



# Swedish PhD Dissertations in Anthropology and related disciplines 2020-2024

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## Introduction

A main purpose of *kritisk etnografi* – Swedish Journal of Anthropology is to offer a window for and a visibility of anthropological research carried out at or in collaboration with Swedish universities. This is all the more important in times of a changing academic landscape, in which ethnographic research is not any longer limited to Anthropology, and where anthropologically oriented research is oftentimes produced outside of the discipline of Social and Cultural Anthropology.

Four Swedish universities have PhD-programmes in Social or Cultural Anthropology: Gothenburg, Lund, Stockholm, and Uppsala. In addition, anthropologically oriented dissertations are produced within inter-disciplinary PhD-programmes at the universities of Linköping, Uppsala, and Malmö, as well as in Rural Development at the Swedish University for Agricultural Sciences (SLU).

In the following list, we have included PhD Dissertations in Social and Cultural Anthropology defended in Sweden 2020-2024. To some extent, we have added anthropologically oriented theses defended outside these PhD-programmes in Social or Cultural Anthropology. In total, we have compiled 31 theses in this list, thereby covering six Swedish universities: Gothenburg, Linköping, Lund, SLU, Stockholm, and Uppsala. Although we have been quite open-minded when it comes to the inclusion of anthropologically oriented theses, we might have overlooked some. In the list, we have mentioned the national research subject (*forskningsämne*) as defined in the official record.

For a complete list of PhD Dissertations in Anthropology at Swedish universities in the last 20 years, we also refer to Sveriges Antropologförbund (SANT) – the Swedish Anthropological Association – that compiles all PhD dissertations at its website (<https://www.sverigesantropologforbund.org/>).

## 2020

**Brandshaug, Malene K. 2020.** *Liquid Landscapes: Human-water interactions and water scarcity in Yanque, Peru*. Research Subject: Social Anthropology. School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg.

In the farming district of Yanque in the Southern Peruvian Andes, everyday life revolves around acquiring enough water for irrigation. This thesis concerns water scarcity and focuses on a range of water management practices. Based on ethnographic fieldwork

conducted among small-scale farmers from January to December 2016, the core chapters of this thesis scrutinise how water is searched for in physical and bureaucratic landscapes; how it is captured in canals, reservoirs and fields; and how it is paid *to and for* through offerings to earth-beings and through money transfers to the state and water organisation. By paying attention to human-water interactions, the thesis not only explores what people do with water, but also the variations in what water is, becomes and does in Yanque. Hence, this study is situated within an anthropology concerned with more-than-human relations. In an Anthropocene world marked by increased water scarcity, *Liquid landscapes* also addresses the relation between national and regional politics of water governance and local water management. It argues that a historical continuity of water scarcity in Yanque is exacerbated by environmental changes concerning disappearing glaciers and irregular rains, as well as by a continued coloniality. The thesis shows how indeterminacy is created in political spaces, in the mountain and valley landscape, and through emotion and affect. Furthermore, by describing and analysing heterogeneous practices that Yanqueños prove to be remarkably skilled in navigating and evoking, the thesis seeks to move beyond what can appear to be opposing water realities. *Liquid landscapes* concludes that by enacting water as a sentient person *and* as a passive substance, Yanqueños do not simply adopt the dominant way of valuing water as an object to be used efficiently. Rather, they creatively combine divergent water management practices, use distinct yet entangled irrigation infrastructures, and make relevant multiple versions of water to deal with water scarcity. Moreover, the thesis ends by holding that although Yanque farmers are especially vulnerable to environmental and ecological changes, which are intensified by inequalities and marginalisation, the indeterminacy of their water situation is not only characterised by vulnerability and uncertainty, but also by strength, creativity and possibility.

**Cole, Tomas 2020.** *Possessed Earth: Ownership and Power in the Salween Peace Park of Southeast Myanmar*. Research Subject: Social Anthropology. Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University.

In the wake of seven decades of protracted revolution and armed conflict in Southeast Myanmar, an ensemble of indigenous peoples and transnational activists have begun formulating a radical alternative vision of how peace and conservation might be achieved in practice. Through translating and rescaling indigenous modes of possessing the earth, this ensemble is working to transform 5,000 km<sup>2</sup> of highly contested terrain in the highlands along the Salween River into a conservation zone they call the Salween Peace Park.

In this study I explore what indigenous practices and cosmologies, and the ways they are being translated and rescaled into the Salween Peace Park, might teach us about ownership, sovereignty, and politics at large.

The first half of this study focuses on the highlands along the Salween River, to explore how people residing here commonly treat their landscapes as already possessed, in the dual and entangled senses of being both occupied or haunted by spectral more-than-human presences, and controlled and owned by them. In these Possessed Landscapes human ownership of land is always ephemeral, ultimately nesting in the encompassing ownership of spectral presences (who I describe as persons). Humans can only borrow land by constantly negotiating with and propitiating its spectral owners. A corollary of these indigenous modes of possessing the earth is that these highlands were not so much anarchic as in sense of “no

ruler”, but rather, power and sovereignty is nesting in the hands of the spectral owners of the earth. I describe this as an alternative mode of politics that I name Spectral Sovereignty. In the second half I take a small step back to shuttle between the residents of these highlands and networks of activists based in Chiang Mai in Thailand. Here I focus on both growing new forms of dispossession and counterinsurgency that have accompanied the cooling of armed conflict, and efforts by ensembles of indigenous peoples, activists, armed groups, and conservationists to attempt to push back and re-territorialise and re-possess the earth. I go on to explore how this ensemble is subtly translating and rescaling possessed landscapes and spectral sovereignty into land laws and conservation policy as a way to transform these former war zones into a protected area, the Salween Peace Park. I then show how, in the process of establishing this protected area, these activists are continuing the revolutionary movements to attain greater autonomy for the indigenous people residing here. I then close this thesis by exploring what is happening as the Salween Peace Park is coming into contact and being negotiated on the ground in these highlands. Here we find revolutionary politics and spectral sovereignty are becoming entwined into a form of Alter-Politics that is unsettling established notions of sovereignty and politics. However, beyond unsettling, it also gestures towards alternative ways of understanding the shifting entanglements between people, politics, spectres, and other unseen more-than-humans, and radical alternatives to conservation and armed conflict in Myanmar, and beyond.

**Granlund, Stefan 2020.** *The promise of payday: exploring the role of state cash transfers in post-apartheid rural South Africa*. Research Subject: Rural Development. Department of Rural and Urban Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

During the last two decades, cash transfer programs have become a significant tool across low and middle-income countries in efforts to reduce poverty. However, there is a paucity of studies on beneficiaries’ own perspectives and lived experiences of cash transfers as well as potential long-term productive effects on livelihoods.

The aim of this thesis is to explore the material and socio-relational implications of state cash transfers for impoverished populations in rural South Africa in a changing livelihood context, using the Child Support Grant (CSG) as case. The CSG is an unconditional cash transfer to improve child wellbeing for households living in poverty. Material and socialrelational implications of the grant are explored through combining household surveys with all (273) households in two rural villages in the Eastern Cape Province with interviews and observations. The surveys, conducted in 2016, followed up a previous similar survey from 2002, which was before the CSG reached these villages. Drawing on literature on cash transfers, livelihoods, and social justice theory, including the two interlinked concepts of redistribution and recognition, the study points to the importance of both material and symbolic redistribution in strengthening livelihoods and social justice.

