

8th CASA Biennial Conference 2025

AGEING OF ANTHROPOLOGY, AGEING IN ANTHROPOLOGY

6 - 8 November 2025

Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, University of Pardubice, Pardubice

Call for Papers

Multiple crises, from the global financial crisis to COVID-19, the war in Ukraine to climate change, and the exigencies of new collective responses and understandings, have left a temporal stamp on our discipline. For this year's conference, we suggest examining how the cascading challenges that occurred during the last hundred years fundamentally altered our discipline, research practices and the connection and connectivity with our worlds – how has anthropology aged, and how does the discipline reflect on its own ageing? Is it prepared to address the challenges posed by an ageing population?

Reflections on age and ageing have accompanied anthropology from its early developments and, to some extent, are emblematic of the initial divide between structural functionalism on one side of the pond and the culturalist approach on the other. On the one hand, seeing ageing as a series of statuses in a life course and the implications of these for the normative temporality of social reproduction (marriage, adulthood, eldership etc.) that is entailed in ritual and political obligations may have itself aged as a theory. Nonetheless, the pragmatics of the field, featuring towering figures, memorable mentors and recommendation letters, is structured around analogic elements. On the other hand, inquiring about the psychological dynamics within and between age categories and their cross-cultural comparison yielded evidence that the meanings of age were socially determined - yet it is the allegedly bio-temporal attributes of age that shape the new regimes of contractual labour in an academia full of young scholars, junior professors,

senior researchers and faculty retirees. The ageing of anthropology and ageing in anthropology is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon, which, moreover, is occurring in the context of the ageing population of most industrialised countries. This conference seeks to delve into the dynamic relationship between the ageing of anthropology as a field and the ageing of individual anthropologists and their entourages within it.

The 1990s witnessed significant growth and development in European anthropology, marked by expanding programmes, establishing of new journals, the emergence of national and international associations (such as EASA, CASA, SASA), and a burgeoning number of graduates. This institutional growth has been further seconded by colonialism, the continuing reverberations of the baby boom, and the discipline's geospatial expansion through mass air travel since the 1960s and, important for the Central and Eastern European region, the easing of individual travel and scholarly exchange possibilities after 1989. Relatedly, the period since the early 1990s saw the formation of national traditions and the renegotiation of roles, including discussions about the relationship between 'Western' social anthropology and East European scholarly traditions.

This moment is now coming to a halt. This conjuncture was also historically contingent—closely linked to globalization, which, as recent events have highlighted, was facilitated by certain silences and global hegemonies. Many scholars built their careers during this phase of European anthropology's 'coming of age' and identified with its promises. Subsequently, there have been the current crises and fissures (from Brexit to the rise of populism), shifting funding structures, reforms of social security systems and the projectification of the discipline, calls for decolonization, and new forms of professional engagement. These changes can be felt and often seen as representing not only a threat to the discipline, but also as a generational divide raising further questions about the future of anthropology.

This conference seeks to explore these temporalities and the interplay between disciplinary shifts, individual scholarly trajectories, and socio-economic changes. We invite contributions that engage with questions such as:

- How has anthropology responded to the challenges of ageing populations, including those posed to science and university education?
- What unique insights can anthropology provide into the experiences, social dynamics, and cultural meanings of ageing societies that distinguish it from other disciplines?
- How do epistemic communities and conversations age over time, and how does this affect creativity in knowledge production?
- How have our ethnographic conclusions and interpretations aged, considering new knowledge and perspectives?

- How do we engage with the classics of anthropology in an evolving disciplinary landscape?
- Is there a clash of generations within anthropology, and if so, what are the sources of tension?
- Is decolonization a generational challenge, and how can we ensure its successful implementation?

We welcome papers from diverse anthropological perspectives that reflect on these issues through theoretical, historical, or ethnographic lenses.

How to submit

You can submit papers for panels or independently of them via [the registration form](#). These will then be assigned to existing panels or clustered, reflecting the highest fit. The deadline for submission is 18 May 2025. The application should include the paper title, an annotation (150-250 words), as well as the name(s), affiliation(s) and contact details of the presenter(s). Submissions can be made in English or Czech (or Slovak).

Further information about the fees, registration, keynote and other details can be found on the [CASA website](#). With any questions, please contact the organising committee at: casa.conference2025@gmail.com.

P01. Romani Studies in Flux: Examining Shifts, Setbacks, Challenges and New Directions

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Over the past three decades, Romani-related scholarship has undergone a series of transformations. It has been influenced by major geopolitical changes, such as the fall of the Iron Curtain, migration, and the process of EU expansion. In the process, the situation of Roma has emerged as a ‘European’ concern, leading to increased funding for research. New programs and academic journals have emerged, and the number and visibility of social

scientists of Romani descent have been steadily, albeit slowly, increasing. In the field of anthropology, Western social anthropology has challenged existing local approaches, while Critical Romani scholars have questioned conventional epistemologies and divides.

