy theory (Lipsky, 1980) provides a key contribution to this work. Data was collected through 20 interviews at front-line-workers, 10 team meeting observations and the reading of projects, agreements with beneficiaries and report activities. Findings show that the specific configuration of the organisational context in Venice shapes the possibility of service delivery through greater decision-making power over the personalisation of most effective interventions and a wide use of discretion. In contrast, in Bologna front-line-workers possessed limited decision-making authority during the implementation stage. Over time, they gradually assumed a more dominant position, acquiring a controlling role over the new housing agreements.

### The Space of (In)Security and the Right to the City. (In)security in Women's Everyday Lives in Genoa

*Camilla Guarino (University of Genoa, Italy)*

This contribution addresses women's (in)security in urban space aiming to enrich the current interdisciplinary debates on the relationship between women and the city. Specifically, it builds on analyses of the so-called “geographies of fear”, which have long shown how perceptions of safety are deeply rooted in gender. Starting from the centrality of security in contemporary urban contexts—and the frequent framing of women within these discourses—the study explores (in)security through the lens of patriarchal power relations and their intersection with other axes of power and social differentiation. Adopting a qualitative and comparative approach, the research examines women's everyday experiences of (in)security in two Genoa neighbourhoods, differing in social composition and urban centrality. It draws on in-depth interviews, complemented by mobile and visual methods, to explore women's perceptions, embodied experiences, and strategies of negotiation. Preliminary findings show that geographies and meanings of insecurity are shaped by the urgency to avoid male gaze, intrusion, and violence. These pressures, structured by gendered relations embedded in the urban environment, define symbolic and material control over women's bodies, framing insecurity as a spatial pattern of gender-based violence. These geographies are also influenced by intersecting forms of oppression and social differentiation, shaping women's perceptions of their bodies, space, and access to resources. Women navigate the city as a largely hostile environment, adopting practices of defense and resistance that reshape urban space. In this context, safety is strongly associated with the female presence and use of public space, and with social relations within their own neighborhood.



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## 13 Cities from Below: Local Dynamics of Change and Belonging

Chairs: Gabriele Manella (1), Madalena Corte-Real (2) and Beatriz Lacerda (3)

(1) University of Bologna, Italy (2) ISEC Lisboa - Higher Institute of Education and Sciences; CHAM – Centre for the Humanities, (3) Institute of Sociology, University of Porto, Portugal

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### The drivers of positive attitudes towards immigrants and immigration in two Portuguese urban fishing communities

*Rui Carvalho* (Brown University, Providence, USA)

European countries have been receiving growing numbers of international migrants in the last decades. This has been accompanied by the increasing politicization of immigration, as well as by a rise in negative attitudes towards immigrants and immigration, across Europe. And, although these tend to be society-wide processes, it is in the main urban areas of these countries that these dynamics usually take place most visibly. This paper consists of an ethnographic study of attitudes towards immigrants and immigration in two Portuguese urban fishing communities, both of which have recently received sizeable contingents of immigrants. In theory, both communities should be characterized by strong opposition to immigrants and immigration (e.g., economically deprived, tight-knit, traditional communities), especially regarding immigrants coming predominantly from Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries (e.g., ethnically and racially dissimilar, hence likely perceived as threatening). However, in opposition to such expectations, local public opinions and attitudes towards (these) immigrants, and intergroup relations in such communities, have stayed overwhelmingly positive. Such outcomes result from the blend of three social forces. First, positive intergroup contact experiences between fishermen, particularly in other-reliant contexts (e.g., aboard fishing boats). Second, extensive support to these immigration movements by coalitions of fisheries-sector and other local organizations. Third, positively mediated national opinions on the importance of these immigrants for the revitalization of the fisheries sector, which spill-over to these local community settings. I discuss the implications of these findings, along with their worth for refining theories on attitudes towards immigrants and immigration in traditional urban communities.

