

International Winter School in Ethnography

Translating Ethnography: Prospects and Dilemmas in Nativist Times

18-20 February 2026

Room 9 (first floor), Sociology Building - Via Verdi 26, Trento, Italy

Organized by: Chiara Bassetti, Paolo Boccagni



Description

Theoretically-informed ethnographic research offers a distinctive and unique approach. The Trento School in Ethnography has all along its history provided a forum for informal, in-depth reflection into social research methods as well as the underlying questions of social theory. The School provides participants with an inside view on the practice and the skills of

ethnographic research across the social sciences. It offers a forum where adepts, students, and scholars can familiarize themselves with the status of the discipline, absorbing the tools and 'tricks of the trade' directly from long-time practitioners.

The teaching format is grounded in frontal lectures, where cutting-edge research is presented, complemented by interactive methodological workshops. Moreover, participants have a chance to present their current research projects, so as to receive feedback and recommendations by guest and resident professors as much as peers. Reading materials are circulated in advance among participants, ensuring they arrive at the school with a shared focus.

This 10th edition's running theme is **Translating Ethnography**. Questions of translation, literal or metaphorical, apply to ethnography in myriad ways: from fieldwork to textwork, from an ethnographer's sensuous and personal experience to the public domain of intersubjectivity, but also from the academic world to "ordinary" social and political life – an especially challenging task, in times in which academic knowledge tends to be dismissed, and many researchers lament the societal irrelevance of their findings. "Translating" is ultimately an invitation to carry knowledge across separate domains, beyond borders such as those set up by nativist and binary views of the world as an *us-vs-them* matter. We will discuss these questions, and many more, with the contribution of three eminent ethnographers, at the crossroads between different disciplines and substantive research topics.

Program

Wednesday, 18 February 2026

09:30 Welcome and introduction

10:00-11:30 Lecture by **Shahram Khosravi**, Stockholm University

Precarization through Integration

Integration, as both an analytical framework and a policy concept, is rooted in a fundamental contradiction: it presupposes that individuals who are already *de facto* members of society are somehow structurally 'external.' The integration discourse sustains itself by reproducing the figure of the migrant as a perpetual outsider, who must be transformed in order to be included. In doing so, integration reinforces the very bordering practices it claims to transcend, framing certain subjects as externals requiring reform to become legible subjects. Through this reproduction of exclusionary logics, society constructs itself as a stable, bounded entity. In this presentation, I examine how precarization operates in and through integration. I argue that state-driven precarization, legitimized through integration rhetoric, systematically destabilizes existing lifeworlds and belongingness.

Coffee break (Room 6, first floor)

12:00-13:15 Participants' project presentation and discussion with the School professors

1. Daniela D'Urso, KU Leuven, "Navigating The City. Exploring Informal Economy in Urban Rabat"
2. Giovanni Pagano, University of Milano-Bicocca, "Citizens' committees and urban planning: Ethnography of everyday life of civil society in urban conflict"
3. Alzbeta Kovandova-Bartonickova, University of Kent, "Filming and exploring public, private and intangible homes in London: documentary and domestic spaces"

Lunch break (Room 6, first floor)

14:30-15:30 Workshop with **Shahram Khosravi**, Stockholm University

Who needs migration studies?

This rhetorical question emerges through a process of critique of Migration Studies and is asked to both make a point and to provoke. Critique is not merely an act of negation, but a transformative effort. It seeks to expose how migration studies, paradoxically, can reproduce the very barriers that hinder a deeper understanding of what scholars in the field of migration studies try to understand. The question aims to unsettle what we think we know. In this workshop, I explore the potentiality within the field of migration studies in the formation of alternative ways of knowing. The aim is to think together how to stimulate new perspectives and approaches and to examine the question 'who needs migration studies?'