Any advancements have been uneven and precarious, and they are threatened with being undone. There has been a decline in long-term ethnographic studies, as well as a decrease in the number of students interested in learning the Romani language. Insights from Romani studies have still not been incorporated into mainstream social science and are regarded as niche topics. Scholars have failed to shape public policies and are of little relevance to Romani communities. Political changes and the rise of populist authoritarianism threaten free inquiry.

This panel seeks to reflect on the changes that have taken place in Romani studies, including anthropology. It invites contributions that examine the challenges that make it difficult or even undesirable to maintain the current status quo; that scrutinise which past developments and approaches are worth preserving or even recovering, and which should be discarded; that discuss emerging research methodologies and perspectives that have been developing often on the margins.

P02. Ageing of Environmental and Ecological Anthropologies

Daniel Sosna, Institute of Ethnology, Czech Academy of Sciences (sosna@eu.cas.cz)

Markéta Zandlová, Faculty of Humanities, Charles University

André Thieman, Institute of Ethnology, Czech Academy of Sciences; Faculty of Arts, Charles University

Ognjen Kojanić, Institute of Ethnology, Czech Academy of Sciences

In Central Europe, one can see an expansion of environmental and ecological anthropologies. Interest in environmental movements, ethics, conservation, and landscapes has been enriched with topics concerning multispecies coexistence, resilience to the effects of climate change or ruptures caused by warfare, discard processes, politics of resource use, and embodied ecologies. With the ageing of high-modern infrastructures (such as dams, roads, pipes and cables), the questions of their in-built ruination and shifting entanglements with the environment have led to conversations about infrastructure maintenance and repair, repurposing, or rewilding. The isolated activities of a few scholars have been giving way to larger collaborative projects and experimenting with epistemology and research methods. Interdisciplinarity has changed from a newspeak of grant proposals into everyday research practice while continuously bumping into anthropological tribalism and self-fetishism. These changes have led anthropologists to explore new frontiers of engagement and synergies with art, popularization, and policymaking, to make research more meaningful and relevant.

Does it mean that environmental and ecological anthropologies have grown and become adults? For the good or the worse? Adulthood brings well-known benefits: one can drink, love, drive, and school those who have not made it there yet. However, with maturity comes responsibility. It may prevent one from doing bold and risky things.

We welcome contributions in environmental and ecological anthropology from anthropologists of any age and career stage, presented as PechaKucha (20×20, in English or Czech) or traditional papers (20 min + 10 min discussion, in English). Please, indicate your choice in the application.

P03. “Spectres of orientalism” in an unequal Europe? Aging of, in and across East and West

Matouš Jelínek, University of Amsterdam, (m.jelinek@uva.nl)

Kristine Krause, University of Amsterdam, (k.krause@uva.nl)

In this panel we want to revisit a seemingly “old” discussion on forms of othering within Europe, particularly between the ‘postsocialist’ East and the capitalist West. Inequalities within Europe have changed and complexified, as reflected in terminologies such as nested and neo-orientalisms (Bakić-Hayde 1995, Buchowski 2006, Cervinkova 2012) and in discussions on the relationship between differently situated centres and peripheries (Kojanic 2020). We would like to reflect on and revisit these conversations by looking at how care is organised in a transnational European market, articulating new and old inequalities. Central and Eastern European countries are sending workers to the West, leaving care gaps behind, and, at the same time, becoming transit and receiving countries, while the care chains move further East. In some instances, this movement is reversed when elderly needing care move East.

We invite research papers and think pieces which address one (or several) of the different prepositions in the title and welcome in particular contributions that include reflections on the history of the research field(s).

- Ageing of: reflections on the distinction between East and West, centres and peripheries, in the light of persisting inequalities around elderly care;
- Ageing in: papers on ageing in East and West and different peripheries, including reflections on the shifting welfare states, post-cold war transformations and (new and old) war situations;
- Ageing across: contributions about how in ageing-related migrations and mobilities East/West, centre/periphery distinctions become (re)formulated and might carry phantoms from the past.

P04. Ethnographic/Anthropological Film and Other Audiovision

Milan Duřnak, University of Pardubice (milan.durnak@upce.cz)

Lívia Šavelková, University of Pardubice

The aim of this panel is to present audiovisual outputs of anthropological or ethnological research, which are significantly marginalized in the current evaluation of science in the Czech Republic and Slovakia compared to textual ones (Biograf 2021/73-74). Despite the long-term systemic disadvantage, linked also to the underfunding of the humanities and social sciences and the persistent dichotomy of science = text / art = film, a number of ethnographic/anthropological films are being produced in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The aim of the panel is to offer a space for the presentation and reflection of audiovisual works by filmmakers mainly from the academic environment (students and graduates of socio-cultural disciplines) and to show that audiovisual ethnographic/anthropological works are relevant outputs of social science cognition.

The section is open to audiovisual outputs produced since 2023.

To apply for the panel, we ask you to provide information on the format and length of your audiovisual output, as well as a short annotation for the film/part.