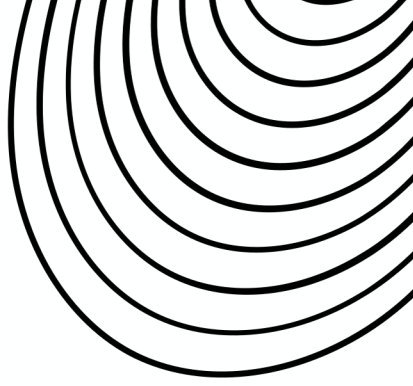
### Between territorial stigma and urban branding. Acknowledging the place of religious diversity in gentrification processes.

*Víctor Albert-Blanco* (1) and *Álvaro Mazorra* (2)

(1) (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona - UAB, Spain), (2) (Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia - UNED, Spain)

This presentation aims to explore the place of religious diversity in processes of gentrification. Focusing on the Raval neighborhood, in Barcelona, we show that religious pluralism plays an ambivalent role in the representations and social dynamics linked to gentrification. Drawing on qualitative and quantitative data collected in different research projects conducted in this neighborhood between 2016 and 2025, we identify different ways in which religious pluralism shapes and is shaped by urban transformations driven by gentrification. First, we show that the presence of religious minorities (especially Islam) is mobilized in the stigmatizing rhetoric mobilized by public authorities, media and other stakeholders in the previous and initial stages of the gentrification process. Secondly, we illustrate that religious pluralism paradoxically became an essential component of the “multicultural” and “cosmopolitan” labels that are currently used to describe the neighborhood. By analyzing these ambivalent and contradictory narratives, we show, at the same time, that minority religious groups are not passive actors in this process of urban transformation. While some of their practices can be seen as forms of “passive resistance” to gentrification, some religious groups take part in campaigns and actions against speculation and housing evictions, developing new forms of solidarity and religious charity. However, other groups or leaders can engage in processes of urban rebranding or economic transactions that favorize the gentrification of the area. These results underscore the increasingly diverse and complex nature of gentrification processes, marked by the involvement of a growing number of actors and the emergence of new and different social groups and practices.





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## 13 Cities from Below: Local Dynamics of Change and Belonging

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### Re-naturalizing the built environment. Plants, architecture, and pedagogy in contemporary green schools

*Leonardo Chiesi (1), Paolo Costa (1) and Bianca Galmarini (1)*

*(1) (Università di Firenze, Italy)*

Urbanization has largely entailed the removal of nature from lived environments and daily routines. In urban contexts, opportunities for contact with nature are nowadays limited, sporadic, and often exclusive. The impacts on health of such disconnection is increasingly evident, and even more so amid the current socio-ecological crises. Re-naturalizing cities and safeguarding the people-nature relationship have become urgent priorities. Schools are strategic in this process, as democratic and civic devices, and dynamic and contextually responsive spaces. Schools are also ideal spaces for experimenting with and applying such re-naturalization efforts. Both the design and the pedagogical models deployed in schools, can strengthen the connection with nature in students and the broader school community and foster long-term ecological awareness among young generations. This study investigates the intersection of educational models and design approaches –particularly ‘biophilic design’– in promoting meaningful people-nature relationships within school environments. Synergies between design, education, and nature are explored in case studies from America, Asia, and Europe, comparing urban, peri-urban and rural settings. A theoretical framework considering pedagogical and design models illustrates the dynamics through which nature is integrated into educational environments. An interdisciplinary approach addresses the gap between sociological and architectural discourse cautioning against the risk of superficial incorporation of nature in architecture and urban policies, or its use as a marketing tool – not unlike what is often referred to as ‘greenwashing’.

### Marginal Areas in Metropolitan Landscapes: Development, Governance, and Challenges

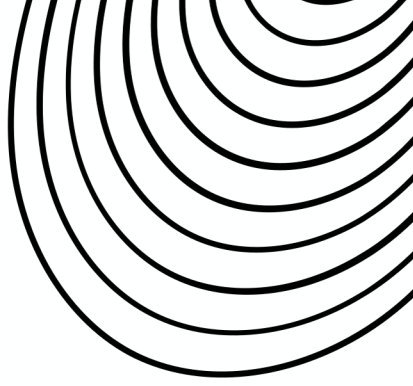
*Madalena Corte-Real (1, 2), Elizete Jardim (1) and Ana Paula Oliveira (1, 3)*

