

**ELTE Faculty of Social Sciences
Institute of Social Relations
Department of Cultural Anthropology**

**ELTE Faculty of Science
Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences
Department of Social and Economic Geography**



IDENTITIES

**Intersections Between
Social Geography and Cultural Anthropology**

**28 November 2024
10:00-15:00**

**ELTE Campus Lágymányos
Northern Building
0.100/C Room Ferge Zsuzsa**

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10:00-10:20

INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATION

GÉZA BARTA (RESEARCH ASSOCIATE)

Understanding Identity and Space in Context: Collaborative Insights from Geography, Sociology, and Cultural Anthropology

10:20-10:30

Questions, Discussion

10:30-11:35

PANEL 01 - IDENTITY AND THE POSTMODERN

10:30-10:45

ENDRE KOVÁCS (PHD CANDIDATE)

Alternative Religions in Hungary: National Identity and Global Trends

10:45-11:00

RICHARD PAPP (ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR)

Can Holocaust Memory Construct Identity in Hungary?

11:00-11:15

SIEL DEFRANCO (PHD CANDIDATE)

Cultural Estrangement and Identity Seeking as a Driver of Migration: the Case of Dutch People in Hungary

10:15-11:35

Questions, Discussion

11:35-12:40

PANEL 02 - BORDER AND IDENTITY

11:35-11:50

PÉTER BALOGH (ASSISTANT PROFESSOR)

Distant EUrope? On Perceptions of Borders and EUrope in the Hungarian-Slovak Borderland

11:50-12:05

GELA MERABISHVILI (RESEARCH ASSOCIATE)

Everyday Nationalism and Territorial Identities in the Hungarian-Ukrainian Borderland

12:05-12:20

TITANILLA FIÁTH (ASSISTANT PROFESSOR)

CBT and Ceviche: Construction of the "Responsible Citizen" in a Peruvian Reintegration Program

12:20-12:40

Questions, Discussion

12:40-13:45

PANEL 03 - CITY AND IDENTITY

12:40-12:55

DIANA VALLEJO ROBALINO (PHD CANDIDATE)

Who are the Pobladores of Barrios Populares? Exploring Cultural and Spatial Identities in the Peripheries of Guayaquil-Ecuador

12:55-13:10

BENCE MÁRK (MSC STUDENT) - **MÁRTON BERKI** (ASSISTANT PROFESSOR)

Subcultural Identities - A Case Study of Budapest's Underground Rap Scene

13:10-13:25

ÁDÁM LABÁTH (PHD CANDIDATE)

Divided Country, Contested City(scape): The Representation of the Northern Ireland Conflict on the political murals of Belfast

13:25-13:45

Questions, Discussion

13:45-14:50

PANEL 04 - (OTHER) LAYERS OF IDENTITIES

13:45-14:00

GÁBOR MOLNÁR (PHD CANDIDATE)

National Identities in the Baltics

14:00-14:15

LYNNAH M'MBAITSA (PHD CANDIDATE)

Mugotitsa: Impacts of Climate-Sensitive Agricultural Techniques on Nutritional Outcomes and Branding

14:15-14:30

TRIME HALILI (PHD CANDIDATE)

Applied Anthropology, Activism, and Community-Making: Cultivating Autonomy and Unraveling Socio-Cultural Dynamics in the Balkans and Beyond

14:30-14:50

Questions, Discussion

ANNOTATIONS

GÉZA BARTA (RESEARCH ASSOCIATE)

Understanding Identity and Space in Context: Collaborative Insights from Geography, Sociology, and Cultural Anthropology

The study of the relationship between identity and space is significantly enriched through the collaboration of geography, sociology, and cultural anthropology. Each discipline offers unique insights that complement one another, fostering a comprehensive understanding of how identities are shaped by spatial contexts. Geography, through the concepts of David Harvey, Doreen Massey, Edward Soja, and others emphasizes the interplay between physical environments, spatial representations, and lived experiences, exploring how spatial arrangements influence identity formation. Sociology adds depth by examining social structures and power dynamics, exemplified by Pierre Bourdieu's notion of habitus, which highlights how social environments shape individual dispositions. Cultural anthropology, through figures like Les Roberts and Setha Low, investigates the cultural meanings attached to spaces and the lived experiences that communities create around them, revealing how narratives and practices contribute to identity formation.