15:30-16:30 Participants' project presentation and discussion with the School professors

4. Paola Di Carlo, Università di Siena, "Comparing Deviant Careers. The Role of Stigma in the (Re)Production of Social Inequality"
5. Luca Dirodi, Scuola Normale Superiore, "Identity, Conflict and Prison. Young Inmates at Bracciaciviva Prison"
6. Katrine Baunkjaer, Aarhus University, "Everyday Practices and Civic Engagement as Acts of De-Sectarianization: Ordinary People as Change-Makers in Lebanon"

Coffee break (Room 6, first floor)

17:00-19:00 Participants' project presentation and discussion with the School professors

7. Sara Veronica Marcolla, University of Coimbra, "Mountain Foodways: Gastronomies in the Huts of the Rhaetian Alps"
8. Natalia Polishchuk, Lithuanian Center for Social Sciences, "Returning descendants of Lithuanian deportees: enacting and negotiating transnationality"
9. Mariana Sabino-Salazar, Institute of Ethnology | Czech Academy of Sciences, "Ciganos de Alma (Gypsies of the Soul) in Brazil's Vale do Amanhecer: Religion as a Pathway to Ethnicity and Romani Representation"
10. Laila Sit Aboha, Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, "Shatat Across Generations: Politics of Belonging and Generational Shifts in the Palestinian Oslo and post-Oslo diaspora"

11. Eleonora Bordogni, UC3M, "Feeling at home: an embodied and affective approach to Spanish migration within Europe"

19:30 Social dinner (Orso Grigio Restaurant)

Thursday, 19 February 2026

09:30-11:00 Lecture by **Kenneth Liberman**, University of Oregon

Ethics and Craft in Field Research

Encountering the other in the field exposes the ethnographer to what should be a mutual relationship. Alongside configuring this relationship as a heuristic tool that allows for discoveries, an ethical responsibility is entailed. Translating social and cultural realities – in the researcher's experience, analyses and writing – and communicating those translations to readers constitutes ethnography's distinctive practice, but it is not without its potential pitfalls. Drawing from several long lasting ethnographic researches, the lecture offers practical advice for navigating some complexities of field research.

Coffee break (Room 6, first floor)

11:30-13:00 Participants' project presentation and discussion with the School professors

12. Linus Klemp, University of Copenhagen, "Conspiratorial Climates: Forest Fires and Tahtacı Spatial Belonging in Turkey"
13. Svenja Hitzemann, Ghent University, "Agrarian Populism and Political Mobilization in Germany"
14. Jùlia Tena Mensa, University of Trento, "Work and working conditions of agroecological farmers: the case of Zagreb"
15. Alessio Menini, Iuss Pavia | CMCC, "Governing Transformative Adaptation in Rural Italian Landscapes: Climate-resilient Nature-based Solutions (NBS) and techno-scientific innovations for Mediterranean agrosilvopastoral ecosystems"

Lunch break (Room 6, first floor)

14:00-15:00 Workshop with **Kenneth Liberman**, University of Oregon, and **Chiara Bassetti**, University of Trento

"Making talk together": Analysing everyday sociability

How to grasp, analyse and represent everyday sociability in its interactional, experiential, and intersubjective dimensions? What does it mean, empirically, to acknowledge the co-constructed nature of social occasions, atmospheres and "vibes"? Starting from an ethnomethodological ethnography conducted in Italy, the workshop tackles the above questions and offers some tips at the crossroads between methodological rigour and creativity.

15:00-16:15 Participants' project presentation and discussion with the School professors

16. Simona Amaro, Maastricht University, "Urban Poverty and Moral Economies in Southern Italy – An ethnography of food insecurity and charitable food provision in Palermo"
17. Jole Decorte, Università di Milano, "Everyday Welfare Encounters and the Dynamics of Non-Take-Up in Italy"
18. Shiori Hagiwara, Maastricht University, "Poverty and food insecurity in precarious Japan"

Coffee break (Room 6, first floor)

16:45-18:30 Participants' project presentation and discussion with the School professors

19. Imane Huyghebaert, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, "The Architecture of Maintenance: Ethnographic Investigations of Care, Knowledge, and Encounters with Wear in Brussels' Built Environment"
20. Virginia Musso, Università di Milano-Bicocca, "Between Culture and Politics: The Making of Counterpublics and Alliances in Literary Festivals. Alliances and the Politics of Space, Relation, and Discourse"
21. Federica Zanardi, University of Padova, "Vulnerability as an Epistemic Lever in the Construction of Expert Knowledge: A Multi-sited Ethnography"