The thesis reveals that in a context of rising unemployment and declining cultivation in the two villages, social grants have both protective and productive effects on livelihoods. The results show how the recipients used the CSG strategically for making small improvements to their livelihoods over time. The study also shows that the CSG has strengthened women’s autonomy and dignity and has reduced gender inequalities at household level. However, the CSG did not lead to significant improvements that could eradicate poverty in the long term.

This thesis further studies state-citizen relations and the contentious character of social grants in rural South Africa. There is a growing sense of entitlement to the CSG among recipients, while sentiments of grants being a form of charity exists simultaneously. The thesis concludes that the encounters with state bureaucracy primarily are avenues where CSG recipients see the state, enact a form of agency and gain recognition, which contributes to a sense of citizenship. In conclusion, the CSG is not simply an economic transfer of cash, which keeps individuals in households and communities afloat, it also becomes part of, and reshapes, social relations. The potential for recipients to gain recognition of their status as citizens is an important symbolic implication of social grants.

**Helmfrid, Sigrun 2020.** *Cotton and Cabaret: Domestic Economy and Female Agency in Burkina Faso*. Research Subject: Social Anthropology. Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University.

This study investigates the functioning of the domestic economy of smallholder cotton farmers with the overall aim of interrogating female agency, based on ethnographic fieldwork in Burkina Faso in the mid-1990s. The thesis addresses the following interrelated research questions: How were the smallholder domestic economies organized and how did they function? What were the mechanisms for economic inequality and social stratification? To what extent did women benefit from cotton farming? What economic strategies were available to women? And finally, how could female agency be conceptualized in relation to the domestic unit under male headship? Permeating the analysis is the insight that domestic economies of many West African farming societies consist of separate but interconnected economic domains, the “common” economy of the farming unit and the “individual” economies of its male and female members. It demonstrates that women have vested interests in both the common economy and their individual ones, since women’s individual undertakings, to a large extent, are motivated by their gendered responsibilities towards the domestic group. The study argues for an agency concept that captures the different modes in which women exercise agency, both as individuals and as members of social bodies.

**Martin Galan, Vanesa 2020.** *Living in times of climate change. Weather-related understandings, realities, and entanglements among Guarani people in the Bolivian Chaco*. Research Subject: Social Anthropology. School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg.

Since climate change became an issue of public concern worldwide, the weather has attracted increasing attention and come to stand as a common ground for joint action between Indigenous people and governmental and non-governmental actors in the Bolivian Chaco. Despite becoming a common cause, the management of weather through mitigation and adaptation strategies takes place under ontological differences and power imbalances. Accordingly, it poses problems of sidelining non-modernist comprehensions, conceptualizations, and enactments of what is known as weather, and of displacing indigenous world-making practices on behalf of climate resilience. These problems have been latent even during the Morales Government, despite being inspired by the ideals of de-colonization and *Vivir Bien*. Based on eleven months of fieldwork conducted in two Guarani communities between 2015 and 2016, this thesis explores Guarani weather-related reality on “its own terms,” and considers its entanglement and power interplay with the State, modernity, and climate change issues during what might be the last period of the

Morales' administration. Drawing inspiration from research, working under the umbrella of the so-called "ontological turn" in anthropology, this thesis takes difference seriously, moves away from dominant assumptions about weather and climate, and engages in a relational perspective that looks at the complex and dynamic relationships between people and their surroundings and at the interconnection of the spheres of social life. Inspired by Latin American studies of coloniality and modernity, this study also draws attention to oppressive aspects and power interplays that shape indigenous lifeworlds and world-makings. By approaching the particularities and radical differences of Guarani people's lived experiences, understandings, practices, and social relations concerned with "weather," this dissertation contributes to bringing the radical alterity that the dominant climate reality eclipses to the fore. While, by addressing the partial connections, entanglement, and power interplays of local "weather" issues with the Karai world and with the dominant context of climate action, this dissertation shows how Guarani reality becomes articulated with the Karai and is accordingly enacted under broader and coercive socio-political conditions that discourage the emergence or strengthening of multiple/alternative worlds.

**Rosén, Linus 2020.** *At the limits of state governance: territory, property and state making in Lenje Chiefdom, rural Zambia.* Research Subject: Rural Development. Department of Rural and Urban Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

African state property regimes – embedded in a racialized structure of land ownership that stretches back centuries – are at the center of contemporary land struggles. At present, the Zambian government is appropriating 'traditional land', controlled by chiefs and headmen molded through colonial rule, in an effort to bring it into the fold of 'modernity'. On paper this process appears as a powerful state-building project. Yet on the ground it is riddled with legal contingency, with land survey beacons appearing unexpectedly on people's doorsteps, and chiefs finding themselves torn between asserting their sovereignty and maintaining recognition by the state

This thesis examines the material and conceptual remaking of chiefly lands as constitutive of new forms of exclusion and political authority. Yet, instead of focusing on the 'achievements' of state power, analytical attention is placed on the creative ways state governance is subverted by chiefly obstruction, insubordinate peoples and unruly nature. Drawing on long-term fieldwork and archival research, the thesis argues that the process of 'state making' and its effects are inseparable from the myriad material practices that thwart state power. A conceptualization of 'boundaries' is developed to capture how relations of state and chiefly power operate on an unstable political landscape. The analysis knits together insights from legal pluralism, political ecology, critical geography, anthropology and postcolonial theory in a grounded reading of everyday forms of state formation that captures how colonial histories and spatialities intertwine with present-day politics.

Building on this analytical foundation, the thesis links up four case studies of 'state making': (I) the colonial racialization and sedentarization of African bodies, and their refusals to conform to colonial territoriality, (II) the government enclosure of a forest repeatedly reoccupied by chiefly authority (III) the emplacement of survey beacons on village land, and their demolition by local inhabitants, and (IV) the promotion of statesanctioned title deeds on customary land, and their reinvention as implements of chiefly control. Each case makes visible the fissures of state power and how creative people exploit indeterminacies

to resist eviction and reassert their claims to home and land. Through a recognition of 'ordinary people' as political protagonists, fully capable of contestation and critique, the thesis shows how marginalized people continuously test the limits of state governance, and how such practices are not 'irregularities' to otherwise effective performances of governance, but crucial political enactments that constitute new forms of property, territory and an uneven and variable state.

## 2021

**Elmi, Nimmo Osman 2021.** *Digitalising Tax, The Kenyan Way: The Travels and Translations of ITax in Kenya*. Research Subject: Technology and Social Change. Department of Thematic Studies, Technology and Social Change, Linköping University.

Kenya, as with other developing countries, has joined the global bandwagon of using digital technologies to increase domestic revenues. Within the new strategies, lie great potential in achieving sustainable development, however, the shift is happening quite rapidly and has been made mandatory within a short period of time. The implications of this shift have prompted this research to analyse how it has shaped tax practices in Kenya. This study addresses the implementation strategies of an e-filings system, ITax in Kenya that was piloted, adopted and made mandatory in a short period of time. ITax as demonstrated in this dissertation has led to complexities including shifting tax expertise from tax consultants to information and communication technology (ICT) experts. I analyse what is at stake for all actors involved from those who commission its use to the taxpayers. I also analyse whether Kenya was prepared economically or infrastructurally for this shift. The outset for this dissertation is models like ITax interface with the different interests of social/institutional worlds as it travels and gets translated generating complex and unintended effects. This study therefore combines postcolonial and technoscientific approaches in order to understand how the current implementation of ITax is connected to colonial development and fiscal rationale. Methodologically, this dissertation contributes to the socio-cultural perspectives to studying tax.

**López, Elisa Maria 2021.** *Transforming Kiruna: Producing Space, Society, and Legacies of Inequality in the Swedish Ore Fields*. Research Subject: Cultural Anthropology. Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, Uppsala University.

