



European  
Sociological  
Association

**Research Network 03  
“Biographical Perspectives on European Societies”**



**Mid-term Conference of the European Sociological Association's  
Research Network 03 “Biographical perspectives on European societies”  
17-18 September 2018, University of Łódź, Poland  
<http://esamidterm2018.uni.lodz.pl/>**

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

**Theoretical and empirical reflections on social disorganisation and “otherness” in modern European societies:** Following the biographical and discursive approach of Thomas and Znaniecki's legacy of “Polish Peasant in Europe and America”

***Conference Theme***

Cultural and social diversity is a feature of modern European societies. Intensive migration across national borders for work, education and travel as well as changes in the field of work caused by the economic crisis in 2007 are still affecting people from different cultures in public space and everyday life. Hence, times of economic and political uncertainty in Europe and the modern world require theoretical and empirical reflection and re-conceptualization to contribute to the policy development that tackles stereotypical images on representatives of “other” cultures (in terms of nationality, ethnicity, social structure etc.) that work/study and live in the neighbourhoods, shared spaces.

The conference will address recent theoretical developments on cultural and social diversity, cultural “melange” and cultural nationalisms in modern European societies. It aims to examine new empirical evidence on the relationship between the cultural and social diversity of European societies in public and private spaces in cities and rural areas, at education and work and the ways it is portrayed in experiences of individuals on the one hand and the public and media on the other.

The Conference will explore methodological advances in biographical and qualitative methods of research and data analysis. Through using examples from narrative, biographical, ethnographical research it will aim to identify perceptions and factors that can aggravate or ease senses of insecurity on the part of individuals and institutions from various perspectives: professional, social, cultural, religious and reflect on the ways this sense of insecurity challenges the foundations of cultural diversity in modern European societies.

Those phenomena are not new, they have been described and analysed by the classics like Thomas and Znaniecki in their study on migration, social disorganization, changing attitudes and values discussed from the individual/biographical perspective by applying biographical

data. It is timely to revisit their ideas on the centenary of the publication of the book “Polish Peasant in Europe and America. The ESA RN03 midterm conference aims at reflecting on the described contemporary social processes and phenomena from the present perspective but at the same time at considering the inspiring thoughts of the classics. Are there any parallels in the analysis? What lessons have been learnt? Are they applicable today?

***The conference invites papers that address:***

Biographical and social experience of migration contemporary perspective and/or comparison between the past and present phenomenon of migration

- attitudes and values as core categories of Thomas and Znaniecki’s work from the perspective of contemporary society, especially phenomenon of migration.
- perception of “otherness”

Policies to address cultural and social diversity (educational policies, social integration policies, migration policies)

Theoretical developments on “otherness” and social and individual disorganization in contemporary society

- Wishes and motivations in the perspective of modernisation

Application of biographical methods to the studies of the other in:

- everyday practices
- public sphere: education, health
- artistic and visual representation of the “other”
- poverty
- religious and secular
- gender

Ethical aspects of biographical studies and text analysis, differences between past and contemporary text hermeneutics.

Methodological approaches to study “otherness”:

- Innovative methods
- New areas of inter-disciplinary research
- Potentials and traps of re-analysis

**The organisers are also open to proposals from outside these fields**

**Application for participation:**

To apply, please provide **an abstract in English of up to 300 words supported by a brief biographic profile of up to 200 words**. Deadline for submissions is: **15 March 2017**.

Decisions will be made by 15 April 2018. Travel and accommodation costs will have to be covered by the participants. The participation fee is €60 for regular participants, €50 for ESA members and €30 for students ESA members, €40 for students (not members of the ESA). PhD

students might apply for travel costs funding to the RN03. For further inquiries, please contact [esa.midterm2018@gmail.com](mailto:esa.midterm2018@gmail.com)

Please submit your abstract of up to 300 words to <http://esamidterm2018.uni.lodz.pl/registration/>

Please provide the following information:

1. Name
2. Institution
3. Biographical profile and research interests ( up to 200 words)
4. Abstract
5. Key words

#### **Registration fees:**

ESA members: €50

ESA members/Students: €30

Regular participants: €60

Students (not ESA members): €40

There will additional workshops in the conference: an additional €10 will be charged for participation

#### ***Conference Programme***

The Conference will feature plenary key-note sessions, a thematic plenary session, a Round table plenary session and three workshops. The language of the conference is English.

The Conference invited key-note speakers: **Catherine Delcroix**, Professor of Sociology, University of Strasbourg, France and **Maggie O'Neill**, Professor of Sociology and Criminology, University of York, UK

**Round-table Plenary session:** Professor **Daniel Bertaux**, France, Professor **Fritz Schütze**, Germany, Professor Emeritus **Robert Miller**, UK

**Thematic Plenary Session: H-2020 ISOTIS project**, keynote speaker and convener Dr Lyudmila Nurse, University of Oxford UK

**Special session:** an open Board meeting of the RN03

**Organisers:** Kaja Kazmierska, Chair of the RN03 and Lyudmila Nurse, Vice-Chair of the RN03

#### **Important deadlines:**

Registration and the submission of the abstracts: **1 February 2018 – 15 March 2018**

Decision regarding acceptance of abstracts sent to the applicants: **15 April 2018**

Registration fee payments: by **15 June 2018**

Programme of the Conference published: **1 July 2018**

### **Conference venue:**

The conference will take place at the University of Łódź in the historic city of Łódź, Poland.

Łódź main rail station is approximately one hour by train from Warsaw. Łódź is served by the international airport. Lodz Airport is located in the south-western part of the city, 6 km away from the city centre and offers flights to a number of European cities.

The Airport location ensures fast access to the very centre of Lodz (Piotrkowska Street) and the train station (Lodz Kaliska). It takes a few minutes to get to Lodz hotels. The Lodz Fabryczna train station may be reached in approximately 30 minutes.