The integration of geography, sociology, and cultural anthropology offers a robust framework for examining the complex relationship between identity and space. By leveraging geography's spatial analysis, sociology's focus on social structures, and anthropology's exploration of cultural meanings, scholars can develop a nuanced understanding of how identities are constructed and transformed within specific spatial contexts. At the end of the presentation, as a case study, I will provide examples of the relationship between identity and space from my own fieldwork in Upper Silesia.

ENDRE KOVÁCS (PHD CANDIDATE)

Alternative Religions in Hungary: National Identity and Global Trends

In my presentation, I will explore the situation of new religious movements in Hungary. Traditional churches are facing new challenges with the spread of alternative religions. The unique role of these new religious movements is strongly influenced by the former socialist political system, the subsequent political transitions, and current political narratives. For a new religious movement to establish itself as an institution, it must align with social norms (Eileen Barker). In Hungary, these norms are heavily shaped by party politics. Following the regime change, alternative religions in Hungary often emphasized national identity. At the same time, New Age ideas reflecting global trends also emerged, albeit with a more limited presence. This form of New Age spirituality incorporates values like democratic thinking, social equality, feminism, and prioritizes personal experiences and intuition over traditional hierarchical structures. My presentation examines this relationship, reviewing historical factors and the current role of new religious movements in Hungarian society, as well as their function in a unique social space where authenticity serves as cultural capital.

RICHARD PAPP (ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR)

Can Holocaust Memory Construct Identity in Hungary?

More than two years ago, György Csepeli and I started researching the local memory of the Holocaust in Hungarian settlements. The research has been later extended to other Central and Eastern European countries (Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland, Serbia, and Romania). Our research project (Research on Transgenerational Holocaust-memory in Central Europe) was supported by the Visegrad Fund. Our research uses qualitative social science methods to explore and interpret contemporary meanings of Holocaust memory. One of the most important and thought-provoking problems of our research was the emergence of unreflected anti-Semitism and dichotomisation in the interviews. This raises the question: can memory or the rejection of memory construct and reconstruct identity? Can Holocaust remembrance create identity narratives in which group formations of 'us' and 'them' are constructed and reinforced? What prejudices and stereotypes are associated with these dichotomisation markers? In relation to these questions, my paper will analyse the narratives of the research participants in an attempt to interpret the meanings of social blame-shifting, removal, victim-blaming and ascribed identity in relation to Holocaust remembrance, and their historical and contemporary social context in Hungary. Inextricably linked to these, I will analyse the social context and patterns of memory politics that characterise and shape the atmosphere of Holocaust remembrance in contemporary Hungary.

SIEL DEFRANCO (PHD CANDIDATE)

Cultural Estrangement and Identity Seeking as a Driver of Migration: the Case of Dutch People in Hungary

Under globalisation, identity formation has become increasingly complicated (Jensen et al., 2011), especially in Western societies where multiculturalism is becoming the norm and the nation state is under threat. As a result, some individuals feel a growing sense of cultural and ideological alienation in their home countries, struggling to connect with environments that are increasingly diverse and progressive. This presentation examines Dutch migration to Hungary, where migrants seek refuge in a nation characterized by strong leadership and conservative politics, believing it will offer a closer alignment with their personal values and sense of identity. Based on interviews with Dutch migrants, I will explore how these individuals navigate the cultural and political landscapes of both their home country and Hungary, revealing how migration is not only motivated by economic factors but also by personal values.

PÉTER BALOGH (ASSISTANT PROFESSOR)

Distant EUrope? On Perceptions of Borders and EUrope in the Hungarian-Slovak Borderland

The project B-Shapes (2023–26) is researching local perceptions of borders and EUrope in different European borderlands. The initial working hypothesis was that due to frequent crossings as well as Covid-related border controls, borderlanders may be more positively inclined toward EUrope, but this may not necessarily turn out to be the case. We have already conducted the analyses of regional media, elite interviews, and zine workshops. The contribution will present some of the preliminary findings.