Extractive resources industries are irreversibly transforming land, air, water, life and society around the world at an unprecedented rate, and Sweden is no exception. This anthropological study analyzes acute issues related to this transformation: the resettlement of six thousand residents of the city of Kiruna due to ground deformations caused by large-scale iron mining by the Swedish state-owned company LKAB (Luossavaara-Kiirunavaara AB). The thesis explains how mining, the dominant mode of production in the Ore Fields (Malmfälten) region, establishes particular social relations, structures of power, and conceptual models of space, nature, and society. I approach these relations and ideas through the perspective of space, and show how space in Kiruna is produced through social processes, material infrastructures, symbols and meaning-making in support of extractivism, the political and economic prioritization of resource extraction. The empirical basis of the work is fifteen months of ethnographic field research in Kiruna between 2012 and 2015. The analysis relies on theories of space in Anthropology and Geography, as well as



ideas from settler colonial studies. A central argument in the study is that despite official representations of the city move as a “social transformation”, the physical, conceptual, and social production of space extends material and social inequalities integral to extractivism. While all city residents are affected by the insecurity and risks of extractivism, which the city move revealed, the Indigenous Sámi community is uniquely affected. Sámi from the Kiruna area have historically been subjected to colonial policy, limits on their subsistence economy, displacement from land, and harmful stereotypes. However, Sámi have also continually resisted such limitations and stereotypes, adopting diverse forms of work to support reindeer herding (including mine work), establishing urban community spaces, and documenting and preserving local cultural landscapes. The move of the city reveals that such legacies of social inequality, which have been a part of the establishment of mining, persevere in social relations, ideas, and material architectures that form space in and around Kiruna. Providing ethnographic detail and analysis of the reproduction of extractivism and its inherent inequalities in spatial practices, this study contributes to the anthropological literature on space, resource extraction, and social inequality.

**Norsted, Kristian Sandbekk 2021.** *Subjects of Feminism: The Production and Practice of Anxiety in a Swedish Activist Community.* Research Subject: Cultural Anthropology. Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, Uppsala University

Anxiety is a zeitgeist of our time. The range of themes to which anxiety attaches today are truly vast, but anxiety arises and is cultivated in specific ways among different groups of people. Based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in the capital of Sweden, Stockholm, in 2017 and 2018, this thesis explores the role that anxiety plays in contemporary feminist activist culture. The thesis focuses on several salient features of that culture: the cultivation of safe spaces and separatist rooms for women and nonbinary people; the place and role of male feminists in the community; how the activists translated the academic concept of intersectionality into an activist practice; and some of the creative ways in which individual feminist activists dealt with anxiety. Theories emphasizing how safety has become a primary cultural value, as well as how we have collectively unlearned to live with uncertainty, shed light on the anxiety that proliferated in the feminist activist community I discuss. Contemporary anxiety is also partly explained by theories stressing the ways in which society has become uncertain in novel ways in the wake of neoliberalism. Among the feminist activists I came to know in Stockholm, collectively devised strategies to do good cultivated a particular social dynamic that rendered individual feminist activists anxious. How might they take personal responsibility for the revolutionary ambitions of feminism? How can they avoid excluding any potential subjects of feminism? What happens if they say or do something that upsets or offends other feminist activists? This thesis examines the relationship between collectively devised strategies to do good and the resulting production of anxiety.

**Pasquini, Mirko 2021.** *The Negotiation of Urgency: Economies of Attention in an Italian Emergency Room.* Research Subject: Cultural Anthropology. Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, Uppsala University.

Urgency in a hospital Emergency Room (ER) is not a self-evident state. Urgency is made, by establishing priorities, distributing attention and material resources, and deciding who and what needs to be attended to first – and, simultaneously, who and what has to

wait. The process of determining urgency is known as “triage” (from the French verb, *trier*, “to choose”).

This thesis is about the vicissitudes of triage in an Italian ER. Based on one year of ethnographic fieldwork, the thesis explores what happens when urgency is at stake; when it is contested and caught up between different, and frequently conflicting, perspectives. It explores how urgency is determined in practice, and shows how triage always is a vulnerable process of negotiation guided by economies of attention.

How is urgency actually shaped in interactions between patients, their families and friends, and the ER staff? The different chapters explore how time in the ER is created through shifting registers of attention, and how attention in the ER is affected by widespread economic and social precarity, and neoliberal national policies of governance. It discusses how triage increasingly is structured by attitudes of mistrust; and also by potential or real outbreaks of violence.

Addressing the particular positioning of the ER as a thick space of conjunction between neoliberal state politics and people's increasing need for care and recognition, the thesis aims to contribute to medical anthropology literature by analyzing triage not as a neutral medical way of sorting, but as a practice that actively creates difference. It explores both the limits of triage, and how those limits can spark improvisation and creative reinvention.

**Rasmussen, Nika 2021.** *Embodied Citizenship in the Making: Bolivian Urban Youth at the Crossroads of Social Hierarchies*. Research Subject: Cultural Anthropology. Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, Uppsala University.

This thesis analyses the body as a nexus for playing out power relations and feelings of belonging. Based upon twelve months of fieldwork amongst young urban people living in La Paz and El Alto, it examines the connections between bodily conceptions, social hierarchies and societal inclusions. During the fieldwork in 2014-2015, Evo Morales and his MAS Party had been in power for almost a decade. The young people had thus grown up with the “process of change”, the project of decolonizing the society and building a plurinational state. This served as the study's backdrop.

The material shows that despite the government's “process of change”, old and discriminatory structures and notions prevailed amongst the youth. Social hierarchies and the production of differences were integral parts of their everyday life. The young people, engaged in an organization working for sexual and reproductive rights, navigated complex and contradictory norms and values in a conflictive socio-political landscape. With political practices at the micro-level of everyday life, they questioned, negotiated and reproduced old notions and developed their political subjectivities. The topic of sexuality emerged as a particularly intense site for interrelational struggles between adults and young people. A new political position surfaced, claiming space in the nation's body politic – the political subject of youth. The study of youth fruitfully unravelled social and political developments and adults' interests, highlighting constructions of temporalities and the need to consider age.

The thesis makes evident how notions of race, class, gender, age, sexuality and place *materialize* bodies. Some bodies merged with salient norms, whereas others “stood out” and felt “out of place”. It is suggested that the relationship between society, state and the individual is productively studied with the framework of “embodied citizenship”. Embodied citizenship is theoretically and analytically uncovered by linking projects of



nationhood, how belongings at different societal levels and social hierarchies are produced and interrelated, together with an intersectional gaze on power relations. This elucidates that citizenship is an ongoing, embodied and lived experience in everyday life. It develops in relation to social hierarchies and projects of nationhood whose inherent power relations work to materialize bodies.

## 2022

**Garis Guttman, Maryam 2022.** *Förändring och kontinuitet: Giftermål, släktskap, identitet och generationsskiften i den assyriska diasporan.* Research Subject: Social Anthropology. School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg.

