

## 6<sup>th</sup> Circle of Educational Webinars “Ethnografein” (2025-2026)

### ***Ethnografein***

***Critical dialogues, epistemological challenges, field experiences, creative texts***



BATUMI, ALPHABET TOWER, 2023



OTAR CHKHARTISHVILI, THE LAST SUPPER, 1983,  
Georgian Museum of Fine Art, Tiflida

Photos: selection E. Sideri

**The webinars are held on Mondays from 16:00-18:00**

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Seminar Platform: **ZOOM**

<https://zoom.us/j/8364531775?pwd=OVg3YVZlbnVCYWw3S0JYcEFGYIV1QT09>

Meeting ID: 836 453 1775

Passcode: KB2JKa

*Since its launch in the spring of 2021, the online seminar series **ETHNOGRAFEIN** has sought to contribute to a critical and interdisciplinary discussion on the theory and practice of ethnography, the epistemology of research, the significance of embodied experience, as well as the ways in which anthropological knowledge is disseminated to both academic and non-academic audiences. It is a central aim that anthropological study—as a research practice and as a politics of writing—should incorporate critical evaluation, empathy, reflexivity, and self-referentiality, while highlighting the importance of multimodal analysis of the local for understanding the general.*

**Organization and Coordination:** Fotini Tsibiridou – Ioannis Manos – Eleni Sideri

**Organization and Coordination of the 6th Cycle:** Eleni Sideri

The **6th cycle of the ETHNOGRAFEIN online seminar series**, beginning in December 2025 and concluding in May 2026, is entitled:

**6<sup>th</sup> Year of Seminar Series Ethnografein**

## Annual Theme

### **Ethnographies of Eurasia: Centres, Peripheries, Power and Critical Area Studies**

Eurasia has long occupied an ambiguous position in international academic research: a space where continents, empires, and epistemologies intersect, but also a region often portrayed as peripheral in relation to the dominant theoretical currents of the social sciences. The lecture series *Ethnographies of Eurasia: Centres, Peripheries, Power and Critical Area Studies* seeks to reconsider the region through the lens of contemporary ethnographic research, bringing into dialogue scholars who engage critically with questions of knowledge production, everyday life, and shifting geopolitical landscapes.

What is at stake is not only the representation of Eurasian societies, but also the analytical frameworks through which they are understood. The institutionalization of “area studies” during the Cold War placed Eurasia within particular disciplinary and geopolitical boundaries, often privileging state-centered narratives and strategic concerns over lived experience. Today, amid the revival of imperial discourses, new geopolitical alliances, and expanding transnational networks, the need for more nuanced and locally grounded approaches is pressing. Ethnography—attentive to voices, practices, and materialities—offers a methodological path for deconstructing hegemonically formed categories, while simultaneously foregrounding the actions and voices of communities in both the centres and the peripheries of Eurasia.

The series will highlight research from a wide range of cultural, social, and economic landscapes: from the margins of post-Soviet cities and the environmental crises of Central Asia, to ethnoscaples shaped by increasingly authoritarian regimes of mobility and emergent digital publics. The research presented will explore how power is exercised and contested in spaces where state authority, religious traditions, global markets, and social imaginaries intersect. Particular attention will be paid to the politics of scale: the ways in which “centres” and “peripheries” are relationally constituted, and how ethnographers themselves are implicated in the dynamics of representation and authority.

Beyond in-depth case studies, the lectures will address broader methodological and epistemological questions. How can we reconcile ethnographic particularity with the comparative ambitions involved in the study of different areas? What does it mean to produce knowledge about Eurasia at a moment when disciplinary boundaries are

becoming increasingly porous and global hierarchies of scholarship are being reshaped? How might collaborative, decolonial, and multi-sited approaches challenge Eurocentric paradigms, while at the same time acknowledging the uneven flows of resources, languages, and institutional power that shape the field?

The series seeks to cultivate connections among researchers with diverse interests and fields of study, and across different anthropological approaches, interdisciplinary thinking, and the varied geographies that constitute Eurasia. In doing so, it aspires not only to enrich the understanding of the region but also to contribute to wider debates about the politics of knowledge, the future of ethnography, and the possibilities for a more plural and locally grounded social science.