*(1) (ISEC Lisboa, Portugal) (2) (CHAM-NOVA FCSH, Portugal) (3) (CiTUR, Portugal)*

There is a general consensus in Europe about the need to enhance governance practices for territorial development. Agendas emphasize transferring powers to communities and involving local civil society organizations to promote more inclusive decision-making processes and participatory solutions. In this context, based on case-study, this paper explores how a territory has been evolving, taking the Leader initiative as a starting point and focusing on the relationship between participatory governance, local development, and national administrative frameworks. Our focus is on Arouca, situated within the Metropolitan Area of Porto, the country's second most populous region. Located on the outskirts of this metropolitan area, the municipality is characterized by limited accessibility, depopulation and strong rural features, alongside a decline in agricultural activities, the presence of manufacturing and the increasing predominance of tertiary sectors, particularly related to tourism. In the early 1990s, with the launch of the LEADER initiative, a group began making the first steps toward establishing local governance. However, top-down measures imposed on the program have significantly constrained its development. While the Portuguese State advocates for decentralization, challenges persist due to decisions made at higher levels of public authority and the need to consider both soft and hard governance within a multilevel system. Interviews with various stakeholders and analyses of secondary data indicate that the LEADER initiative has been a crucial driver of local governance. It has fostered a culture with established territorial partnership structures, and actors are now applying for diverse funding opportunities.

Keywords: Governance; LEADER; territorial development





# PAPERS & abstracts

## 13 Cities from Below: Local Dynamics of Change and Belonging

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### One-Euro Houses: A Case Study on Rural Revitalization and Community Development

*Marco Pizzi (1), Silvia Scarafoni (1) and Paola de Salvo (1)*

*(1) (University of Perugia, Italy)*

Place Branding practices are considered more and more influent in determining the local development for both urban and non-urban areas. As the deindustrialisation process progressed and the tourist industry matured, the rural world, especially, is expressing an interesting variety of such phenomena.

According to a wide literature, this was done by going along with a process of commodification of places, as part of an often negatively judged trend. On the other hand, however, some scholars tried to frame this in a positive light, speaking of Participatory Place Branding. To problematise this issue, the Italian project “Case a 1 €” will be presented. This is a purely tourism and real estate operation, apparently, which nevertheless seems to contain aspects worthy of discussion. In fact, the project seems to be simply oriented towards the sale of dilapidated properties in small rural and mountain villages but often ends up becoming something more complex and profound. The analysis of this project and its outcomes sheds light on the apparent paradox represented by the attempt to redevelop rural areas using communication techniques from the corporate world (i.e. marketing of places). This theme was explored through in-depth interviews, questionnaires and territorial desk analysis. The research shows how this project can also be experienced as a moment of community empowerment and not only as a getsout of the territory. Such findings can help public decision-makers to implement public policies aimed at facilitating the real estate market in rural territories, without compromising the integrity of local identity.

### From Paper to Practice: Informal Care, Ethics, and the Struggles of Engaged Urban Research

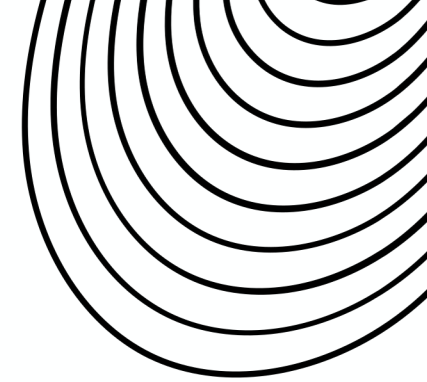
*Naomi Rommens (1), Josien Kamp (1) and Seline Westerhof (1)*

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Universities are exceedingly repositioning and rebranding their role in society, framing themselves as ‘civic universities’. In social sciences, this means that ‘engaged’ or ‘impact-driven’ research is increasingly embraced. These forms deepen the understanding of urban issues like marginalization and self-organization while enhancing science's societal relevance. Yet, despite institutional encouragement to closely collaborate with civic society, we observe that the institutional make-up of academia fails to provide space for ethically conducting engaged and societally relevant research. Engaged researchers often struggle to balance the demands of academic output and individualist nature of research, while ensuring societal relevance and local impact of their studies. They are caught between the fast-paced dynamics of ‘the field’ and slower rhythms of academia. The challenges that arise – around responsibilities and power dynamics for example - are often invisible, time-consuming, and emotionally taxing, especially when they are faced alone.