Denna avhandling undersöker uppfattningar om släktskap och giftermål bland assyrier i Sverige, i relation till gruppens diasporaidentitet. Den tar sitt avstamp i historiska processer under mitten av 1970- talet vilka tenderar påverka ungdomars vardagsliv för att sedan fokusera på hur en ny syn på kategorin ungdom och normalitet tar form. Därefter ringas ungdomars uppfattning om giftermålstraditioner och släktskapsrelationer in, men också hur de ser på sin sociala och etniska identitet. Syftet med avhandlingen är att kasta ljus över sociokulturella förändringar bland assyrier i Sverige och deras innebörd för den enskilda individen men också för gruppen som helhet. I förståelsen av förändringarnas omfattning har utgångspunkten varit i parallella processer som inte är helt oberoende av varandra, nämligen hur synen på släktskap, giftermål och ungdom i mötet med det svenska samhället har tolkats och omtolkats och därigenom fått annorlunda innehåll och innebörd. Den relevans giftermålet och släktskapet hade i hemlandet skiljer sig i många avseenden från den betydelse dessa institutioner kommit att få i Sverige. Äktenskapet kännetecknas inte längre av tidiga och arrangerade giftermål och patriarkatet som ideal håller på att omvärderas av många i den yngre generationen. Den etnoreligiöst baserade endogaminormen har skiftat i Sverige och håller på att luckras upp, då dess betydelse för reproduktion av religiös och/ eller etnisk tillhörighet inte är lika viktig bland en del unga medlemmar. På liknande sätt har synen på ungdom bland assyrier förändrats och anpassats till de förhållanden som råder i Sverige, processer som ungdomar sedan ankomsten till Sverige varit med och påverkat i en viss riktning. Det organiserade inhemska föreningslivet inom gruppen öppnade under gruppens första tid nya möjligheter för ungdomar i allmänhet att på ett konstruktivt sätt bryta mot vissa normer utan större konsekvenser, till exempel att inte vilja gifta sig med den av föräldrarna utvalde. Många föräldrar fick en ny konkurrent som de inledningsvis försökte bekämpa men som de fortsättningsvis kom att betrakta som komplement i vägledning av de unga. Från omkring 2010 och framåt har familjen, primärt kärnfamiljen, återigen kommit att spela större roll än föreningen i ungdomarnas liv och svenskfödda ungdomar håller på att förhandla om föräktenskapliga förhållanden och annat som begränsar deras frihet. Familjen anses stå dels mellan individ och kollektiv, dels mellan det svenska samhället och det assyriska kollektivet. Utifrån att det ställs krav på familjen från dessa skilda håll har den fått en ambivalent funktion i Sverige: å ena sidan förväntas den att upprätthålla kulturella normer och ideal och å andra sidan förväntas familjen från både ”svenskt” håll och från deras barn att visa förståelse och acceptans för sina barns uppväxt i det svenska samhället och det assyriska kollektivet. Avhandlingen visar hur familjens roll skiftat över tid och successivt övergått ifrån att vara en ”traditionsbärande” till att vara en ”förändringsvänlig” institution, präglad av bilaterala släktskapsband. Därtill praktiserar många assyrier svenska traditioner

som exempelvis kulturella och religiösa högtider på sitt eget sätt, i vad som skulle kunna beskrivas som ”mixkultur”. Allt fler börjar också i vissa sammanhang att identifiera sig som svensk-assyrier. Alla dessa kulturella förändringsprocesser har lett till en förändrad syn på den etniska och sociala identiteten. Vilken aspekt av dessa identiteter som lyfts fram beror på inbördes relationer i varje given situation. Nyckelord: Socialantropologi, assyrier, bilateral, diaspora, dubbelidentitet, endogami, familj, förändring, giftermål, ideal, kontinuitet, normer, patrilinejär, patriarkala traditioner, släktskap, svensk-assyrier, svenskar, ungdom.

**Johansson, Simon 2022.** *Comeback Detroit: The return of whites and wealth to a Black city*. Research Subject: Social Anthropology. Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University.

Since the 1950s, the city of Detroit has declined in terms of demography and economic prosperity. Once among the wealthiest and largest cities of America, Detroit now continually ranks as one of nations poorest, Blackest and most abandoned urban areas.

This dissertation studies urban change by focusing on the emergent reversal of the city’s long-term decline, exploring the period of time when both whites and wealth were returning to the city. As this moment of return is closely aligned to local notions of “comeback” and that the city was “coming back”, the thesis examines the reflections and contestations of the city’s contemporary comeback and the relations of power that frame this process.

The first part of the thesis examines how the city has changed in the past, and the ways in which this past has furnished particular understandings of the present. Racial and class struggles have defined the city’s trajectory and these struggles have shaped a cosmology of division and separation, informing everyday life and mundane relations, while being mirrored and expressed through the material city. In the second part, the thesis concentrates on the temporal, spatial and demographic dimensions of comeback and the emergence of a “New Detroit”; a city that is whiter and wealthier than before. By examining the subjects said to be returning, and how both the city’s spaces and futures are molded around them, the study inquires into how comeback and a New Detroit is made to emerge.

The third part of the thesis explores how Detroiters come to labor collectively, through ritualized events, with a city that is changing. It is in ritualized events that Detroiters come to experience diversity and community, integrating what is otherwise divided, while articulating both morality and legitimacy in relation the city’s comeback.

**Kristiansen, Mathias 2022.** *The Greatest Scam: Network Marketing and the Economization of Everyday Life in the United States*. Research Subject: Social Anthropology. School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg.

This thesis examines how neoliberalism has penetrated the everyday life of middle-class Americans, leading to new forms of living and new collective understandings of the capitalist economic order. In order to understand how neoliberalism has penetrated the everyday life of middle-class Americans, I conducted one year of ethnographic fieldwork among people participating in network marketing, a form of sales that also includes the recruitment of additional salespeople – what is known as building a network. Network marketers do not receive a salary or direct commission; they generate income through recruitment of customers and salespeople. This structure encourages network marketers to rethink their social relationships in financial terms, reframing their personal connections as

opportunities to earn money. Network marketing is a particularly strong case to illustrate neoliberalism in the United States because it epitomizes core tenets of neoliberalism like individual responsibility and entrepreneurialism, while also illuminating how a financial logic has replaced employment as the ideal pathway to middle-class life. This is emerging as part of the large-scale economic transformation from post-war regulated capitalism to neoliberal capitalism which has created intense economic insecurity and inequality for many people in the United States. I introduce a framework called the neoliberal economization of everyday life to analyze how mundane aspects of daily life – social encounters, routines, and modes of self-representation – become saturated with a capitalist economic logic. I demonstrate how the economization of everyday life naturalizes economic inequality and fosters social relationships dictated by a capitalist logic, which limits other non-economic aspects of human life that bind people together.

**Lacbawan, Macario 2022.** *The Burden of Responsibility: Predicaments of Environmental Life in the Caraballo Mountains, Northern Philippines.* Research Subject: Cultural Anthropology. Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, Uppsala University.

Indigenous people are not obviously, or naturally, stewards of the environment. But when the idea that they are such custodians gains legal traction, and when indigenous land-use practices are codified to reflect environmental principles, they become a burden of responsibility that has significant consequences for the lives and the livelihoods of indigenous communities.

This thesis is about Ikalahan people of the Caraballo Mountains in Northern Philippines and the vicissitudes of their obligation to the environment. Based on twelve months' ethnographic fieldwork, the thesis explores what happens when the legal recognition of Ikalahan people as an indigenous group demands that they re-fashion their ancestral land from a place where they practice swidden agriculture into a space where they are supposed to ensure environmental conservation. It explores how the Philippine state utilizes scientific knowledge such as cartography and forestry to facilitate the expulsion and estrangement of Ikalahan people from their land even as it relies on those people to maintain their ancestral land as an exclusive ecological sanctuary.

How do Ikalahan communities enact this environmental responsibility, and how do they contest it? The different chapters explore how villagers deploy the cultural power of shame to impose ecological obligations, how they also create tactics to evade and subvert such obligations, and how they use the rhetoric that the land should not be monetized to, precisely, monetize it. The chapters also discuss how traditional moral principles provide a means for Ikalahan people to both understand and facilitate the economic inequalities that have emerged since their land was transformed into an ecological zone.