### Program

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Panel 8/12/2025 16:00 - 18:00:**

**D. Kataiftsis.**, Post-Doc Fellow, University of Macedonia

*"Globalising pro-russian chauvinism: modalities of Russianness in the Greek case"*

**Guénola Inizan**, Postdoctoral researcher, PhD in Geography - Lyon 2 Lumière University

*"The Russification of Mariupol after 2022 through the lens of housing and urban Planning Policies"*

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Panel 12/1/2026 16:00 - 18:00:**

**Veronika Pfeilschifter**, Ph.D Candidate, Friedrich Schiller University of Jena

*"Azerbaijan's Left and Emotions Across Borders: Problematizing Self-Reflexive Knowledge Production Amid Detachment, Digitality and Repression"*

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> Panel 16/2/2026 16:00 - 18:00:**

**Yulia Antonyan**, Associate Professor, Yerevan State University

*"Dismantled Materiality, Social Shifts, and Nostalgia: How to Make an Ethnography of the Soviet Legacy (the Case of Armenia)"*

**Weronika Zmiejewski**, social anthropologist

Book presentation of Dr. Weronika Zmiejewski, *"Georgian Women on the Move: Migration to Greece in Times of Crisis"*, 2025, Beghahn

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Panel 2/3/2026 16:00 - 18:00:**

**Iulia Statica**, Lecturer, Mellon Fellow, University of Sheffield, Harvard Institute in Washington, DC

*"Ethnographies of Landscape and Care: Gendered Ecologies and Urban Domesticities in Post-Socialist Romania"*

#### **5<sup>th</sup> Panel 30/3/2026 16:00 - 18:00:**

**Malika Bahovadinova**, Research Associate, Univ. of Amsterdam

*"Between a Knife and the Law: Human Rights and Expertise in Migration Bureaucracy in Tajikistan and Russia"*.

#### **6<sup>th</sup> Panel 30/3/2026 16:00 - 18:00:**

**Nikolaos Olma**, Assist. Professor, University of the Aegean.

*"Trembling Light: The World Bank's PESAC Programme and the Afterlives of Neoliberal Restructuring in a Kyrgyz Industrial Town"*

**Spatharidou Dimitra**, PhD, Dep. of Balkan Slavic and Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia: Support to the coordination of this panel.

**7<sup>th</sup> Panel 27/4/2026 16:00 - 18:00:**

**Aliki Angelidou**, Associate Professor, Panteion University

**Alexandra Balandina**, Associate Professor, Ionian University

**Dr. Maria Kokkinou**, Post-doc researcher, Univ. of Gallaway

**Dr. Georgia Sarikoudi**, Post-doc researcher, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

"Soundscapes and Memories of Exile: The Radio Programs of the Refugees of the Greek Civil War"

**Vasiloglou Georgios**, PhD, Dep. of Balkan Slavic and Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia: Support to the coordination of this panel.

**8<sup>th</sup> Panel 4/5/2026 16:00 - 18:00:**

**Elisa Scaraggi**, Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellow at the Institute of Contemporary History at NOVA School of Social Sciences and Humanities in Lisbon

*"The Making of an International Struggle: Mário Pinto de Andrade, Eurasian Connections and Angolan Liberation"*

**Meera Venkatachalam**, anthropologist and historian

*"India, Africa and the Politics of Southern Solidarity: How the Third World became the Global South"*

**Short CVs**

**Dimitris Kataiftsis** is a Dr. in Cultural Studies (University of Paris-IV Sorbonne 2014) and external collaborator, teaching anthropology courses at the Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies of the University of Macedonia. Since 2010, he has been conducting field research in communities of returnees from the former USSR, in Greece and abroad, mostly focusing on gender and economic reproduction. During his last postdoctoral research, he studied transnational networking, ethnic and cultural economies in the context of the Russian-speaking world and return migration, publishing articles in international journals and volumes and participating in international conferences. Finally, he actively participates in the scientific and editorial team of the journal *EIRINI/Studies of Young Scholars on Gender*, and in numerous activities of the Laboratory/Culture-Border-Gender (cbg-lab.uom.gr), at the University of Macedonia, as a regular member.

**Guénola Inizan** holds a PhD in Geography from Lyon 2 Lumière University (2024). Her dissertation examined the politicization of housing issues in the context of a major urban renewal project in Moscow. Since defending her thesis and following research fellowships at the Leibniz Institute für Länderkunde and the Faculty of Geography at the University of Łódź, as well as an upcoming residency at the Lviv Center for Urban History, she has been working on urban and housing policies in Russian-occupied territories in Ukraine.

**Veronika Pfeilschifter** is a social scientist working at the intersection between area studies (focus: South Caucasus) and political sociology. She is a research associate at the Institute for Caucasus Studies at Friedrich Schiller University Jena (Germany) and a research affiliate at the Centre for East European and international Studies (ZOiS) Berlin. Her doctoral project „In Quest for Otherwise: Left-Wing Subjects and Political Imagination in the South Caucasus“ analysed what it means for young subjects in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia to be left-wing. Her work has been published in *Constellations. An International Journal for Critical and Democratic Theory*, *Europe-Asia Studies* and *Caucasus Analytical Digest*.

**Yulia Antonyan** is Associate Professor at the Department of Cultural Studies, Faculty of History, Yerevan State University (since 2008). Her professional interests are in the anthropology of religion and the anthropology of social structures, with a special focus on the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. Her permanent field of research is Armenia, but she has also

undertaken several short-term field studies of Armenian communities in Georgia, Syria and Lebanon. Dr. Antonyan has published more than fifty articles in English, Armenian and Russian and has edited several volumes.