GELA MERABISHVILI (RESEARCH ASSOCIATE)

Everyday Nationalism and Territorial Identities in the Hungarian-Ukrainian Borderland

This paper examines the changes in the sense of transborder nationhood among Hungarians living on both sides of the Hungarian-Ukrainian border during the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The research is based on fieldwork in the border region and semi-structured qualitative interviews with ordinary residents of Zahony and Barabas (on the Hungarian side) and Beregszasz/Berehove and Mezokaszony/Koson (on the Ukrainian side). The research focuses on the sense of solidarity between Hungarians across the border, views on Ukraine's statehood and territorial integrity, and the place of Transcarpathia in the borderland residents' territorial vision.

TITANILLA FIÁTH (ASSISTANT PROFESSOR)

CBT and Ceviche: Construction of the "Responsible Citizen" in a Peruvian Reintegration Program

Between June and September 2024, I conducted participant observation-based fieldwork at the North Lima Centre of the Peruvian Department of Corrections. The institution, which is responsible for the reintegration of released inmates and the provision of psychosocial programs for offenders, organizes group sessions of two main types. Some offenders are required to attend therapy groups only once a month, while others – typically offenders sentenced for domestic violence – are required to attend groups three times a week. Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) is the most popular, globally applied approach of the 21st century reintegration programs. CBT interprets the so-called criminogenic factors as unrealistic beliefs, cognitive biases, while almost completely ignores socio-cultural factors: the original context of "criminal behavior". In this way, psychotherapy focusing only on individual responsibility does not even need to touch upon issues of social inequality, unemployment, poverty, racism or the values of certain cultures and subcultures. During fieldwork, it became clear that, in contrast to the less frequent groups – which followed North American-style treatment manuals based solely on CBT principles – the group, which met 3 times a week, built significantly on the strength of the community and on everyday experiences of the participants. By affirming the Peruvian identity and the relationships between participants through different activities, they sought to resist CBT, which understands behavior along the same, rather simplistic principles in all cultures.

DIANA VALLEJO ROBALINO (PHD CANDIDATE)

Who are the pobladores of barrios populares? Exploring cultural and spatial identities in the peripheries of Guayaquil-Ecuador

My research explores the complex intersections of identity and urban space in two low-income peripheral neighborhoods of Guayaquil, Ecuador – Bastión Popular and Isla Trinitaria. Since the mid-1980s, big masses of rural migrants, mainly from the Coastal region, came to the main Port city in the search for better socio-economic opportunities. In turn, the findings show how the memory of populating the peripheries "informally" and building collectively the infrastructure of their houses and neighborhoods are central in the comprehension of an identitarian self as urban poor. Additionally, we will see how the pobladores' cultural identities shape the neighborhood space and its dynamics and reflect a spatial identity through physical and symbolic borders highlighted by its inhabitants. This work contributes to urban anthropology by illuminating how identity, locality, and resistance are forged within marginalized urban spaces, where residents negotiate urban belonging and enact forms of resilience within contested city spaces.

BENCE MÁRK (MSC STUDENT) – **MÁRTON BERKI** (ASSISTANT PROFESSOR)

Subcultural Identities – A Case Study of Budapest’s Underground Rap Scene

This presentation attempts to shed light on the intricate layeredness of subcultural identities through the example of Budapest’s underground rap scene. Our questionnaire survey conducted among members of the scene revealed that their subcultural identities are far from being monolithic; on the contrary, their genre-specific preferences are highly diverse, which is also reflected in the varying ways they navigate subcultural spaces. We examined this complexity through questions such as: How important is it for them to express their affiliation with the rap scene through their clothing? Do they prefer acquiring rap releases in physical formats (vinyls, CDs, cassettes) or non-physical ones (streaming, digital downloads)? Do they listen more often to currently active artists or to ,classic‘ performers who are no longer active? Do they prefer Hungarian artists/releases or rather non-Hungarian/international ones? Do they consider the lyrics more important or the music itself? Should rap music, in their view, be apolitical, or should it take a stand on social and political issues? Do they personally identify more with leftist/liberal values or right-wing/conservative ones? Has Budapest’s underground rap scene, in their opinion, grown stronger and larger over the recent years, or has it weakened and diminished in size? Finally, we also aim to compare the above patterns with the respondents’ use of subcultural spaces, showcasing which venues in Budapest are frequented by scene members with differing preferences.