By addressing how Ikalahan communities negotiate the consequences of their legal recognition as indigenous people, the thesis contributes to the expanding literature that shows how indigeneity is not a neutral label, but is, rather, a potentially burdensome positionality whose attachment to the environment is anything but straightforward.

**Matai Manjate, Fernando 2022. SOMETHING GOOD BUT NOTHING TO BE PROUD OF: Inheritance and Succession Practices, and Sociopolitical Stakes in Times of Decentralization in Marracuene, Mozambique.** Research Subject: Cultural Anthropology. Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, Uppsala University.

This ethnographic study focuses on inheritance and succession practices and sociopolitical stakes in present-day Marracuene in southern Mozambique. It explores how in contexts of rapid economic, social, cultural and political change, individuals, social actors and institutions deal with inheritance and succession rights, both when the property holders and incumbents are still alive and after they have passed away. Besides exploring legal processes, this study approaches inheritance and succession as social, cultural, economic and political processes.

The study is based on twelve months of fieldwork, and, to a lesser extent, archival research. It focuses on inheritance and succession through five entry points. First, the study looks at how people deal with inheritance and succession rights pertaining to their own life situation. Second, it explores cultural understandings, as well as different strategies and arguments mobilized to secure and safeguard inheritance and succession rights. Third, the study investigates how individuals anticipate what is going to happen with inheritance and succession after their passing. Fourth, it explores how in global, national and local arenas rights and interests of traditionally weak social actors, such as widows and orphans, are defended and protected from disinheritance and dispossession. Fifth, the study analyses the extent to which local inheritance and succession practices relate to, and are influenced by, ongoing sociopolitical transformations, such as decentralization and urbanization, in Marracuene.

Ethnographically, the study describes and analyzes actual inheritance and succession practices and strategies of individuals, kin groups and various sociopolitical institutions. The study furthermore describes and analyzes local politics, notably in relation to decentralization processes, so as to analyze the practical implications of the fact that chieftaincy and other community-based positions are nowadays defined as “community authorities,” according to the Mozambican state law.

The findings show that there are general principles of inheritance and succession: a man is supposed to transfer inheritance to his wife and children and to be succeeded by his eldest child. However, such principles are often overruled, which can lead to disinheritance and dispossession of widows and orphans. The actual inheritance and succession practices result from a combination of factors. They include the economic and cultural values of the properties and positions in question (and the ways through which they were acquired), the power and authority of the actors, the power relations between different social actors involved in each case, the normative orders referred to and their interpretation and practical implementation, and the institutions involved in the process of decision-making. Overall, people have different understandings of inheritance and succession that furthermore more influence practices. In a local context of legal pluralism, individuals and groups tend to combine different normative orders and practices to claim and secure their rights, or to protect themselves whenever their rights are questioned. Through detailed ethnographic descriptions, the study demonstrates that inheritance and succession are complex processes and depend on economic, social, cultural and political factors at play in specific circumstances.

**Petričević, Igor 2022.** *Beyond Transit: Precarious Emplacement and the Wavering Reception of Migrants in the City of Zagreb.* Research Subject: Social Anthropology. Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University.

The territory of the Republic of Croatia has historically been a place of forced and economic migration, mainly consisting of population movements between former Yugoslav states and other neighbouring European countries. Since the 2000s, these borderlands have become sites of continuous transit migration from the Middle East and Africa. Based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Zagreb over several periods between 2016 and 2020, this thesis seeks to understand how non-European migration and places of transit in the Balkans interrelate and transform each other. Thus, the study explores how different migrants' trajectories meet, and how they interact with the spaces and people in Zagreb as the country prepares to enter the Schengen area of free movement, and the city is absorbed into the European border regime. The focus on 'migrant' and 'non-migrant' relations in a transit area presents a particular viewpoint on the mediated dynamics of large-scale migration into Europe. The thesis argues for a study of migration and emplacement as entangled with borders, the histories of transit localities, relations within them, affects in everyday encounters, and structures of precarity. As a contribution to the anthropology of transit migration, three interrelated concepts are formulated. First, 'precarious emplacement' captures the complexities of moving and staying on the European periphery by taking these (im)mobilities to be embedded in local spaces, relations and histories. Second, by highlighting the relationality of emplacement, the concept of 'wavering reception' is developed to depict the discourses, practices and orientations of local residents. These fluctuate between hospitality and hostility, and therefore form a complex affective landscape in the urban spaces where migration is prevalent. Third, the thesis develops the concept of 'the Gap' as an indeterminate and ductile space between individuals and groups. It is used as an analytic for exploring the qualitative shifts in position, perceptions and feelings that produce these vacillating relations of proximity and distance which are central to emplacement. This conceptual framework illuminates the changing dynamics of transit migration in Croatia, as well as the various processes and transformations which emerge as (im)mobilities interact with transit areas.

**Rekhis, Mayssa 2022.** *Surviving trauma in exile and the integration-conundrum: navigating therapy and the imperatives of a host(ile?) society.* Research Subject: Health and Social Sciences. Department of Culture and Society, Linköping University.

"Undesirables" of the contemporary world (Agier, 2008), refugees are often considered "Others" whose lives can be wasted, at deadly borders, in detention centers, or at the margins of societies. Proving their suffering is a condition for accessing the right to asylum, but the current migration policies in the host countries expect them to quickly overcome it, and integrate, as a way to pay back for the protection they received. This is partly because some countries offered protection to refugees as an investment to tackle their own challenges of aging societies, and labor shortages, in other words, to reap the so-called "refugee-dividend" (Hansen, 2021). Thus, refugees face what I call an integration-conundrum whereby they are expected to overcome trauma to integrate – as a needed proof of their deservingness of being accepted – while healing is a struggle hardened by the instability due to the difficulties of integration, the structural exclusion, and the impossibility of belonging. Through an

ethnography of a trauma therapy center for refugees in Sweden, this anthropological study explores the experiences of refugees navigating their pain and sufferings, in a context where the focus is on them overcoming trauma and integrating. It closely analyses the consequences of borders, migration, and integration policies on exiles' experiences of suffering, resisting, living, and healing. In parallel, it explores the roles of trauma therapy, trauma discourses, and therapeutic apparatuses in the refugees' journeys, narratives, possibilities for healing, and attempts to lead dignified and fulfilled lives, despite structural exclusion and being "othered". While trauma used to be mobilized to legitimize the victim status and to identify "real refugees" (Fassin & Rechtman, 2007), this study argues that we are now witnessing a trauma regime of survival. And in the particular case of refugees, this survival paradigm gets intertwined with integration and seems to create new hierarchies and categorizations: the good and the bad refugees, the good being the ones able to survive, overcome their trauma, and integrate into their new communities. The bad are the ones who don't recover and continue to be a burden on the welfare states, unable to "integrate". With this categorization, therapeutic spaces take on a new role, one of strengthening the capacities of survival of the "not-yet integrated" refugees, and integration becomes transformed not only into a moral imperative by the host society but also into an individual psychological competency; an equivalent of recovery and survival that refugees need to acquire to prove both their healing and their deservingness.

**Rogat Mauricio 2022.** *Even flows and deferred lives: The logistification of migrant settlement in Sweden.* Research Subject: Social Anthropology. School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg.