**Weronika Zmiejewski** is a social anthropologist specializing in the Caucasus and Central Asia. She earned her PhD from Friedrich Schiller University in Jena with a dissertation on Georgian migrant women in Greece, based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Greece (Thessaloniki) in 2015 and Georgia in 2016. She is currently working on a postdoctoral project focused on World War II recordings from Central Asia at the Phonogrammarchiv in Vienna.

**Iulia Statica** is Mellon Fellow in Democracy and Landscape at Dumbarton Oaks, and assistant professor (lecturer) at the School of Architecture and Landscape at the University of Sheffield, UK. She previously held postdoctoral positions at The Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL, and Cornell University. Her research focuses on the legacies of socialist-built environments in Eastern Europe, particularly mass housing, and the gendered experiences of these spaces. Statica uses documentary film in her research; her film *My Socialist Home* premiered in London in 2021. She is the author of *Urban Phantasmagorias: Domesticity, Production, and the Politics of Modernity in Communist Bucharest*.

**Malika Bahovadinova** is a political anthropologist working on state-society relations. In her work, she explores the everyday politics of migration governance, looking at how bureaucratic ordering emerges as a site of unequal postcolonial and geopolitical relations. She also studies the citizens' engagement with state controls and their agency in asserting a political role in authoritarian contexts. She works at the International Studies Program at Leiden University.

**Nikolaos Olma** is an Assistant Professor of Social Anthropology in the Department of Social Anthropology and History at the University of the Aegean and a participating researcher in the ERC-funded project "Anthropogenic Environments in the Future Tense: Loss, Change, and Hope in Post-Soviet Industrial Landscapes (ANTHEFT)" at the University of Vienna. He earned his PhD from the University of Copenhagen in 2018, with a dissertation that examined the nexus of embodied memory and urban infrastructure in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Currently, he is working on a book project that explores the various processes of (un)knowing that inform life with radioactive uranium tailings in Mailuu-Suu, a former uranium mining town in Kyrgyzstan. His research interests span economic and environmental anthropology, with a focus on socio-economic change, post-socialism, extractivism, the politics of (un)knowing, pollution and toxicity, infrastructure, and informal mobility.

**Aliki Angelidou** is Associate Professor at the Department of Social Anthropology at Panteion University, Athens. Her research concerns both the anthropological readings of globalcapitalism in Greece and the Balkans, and the sensory dimensions of the experience of exile through the study of the Greek speaking radio broadcasts from the ex-socialist block. She is one of the two PIs of the research project "Soundscapes and Memories of Exile: The Radio Broadcasts of the Refugees of the Greek Civil War".

**Alexandra Balandina** is an Associate Professor in Ethnomusicology at the Department of Music Studies, Ionian University. Her research areas include performance practice and theory, music creativity, cultural organology, ethnography, embodiment in performance and research, auditory cultures, music censorship, and music and politics. Music genres that she has researched, written and taught about include classical music of the Middle East and Central Asia, and popular music in Greece and the Balkans. Her latest book *Ethnographic Research in Ethnomusicology*, is open access and can be downloaded here <https://repository.kallipos.gr/handle/11419/13733>

**Dr. Maria Kokkinou** is a postdoctoral researcher on the BILQIS ERC project at the Irish Centre for Human Rights, University of Galway. She studied social anthropology at the University of the Aegean (Mytilene, Greece), then completed her master's degree and PhD thesis in social anthropology in Paris at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS).

**Dr. Georgia Sarikoudi** is a post-doctoral researcher at the Department of History-Archaeology at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She is currently teaching Greek language and history in secondary education.

Her research interests include anthropology of socialism and post-socialism, social memory, economic anthropology and material culture, immigration and refugees' studies, anthropology of education.

**Elisa Scaraggi** is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at the Institute of Contemporary History, NOVA School of Social Sciences and Humanities in Lisbon. She has a background in comparative studies, and her work addresses questions related to the entanglement of personal and collective experiences in personal archives, as well as in autobiographies, memoirs, and other life-writing. She is interested in how colonialism and colonality shaped the political, social, and cultural context of nations that emerged from the dissolution of the Portuguese empire, with emphasis on Angola and Brazil. Her current research focuses on the personal archive of Angolan nationalist Mário Pinto de Andrade as a key to uncovering new narratives about Angola's recent past and the relationship between culture and nationalism.

**Meera Venkatachalam** is an anthropologist and historian. Her work is focused on the circulation of ideas, capital, and people between Africa and South Asia. She is the co-author of 'Common Threads: Fabrics Made in India for Africa' (ASCL: 2020); and co-editor of 'India's Development Diplomacy and Soft Power in Africa' (Boydell & Brewer: 2021).