Friday, 20 February 2026

09:30-11:00 Participants' project presentation and discussion with the School professors

22. Melike Kaplan, Aalborg University, "Cooperative By Design: Reconnecting for Sustainable Work Platforms"
23. Niccolò Manfrin, University of Trento, "Culture, Cognition and Affect in the Experience of Amateur Tennis Practitioners"
24. Virginia Vergara, University of Trento, "Relationships at Play: A Participatory Path to Explore Teen Dating Violence"

Coffee break (Room 6, first floor)

11:30-13:00 Lecture by **Daniel Miller**, University College London

Anthropology – both depth and breadth

How can one discipline conduct intensive ethnographic fieldwork in just one place and yet hope to speak in general terms about humanity and life? This lecture is a journey from the ethnographic case study to questions beloved by philosophers as to the nature of the good life. Yet also, from the breadth of China to one small town in Ireland. It starts with case studies intended to understand the nature and direction of the latest digital technologies and their consequences for everyday life. The consumption of the digital and how AI confounds the boundaries of the human. A bridge from the parochial to the general comes partly through the

centrality of comparison to anthropology. Here contrasting the meaning of the term digital in China and the West. This leads to an argument for the superiority of anthropology over philosophy in examining fundamental questions as to what we mean by living a good life exemplified by an ethnography in Ireland, using evidence from consumption and other domains, to see how a polis/town creates its population.

Lunch break (Room 20, second floor)

14:00-15:00 Workshop with **Daniel Miller**, University College London

The Augmented Interview – and any method questions you would like to discuss

15:00-16:00 Final greetings and wrapping up

Guest Professors Biographies

Shahram Khosravi is professor of Anthropology at Stockholms University. His research interests include anthropology of Iran, forced displacement, border studies, and temporality. Khosravi is the author of several books such as: *Young and Defiant in Tehran* (2008); *The Illegal Traveler: an auto-ethnography of borders*, (2010); *Precarious Lives: Waiting and Hope in Iran*, (2017); *After Deportation: Ethnographic Perspectives*, Palgrave (2017, edited volume); *Waiting. A project in Conversation* (2021, edited volume), *Seeing Like a Smuggler* (2022, edited volume), and *The Gaze of the X-ray: An Archive of Violence* (2024, edited volume). He started Critical Border Studies, a network for scholars, artists and activists to interact.

Kenneth Liberman received his PhD from the University of California, San Diego in 1981. He joined the University of Oregon in 1983. His specialties are ethnomethodology, intercultural communication, race relations, and social phenomenology. Liberman has completed ethnomethodological studies of mundane interaction among traditional Australian Aboriginal people (*Understanding Interaction in Central Australia*, Routledge), the practices of reasoning of Tibetan scholar-monks (*Dialectical Practice in Tibetan Philosophical Culture*, Rowman & Littlefield), and the uses of objectivity in coffee tasting by professional coffee tasters in 14 countries (*Tasting Coffee*, SUNY Press). He provided a detailed ethnomethodological account and assessment of sophistry based on a video-recorded Tibetan debate in his *Husserl's Criticism of Reason* (Lexington Books). His *More Studies in Ethnomethodology* (SUNY Press) won the Best Book Award from the EMCA Section of the American Sociological Association. He is presently undertaking a long-term comparative study of negative dialectics in Tibetan Buddhist and postmodern epistemological practice.

Daniel Miller is an anthropologist who is closely associated with studies of human relationships to things, the consequences of consumption and digital anthropology. His theoretical work was first developed in *Material Culture and Mass Consumption* and is summarised more recently in his book *Stuff*. This work transcends the usual dualism between subject and object and studies how social relations are created through consumption as an activity. Miller is also the founder of the digital anthropology programme at University College London (UCL), and the director of the Why We Post and ASSA projects. He has pioneered the study of digital anthropology and especially ethnographic research on the use and consequences of social media and smartphones as part of the everyday life of ordinary people around the world. He is a Fellow of the British Academy (FBA).