In 2016, rebuilt containers and barracks accommodating so-called 'newly arrived immigrants' started to appear in Stockholm, Sweden. People who had been on the move for an extensive time, staying in refugee camps, and transit, reception and asylum centres, found themselves again in a state of deferral, this time within the refuge of the nation-state. This dissertation aims to deepen the understanding of how new thresholds arise and materialise, extending the migration trajectory within the nation-state. To this end, the dissertation attends to conflicting policies, bureaucratic practices and local conditions, focusing primarily on the logic and implementation of the Settlement Act, a Swedish dispersal policy enacted in the wake of the 'summer of migration' in 2015. The new law aimed to speed up the transition of 'newly arrived immigrants' into the labour market by creating 'even flows' between asylum centres and municipal accommodation. More specifically, this dissertation explores how the practices of deferral are enacted in the implementation of the Settlement Act through three separate empirical domains: 1) calculations of the dispersal and matching system at the state level, 2) municipal management and the dwellers' experiences of temporary accommodation and resettlement in Stockholm, and 3) the professional and social dimensions of the encounters between street-level bureaucrats and 'newly arrived immigrants'. The dissertation builds on nine months of ethnographic fieldwork in Stockholm between 2018 and 2019. It comprises participant observations and interviews with officials and with 'newly arrived immigrants' living in temporary housing. The dissertation brings together and analyses the separate empirical domains by drawing on the concept of the logistification of migration. This analytical lens encourages us to dissect the inclusive yet differential mechanisms in the migration apparatus, paying attention to the temporal management of circulation



and mobility, on the one hand, and the ensuing friction and contestation, on the other hand. The dissertation argues that the logistification of migrant settlement management includes several practices that defer the housing shortage to sustain the acceleration from asylum centres to municipal accommodation, which produces a post-asylum threshold and incessant forced mobility. This continuous circulation of people operates as a filtering mechanism between asylum and integration, leading the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ into housing and labour precarity. Hence, the dissertation points to the linkages between the logistical management of settlement, practices of deferral and differential inclusion. This dissertation contributes to the growing literature dealing with the logistification of migration by following state policy through its implementation. While large parts of the literature on the logistification of migration have focused on the state level of managing migration and borders, this dissertation pays attention to how the logistification takes shape within the borders of the nation-state.

## 2023

**Arvidsson, Anna 2023.** *Smallholders and pigs in northern Uganda: an ethnographic study of pig rearing, disease management and local knowledges*. Research Subject: Rural Development. Department of Urban and Rural Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

In Uganda, pig numbers have increased rapidly in recent decades, with the majority reared by smallholder farmers in rural areas. It has been suggested that pig production can play an important role in reducing rural poverty. However, the severe and often fatal disease of African swine fever (ASF) represents a major threat to the Ugandan pig sector, hampering its potential to mitigate poverty. This thesis work is situated in post-conflict northern Uganda and aims to contribute knowledge about the challenges that smallholders face in pig production, paying particular attention to ASF. A discourse analysis of policy documents informing the Ugandan veterinary and agriculture sector was combined with ethnographic fieldwork among smallholders in northern Uganda. Results show that pig diseases such as ASF are one of many challenges faced by smallholders who keep pigs. Besides the obstacle of pig diseases and the associated difficulties commonly experienced, smallholders described social tensions caused by the possibility of accumulating individual wealth through pig production. The findings also reveal that smallholders have very limited access to veterinary services and are therefore heavily dependent on the resources and knowledge available in their local communities when dealing with pig diseases. In contrast to the dominant development narrative found in agricultural policies, which focus on transforming smallholder farming into large-scale agriculture, smallholders often perceive their own pig production as a potential launch pad out of poverty, rather than as a means to become large-scale farmers. Despite all the challenges associated with pig rearing, most smallholders continue to invest in pigs in the hope of improving their everyday lives and their future.

**Caballero, Adelaida 2023.** *Shortchanged: Elderly Women Street Vendors in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea*. Research Subject: Cultural Anthropology. Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, Uppsala University.

Normative assumptions regarding reciprocity between adult children and elderly parents continue to dominate narratives on later life in sub-Saharan Africa. Yet strenuous

socioeconomic conditions make it difficult for families to meet expectations of care and support. In Malabo, elderly women commonly engage in economic activities such as street vending for survival. Separation from male partners and high unemployment among men and youths often turn senior women into sole providers in multi-generational households. The cultural script of self-sacrificial motherhood, however, leads people to believe that these senior women are hardly entitled to demand reciprocal support – that as proper mothers and grandmothers, they are merely fulfilling a duty. Gender-based forms of exploitation and feelings of desertion characterize family life for many older Equatoguinean women.

Elderly women street vendors who live and work in Malabo are also mistreated outside their homes. Harassment, humiliation, and physical invisibilization are some of the means by which ‘patriotic citizens’ and representatives of state authorities protect the government’s narrative of ‘unprecedented development.’

The thesis explores how elderly women street vendors try to counter the routinized types of violence to which they are exposed and how they strive to assert themselves as persons. I approach the women’s articulations of personhood through the concept of moral economy and discuss them with regard to normative African relationality. The empirical basis of the work is fourteen months of uninterrupted ethnographic field research in Malabo between 2017 and 2018. The analyses rely on social gerontological theories on dependency, intergenerational tensions, prosocial behaviors, gender identity, sexuality, and autonomy, as well as on anthropological theories on the category of the person, everyday violence, morality, gossip, and older women’s sexuality in Africa. The thesis aims to contribute to humanistic gerontological literature by highlighting the meanings that autonomy can take for seniors who live in conditions of no institutional support, normalized violence at home, gender prejudice, and the kind of ageism that arises from narratives that equate social advancement with development, hence identifying old age with anti-values such as ignorance and backwardness. Findings suggest that, among elderly women street vendors in Malabo, striving toward a sense of autonomous personhood is not only a means for coping with the challenges of aging in a difficult socioeconomic milieu, but also a more encompassing rejection of ‘retraditionalized’ national politics and authoritarianism.

**Engblom, Rikard 2023.** *Time Warps: Refugees and the Experience of Waiting in Rural Sweden*. Research Subject: Ethnology. Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, Uppsala University.

This thesis explores the ways in which refugees’ experience of time is warped when they come to Sweden. It is based on fourteen months of ethnographic fieldwork in Avesta, a small municipality in rural Sweden.

Refugee reception and immigration control in Sweden is characterized by humanitarian ideals that exist in tension with practices and policies aiming to restrict immigration in the name of security and stability. Each chapter of this thesis documents a different combination of these ideals and concerns, examining how they generate particular configurations of waiting. For many refugees in Sweden, everyday life is characterized by waiting—waiting to have their asylum application processed; to receive a residence permit, which grants them the right to work; to be reunited with their families to find a place in Swedish society. This process often takes several years, during which the conditions for receiving residence permit may suddenly change or be made more difficult.

The thesis is a contribution to the recent “temporal turn” in migration studies through its focus on waiting as a productive phenomenon in vulnerable circumstances. The increased presence of refugees has given rise to anti-immigrant sentiments in Sweden, but it has also generated welcoming, compassionate responses. By addressing not only how refugees cope with living in a continual state of waiting under precarious conditions, but also how bureaucracies, civil societies, and individuals respond to this waiting, the thesis discusses the sociological and ethical implications of refugees’ waiting. *Time Warps* demonstrates the importance of unpacking combinations of humanitarianism and securitarianism when developing a deepened understanding of refugees experience of waiting in rural Sweden.