We argue that collaborative, team-based structures are essential for conducting meaningful research that addresses today’s urban challenges. We believe that this paradigmatic turn for societal relevance not only requires better ‘engagement’, but foremost a better understanding of how urban contexts are studied. Taking our PhD trajectories as an example, we question academia’s individualistic, status-driven and positivist norms by creating space for shared struggles, securities and collective reflection.

Through collaborative auto-ethnography we explore the potential of informal care practices in team structures, aiming to understand what this practice of collaboration and support can look like to enhance both the quality of our work and the ethics that guide it.



# PAPERS & abstracts

## 13 Cities from Below: Local Dynamics of Change and Belonging

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### Changing the local shopping street: commercial mixing, urban policies and middle-class imaginaries in ethnically-mixed districts in Paris and Lisbon.

*Priscilla Santos* (1) and *Victor Albert-Blanco* (2)

(1) (Cies-Iscte, Portugal) and (2) (Isor - Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain)

This presentation aims to shed light on the process of urban transformation in two shopping streets located in ethnically mixed neighbourhoods: Rue du Myrha, in the Goutte d'Or district of Paris, and Rua do Forno do Tijolo, in Lisbon's Anjos district. We adopt an ethnographic approach to examine the transformation and current coexistence of social classes, racialised groups, and consumer repertoires reflected in the commercial fabric of these streets. In both cases, one can find small shops owned by racialised migrants alongside newer businesses such as organic restaurants, specialty coffee shops, and natural wine bars owned by both relatively privileged migrants and autochthonous people. Our objective is to analyse, from a spatial perspective, how this coexistence unfolds in contexts where public policies on social mixing are either present (as in Paris) or absent (as in Lisbon). How do these streets change—or remain unchanged—depending on the presence or absence of such policies? How does social mixing occur in similar or divergent ways across these differing policy contexts? To address these questions, we draw on ethnographic research, including participant observation, interviews with public authorities and small business owners in both districts, and document analysis. By doing so, we explore urban representations and discourses on diversity, examining how these narratives shape the symbolic evaluation of these areas and contribute to their differentiation from other high-value neighbourhoods in Paris and Lisbon.

Keywords – Retail, Urban Space, Gentrification, Paris, Lisbon

### Urban imaginaries of rurality

*Elisabetta Mocca* (Universidad de Salamanca, Spain)

Countless publications open with the adage whereby "we live in an urban age, underscoring the inexorable growth of urban settlements. In a world that is thought to become nearly completely urbanised, rural places appears to be doomed to shrink and possibly disappear. However, urbanisation will posit crucial challenges to rural areas, including declining population, a diminishing supply of services, few employment opportunities and an ageing population.

To design effective policies to revert rural decline, it is paramount to acquire an understanding of the motivations for people not to live in rural areas. This requires an excavation of the constructed meaning(s) and popular images of rurality. Indeed, visions and meanings people give to the latter term concur to construct what is perceived as rural (and urban) and influence their personal locational decisions.

Research on rural imaginaries tends to focus on rural residents' construction of rurality. By contrast, fewer works examine urban residents' representations of rural places. Hence, this paper investigates how urban residents imagine rural spaces and whether and under which conditions they would change their residential choice. To do so, the findings gathered through workshops involving urban residents living in Madrid are reported. Building on this evidence, the paper casts light on how personal and collective imaginaries construct place identity and shape urban and rural dynamics. Ultimately, the paper seeks to sweep away the "city centrism" underpinning much of urban studies, by turning attention to how urbanisation is affecting not only urban areas, but also those areas beyond the city.

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