ÁDÁM LABÁTH (PHD CANDIDATE)

Divided Country, Contested City(scape): The Representation of the Northern Ireland Conflict on the Political Murals of Belfast

The well-known city of Belfast tells us unfinished stories about the depth of the Northern Ireland conflict, also known as “Troubles”. After the Good Friday Agreement ended the years of terror in Northern Ireland, political murals still present the political identities of the nationalists and unionists, and as guiding sign it heads us into the historical, ethical and political background of the conflict. At the end of the journey we may see characteristics of Eastern Europe in the Irish case and the complexity of the Northern Ireland conflict.

GÁBOR MOLNÁR (PHD CANDIDATE)

National Identities in the Baltics

The Baltics cover a relatively small geographical area, yet it is home to three states with very different histories. Throughout history, the region has been a collision zone for the surrounding great powers, and accordingly, diverse state formations have followed one another in this ‘In-Between Europe’ area, where the diverse system of relations between the original and the settled populations eventually gave rise to the present-day Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian nations. My lecture deals with the ethnogenesis of these three nations, as well as the network of relations of other ethnicities that still live with them in this region.

LYNNAH M'MBAITSA (PHD CANDIDATE)

Mugotitsa: Impacts of Climate-Sensitive Agricultural Techniques on Nutritional Outcomes and Branding

The global climatic shift is aggressively addressing agricultural productivity and food security. Agriculture is the core of food and nutrition security, and climate-sensitive agriculture (CSA) offers sustainable strategies that can enhance food production while controlling the adverse impacts of climate change. This study explores the impacts of climate-sensitive agricultural techniques like agro-forestry, crop diversification, and conservation agriculture on nutritional outcomes. It explores how it can shape consumer perception and influence branding in the agricultural market. Practical application of CSA techniques aids to develop resilience against climate change and enhance soil health, decrease environmental degradation and support biodiversity among farmer groups and consumers. This research examines the role of climate-conscious branding in influencing consumer perception and creating a unique market value for sustainable agricultural products. The study will employ a qualitative approach. Qualitative data will be gathered via focus groups and consumer interviews to understand perceptions of CSA-branded products, exploring consumer values and willingness to pay. The qualitative data will be analysed thematically to identify key consumer preferences and branding insights. This research aims to demonstrate the nutritional benefits of CSA practices, highlight effective branding strategies for climate-resilient agricultural products, and provide actionable insights to policymakers and market stakeholders to promote food security through climate-sensitive approaches.

TRIME HALILI (PHD CANDIDATE)

Applied Anthropology, Activism, and Community-Making: Cultivating Autonomy and Unraveling Socio-Cultural Dynamics in the Balkans and Beyond

This research investigates the evolving dynamics of identity and locality within autonomous communities and socio-cultural spaces, emphasizing their potential to redefine socio-economic, political, and cultural paradigms. Anchored in the context of Tetova, North Macedonia, it examines the city's pioneering community-social-cultural space as a microcosm within a broader Balkan network of four organized communities and their collaboration with a coordinating group in Brussels, Belgium. These interconnected groups have diverse approaches to collective organization shaped by their specific socio-cultural realities while exploring opportunities to create a shared culture and identity grounded in global objectives and universal cultural motivations. The study draws on applied anthropology and activism, employing reflexive and participatory methods to prioritize collaborative ethnography as a means of generating knowledge that responds to the community's self-identified needs. By questioning the ethnographer's positionality and 'authority' through feminist ethnographic perspectives, it explores the intersubjective processes that challenge traditional hierarchies between researcher and participants. This reflexivity foregrounds the ways identity is co-constructed through shared local experiences and broader socio-cultural dynamics.

Over five years of research and participatory engagement, this study unpacks the complex relationships within and across communities, revealing the 'agonistic' tensions in shaping identity: the inter-play of self and other, local and global, and East and West. It questions the presence of neocolonial narratives and performative power structures in community-building efforts, highlighting the negotiation of unity and diversity, hierarchy and equality, and the giver-receiver dynamic. These tensions illuminate how local identities are continually redefined within the broader frameworks of contemporary European social movements, enabling new forms of cultural expression and collectivity.