**Landström, Katarina 2023.** *The Specter of Community: An Ethnographic Exploration of the Local Support for the Kaunisvaara Mine*. Research Subject: Rural Development. Department of Urban and Rural Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

This dissertation explores the reasons behind local support for the opening of an iron ore mine in the village Kaunisvaara, Pajala municipality, Sweden. The thesis makes a contribution to knowledge by deepening our understanding of mining conflicts in Sweden’s rural north in the twenty-first century. It seeks to answer the following question: What hopes, dreams and expectations do Pajala’s mining proponents wish that the opening of the Kaunisvaara mine will realize?

In contemporary research, mining conflicts are grasped as the result of conflicting values between mining proponents and mining opponents. Previous research links opposition to mining with valuation of a clean environment, local culture and livelihoods. Meanwhile, local support for mining is linked to a valuation of local economic and demographic growth. However, the notion of value employed in much research is insensitive to the distinction between intrinsic and instrumental values. This has left the values or ends of mining proponents, who see money and development as means to something else, unexplored.

Although value is acknowledged as being central to mining conflicts, previous research on mining conflicts rarely unpacks the notion of value in detail. By taking a more precisely defined notion of value as its starting point, this thesis offers a deeper understanding of the hopes, dreams and expectations underlying the explicitly stated economic rationales advanced in support for a mine. Empirically, the dissertation adds to the literature on mining conflicts through an ethnographic account of support, rather than resistance, to local mining operations. Theoretically, it offers a starting point for rethinking mining conflicts, and other natural resource conflicts, not primarily as the product of actual, clashing values between different local groups, but as struggles over the very definition of value. In that struggle, the main line of conflict runs not between members of the local community, but between local communities and actors driven by profit maximization.

**Rodneliussen, Rasmus 2023.** *Underwater Worlds: An Ethnography of Waste, Pollution, and Marine Life*. Research Subject: Social Anthropology. Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University.

In this dissertation, I investigate relations between humans, waste, pollution, and marine life. I introduce the concept of Aquabiopolitics as a means to understand how humans govern life in water in order to enrich human life on land. The study focuses on the Baltic Sea and Lake Mälaren, using Stockholm, the capital of Sweden, as the connection

point. Throughout the dissertation, I explore how human practices over time have had devastating effects on marine life and continue to have so today.

The dissertation engages with the marine world through underwater ethnography to provide a perspective on water from below the surface. In this endeavor, I employ the assistance of marine scientists and trash scuba divers who are jointly invested in tracking human maltreatment of water and finding solutions for treating water differently in the future. We will follow the scientists on expeditions at sea and to their laboratories in order to learn about their methods and relations to underwater worlds. Together with the trash scuba divers, we will dive into the dark murky waters around Stockholm—experiencing what it is like to move below water, among sharp and toxic waste, without any visibility.

The work of creating a knowing and caring relationship between humans and water is of key importance to both scientists and divers. Therefore, one of the main parts of this dissertation is to analyze how, and if, this relationship can be created: via social media, images, installations, or other means. For as the divers often say: *Water is Life. Make it Important!*

## 2024

**Butungo, Stanslaus Peter 2024.** [Access To Land in the Context of HIV and AIDS in Lyamba Ward, Rural Tanzania : A Case of Lyambamgongo Ward in Bukombe District.](#) Research Subject: Rural Development. Department of Urban and Rural Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

Access to land is an important contributor to the wellbeing and social status of people in rural areas. However, this is often compromised for people affected with HIV/AIDS, a disease which is prevalent in Tanzania. Prior to this study, others have tried to associate between HIV/AIDS infection and land access. However, the link and the contextual factors underpinning such relationship are largely not well understood. This research explores: first, how and in which ways HIV infection affects access to land; second, what contextual factors underpin the impacts of HIV on land access, and thirdly, who among HIV-affected people is more vulnerable to loss of access to land. Drawing on theoretical accounts that frame land access as a question of social power, this study undertakes intensive ethnographic research in Lyamba ward in Bukombe District, Tanzania. The research draws from the life history accounts of 17 HIV-infected people and their access to land. The study reveals a variety of ways in which HIV/AIDS negatively affects land access: destabilising social relationships, spousal or parental deaths, and diminished social status. Such cases happen in contexts characterised by existing land contestations, unequal social relationships, and a pluralistic legal system of overlapping formal and informal rules, norms and values that govern land access. While women and children are often at risk of loss, men with weaker land claims can also lose access. However, the study also documents instances where vulnerable people can fight back to secure land access through collective mobilisation, knowledge on legal land rights, and relations with authority figures. While loss of land can further exacerbate experiences of marginalisation, successful attempts to secure land access can validate personal worth and protect social esteem. The study calls attention to the contested nature of land and how changing dimensions of social power are central to shaping land access in the context of HIV/AIDS.

**Gota, Pascal 2024.** *Heritage Forests in Inhambane: Negotiating History, Landscape and Environment*. Research Subject: Archaeology, Cultural Studies, Botany, Environmental Sciences, Human Geography, Social Anthropology. Department of Archaeology and Ancient History.

Heritage forests are gaining greater prominence and importance as places with high cultural and ecological value, and ideal for biodiversity conservation worldwide. However, there are few studies documenting these forests in Mozambique. This thesis presents 88 different cultural heritage sites in Inhambane Province, of which 52 are heritage forests. In this thesis I focus on three case study areas, Luido, Chitanga, and Mapoka showing with satellite images analyses that forest boundaries have remained relatively stable over the last three decades. Heritage forests are connected to discourse and discursive practices of heritage. Chiefs are the main representatives of the local institutions and its associated social codes and system of laws for protection of heritage forests. In post-colonial Mozambique, such local heritage practices were constrained and controlled, however, they were still maintained. Botanical inventories of the forests show that local heritage practices taking place in and around have a fundamental role to the existence of plant diversity. A total of 14 plant species with great conservation value was identified. Most of these locally protected heritage sites are not included in formally protected areas, and they are currently experiencing various types of pressures from within and outside the community, mostly from logging activities. Formal recognition of communities as collaborators and partners to the continuity of these areas is essential and feasible, but such need to be implemented cautiously and driven by communities. There are legal mechanisms at the national and international levels, in culture and biodiversity conservation, to secure these types of heritage sites and conservation areas in Inhambane, Mozambique, and beyond.

**Lindberg, Emy 2024.** *Dream Machine: an Ethnography of Football Migration between Ghana and Sweden*. Research Subject: Cultural Anthropology. Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, Uppsala University.

This thesis examines football migration between Ghana and Sweden. Based on multi-sited, transnational, part-time ethnographic fieldwork that spanned 22 months between 2017 and 2019, it focuses on the everyday realities of Ghanaian football migrants throughout their labor migration trajectory. At the same time, the thesis contextualizes these experiences within the larger historical processes of neoliberalism, colonialism, and the transatlantic slave trade. The theoretical framework draws on literature concerning dreams and aspirations, time and migration, family structures, race, and the enduring impact of colonialism.

The thesis sheds light on the historical connection between Ghanaian and Swedish football as a colonial project, a national project, and a global postcolonial phenomenon, emphasizing the political economy of football migration. By zooming in on dreams and the footballing body, it then examines footballers as neoliberal entrepreneurs of themselves as well as objects of the industry's racialized dreams. Next, the thesis draws attention to the temporal aspects of football migration, including institutional borders, capitalist timelines, and the time of the footballing body. The thesis goes on to explore family structures, particularly fatherhood, in the migratory and footballing context, showing how these structures are interconnected with the business interests of the global football industry. It further demonstrates how race and racialization are present in the Swedish footballing

context and finally looks at return migration, investigating how migrant footballers seek to repay economic and social debts.

As performers on a commercialized global stage, the footballers embody the dreams of people all over the world. They are commodified and seen as investments for the future, both by people at home and by those working in the industry. Their success generates profit and shows that the dream of migration and the dream of football can come true. This thesis uses the metaphor of the dream machine to understand how dreams operate both globally and locally. It examines the linkages between maintenance of the footballing body, transactions of care, practices of social inclusion and racialized exclusion, and the functioning of the global capitalist football industry. Doing so, it emphasizes the meaningfulness of the migration trajectory for individual footballers and their networks, placing these relationships at the very heart of the beautiful game.

**Linder, Elin 2024.** *Caring for Olive Oil: Cultivating Flows, Crafts & Traditions*. Research Subject: Social Anthropology. Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University.

Olive oil is a food, but more than that, it is a social relation, cultural phenomenon, local practice, global industry, emplaced tradition, valued concern, cyclical rhythm, embodied care-work, multigenerational flow, kindred ecology, and cultivated craft. This is the case in the region of Puglia, the heel of Italy, where over half a million ancient olive trees and an entire landscape of olive groves bear witness to its heritage of making. This thesis builds on more than one and a half years of ethnographic fieldwork with Pugliese oliviculturalists. It uses sensory and multimodal methods for collecting and representing material, and takes creative ethnography as its frame for critical analysis. Through the concepts of *flow* and *artful care*, it advances the spatiotemporal dynamics of the making of Pugliese olive oil. It frames the work of research participants as *situated craft* and brings attention to embodied features of knowing and doing. It curiously explores how olive oil occurs practiced and lived from the perspective of practitioners, thus making the bodies and work of beyond-human agencies into account, making claims to the broad-scope ecology of life inherent in *olivicultura* (olive culture). A major finding is that Pugliese oliviculturalists *live landscape* and work in rhythm with the atmospheric dynamics influencing it. Another is that traditions flow together with modern developments, growing local practices of craftsmanship while creating commodities in line with global market structures. The concepts of *care* and *value* are fundamental to the thesis. They are paramount to the lived (hi)stories of Pugliese oliviculturalists, hence to the narrations and analyses of this thesis.

**Shen, Qing 2024.** *Queer Fun in Shanghai: The Social Lives of Elderly Working-Class Chinese Men*. Research Subject: Cultural Anthropology. Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, Uppsala University.

This thesis uses “play” as a core concept to examine the lives and subjectivities of older working-class queer men (mostly above 60 years old) in Shanghai. Play (玩 *wan* in Chinese) is a distinctive feature of the everyday lives of the men, who spend a great deal of time with fellow queers engaged in a variety of leisure activities, such as hanging out in parks, eating together at home or restaurants, singing karaoke, and joining sight-seeing tours. Drawing on anthropologist Gregory Bateson’s theory of play as a kind of metacommunication that creates a play frame and a boundary between play and non-play, I examine how the play



frame continually invoked by the men (“just for fun” or “just play”) is materialized, enacted, and transgressed.

Based on fourteen months of ethnographic fieldwork in Shanghai conducted between 2021 and 2022, this thesis demonstrates that queerness is centrally linked to playfulness. Playing is a process of queering through which the men actively explore alternative and ludic ways of being without any real consequences for their day-to-day lives, in which most of them are married to women. But “play” as playfulness or “just for fun” also constrains the men’s perceptions of queer identities, their relationships, and their friendships with one another.

A main argument is that unless we acknowledge the existence and perspectives of people like the men I describe in this thesis, our knowledge of queer lives will remain biased and impoverished. The old men I write about here in many ways are the opposite of the identity-based sexual rights activists who attract so much attention in the scholarly and popular literature (and who write much of that literature). The men are not oppositional, they are not activists, and they have little interest in gay rights or any kinds of sexual rights. The men’s lives reveal a form of jovial queer existence in a repressive non-Western setting. They complicate understandings about topics of importance in anthropology, such as sexual identity, aging, resistance, and vulnerability. Play is a lens that makes it difficult to view people’s actions only as either disruptions of power or enactments of power. Play highlights enjoyment, fun, and pleasure in ways that make them available to critical analysis. Play is what literary scholar Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (2003:149) has called a “reparative practice”; one that “confers plenitude” on people and recognizes the complexities and surprises of their lives.

**Stiernström, Arvid 2024.** *Beyond the Minefield : Mining, Development, and Open Moments in Northern Sweden.* Research Subject: Rural Development. Department of Urban and Rural Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

In recent years mining has taken centre stage in rural development. In part, this is a consequence of the ‘green transition’, where the demand for minerals to develop new energy systems is increasing dramatically. Using ethnographic methods, I take my starting point in Storuman, a sparsely populated municipality in the rural North of Sweden where three potential mines are already reterritorialising property rights and access, and the governance of land is being reconfigured. With the aim to explore how extractive interventions shape rural places in times of transition, I ask questions about the entanglements between people and land, the reconfigurations of territory, and what large scale extractive interventions mean for the conceptualisation of rural development in Sweden and beyond.

To understand how the ‘green transition’ impacts rural areas and what the future for rural development entails, I bring together research on resource extraction, rural development, and indigeneity. By doing so, I show how the potential mines are generating open moments, where a state of uncertainty becomes a central part of life. I uncover how rather than being passive receivers of state policies, people take charge of their situation in open moments to steer the outcome of events. I argue that there is an overarching critique of how state policies and practices treat communities at the edge of the state. The core of this critique lies at the intersection of past and future, as people make sense of what unfolds in the open moment both as the latest instantiation of repression in a long history of colonial practices, and as a desire to reevaluate what development is and can be.

**Östergren, Petra 2024.** *Sweden's ban on sex-purchase. Morality politics and the governance of prostitution.* Research Subject: Social Anthropology. Department of Sociology, Lund University.

This essay thesis examines Sweden's 1999 ban on purchasing sexual services, considering the attention it received as an unprecedented approach to governing prostitution, the highly polarised political environment in which it exists, and the multiple legal contradictions it displays. Using material gathered through a multisited method from 2009 through 2019, the study shows that the offence is a variant of other anti-prostitution laws directed at sex workers and their clients. Moreover, the thesis argues that the highly charged emotions surrounding the ban, as well as its conflicts and contradictions, are comprehensible if analysed within the framework of morality politics.

The thesis contributes empirically to studies of prostitution policy, theoretically to the conception of morality politics, and methodologically to the anthropological analysis of law and policy. It proposes an empirically grounded typology of prostitution policies: the repressive, aimed at eliminating the sex industry through punitive measures; the restrictive, permitting the trade to operate under strict conditions, regulated by both criminal and civil law; and the integrative, which does not criminalise consensual sex work but regulates the industry and protects sex workers through sector-specific labour and trade legislation. Its major theoretical contribution is a refinement of the concept of morality politics that offers new insights into how issues such as prostitution, homosexuality, abortion, and drug use are perceived, discussed, and governed in liberal democracies. These all involve 'consensual crimes' rooted in religious notions of sin and regarded as posing a risk to social order. They are typically addressed by the three distinct policy models, while the governance agenda either seeks to reform those who engage in these marginalised practices or to grant them equal civil rights. Empirically, the thesis demonstrates that the ambivalent legal and civic status of sex workers in Sweden is based on an exclusionary logic inherent in all anti-prostitution law, suggesting a link to the historically subordinate position of women's work, as well as to the discriminatory treatment of 'sinners' and other social outliers.

These conclusions are the result of following the sex-purchase ban over a long time and across four related socio-legal domains: established law, political discourse, implementation, and impact, including a close scrutiny of how the ban relates to general legal principles and rules according to the source of law. The thesis consists of six introductory and summary chapters, two published articles, and two essays that have not yet been published.