

## **Potential Ethnographic PhD Opportunity (University of Barcelona) to study German Agriculture and Social Difference**

### **1. Offer description:**

We are looking for a potential Phd student/researcher to support the Principal Investigator of an international research project funded by the European Research Council, based at the University of Barcelona in the Department of Social Anthropology in the Faculty of Geography and History. This researcher will conduct immersive, full-time ethnographic fieldwork research in German agriculture (focused on production, transportation, and consumption), community collaboration, academic writing and presentation activities associated with the project throughout approximately 3 years. With support from the PI and the research team, the researcher will engage in collaborative research with people involved in German agricultural circuits. With collaboration from the PI and support from advisors, this doctoral research will focus on the German Agriculture as a vantage point to study social difference, differentiation, identity, and identification in Germany regarding inequalities, migration, and the relations between East and West Germany.

This project seeks to understand the invisibilization of connections between migrants and the societies of which they form part by studying how their contribution to those societies is rendered invisible. To achieve this objective, the project will study German agriculture as a place in which social class, migration, racialization and the relations between East and West emerge in intricate ways. Specifically, the researcher will focus on the German asparagus, providing novel insights in the construction of national as well as regional East and West identities, as well as themes such as gastro-nationalism, infrastructure and human-environment relations. This focus on asparagus will be complimented by some comparison / contrast with other common agricultural products in Germany, particularly the potato and/or strawberry. The project focuses on bodies and embodiment from a social theoretical perspective when considering invisibilization and connection. This part of the project connects the embodied experience of migrant farmworkers, supply chain workers, and consumers, as well as the different relations they develop with the asparagus (in comparison with potato and/or strawberry) depending on their social positions in relation to and within German society (including especially East and West).

The project methods are based in in-depth, immersive participant observation (and perhaps observant participation) ethnography with migrant farmworkers, transportation and supply chain workers, and consumers of fruits and vegetables within what the project conceptualizes as “food circuits”. Based on this in-depth ethnographic fieldwork in food circuits and interacting with social theory, the project will theorize ethno-nationalism and nationalism, mobility and circulation, racialization and racial capitalism, embodiment and health, humans and more-than-human environments, infrastructure and supply chains, connection and invisibilization in relation to agriculture, food and eating. The team is based at the University of Barcelona in one of the largest and most dynamic Departments of Social Anthropology in Europe that is home to multiple national and international projects and research teams working on issues of contemporary theoretical and social importance.

**Job description:** The PhD researcher will – with collaboration from the PI and support from advisors – investigate social differences in the context of German agriculture from an innovative perspective that interrelates themes such as racialization, migration, social hierarchies, infrastructure, anthropocene or plantationocene, and national/regional identities. The predoctoral researcher will take part in collaborative co-leading of presentation and publication ventures, including conference panels and journal special issues. The PhD researcher will also help foster visual ethnography, which will be led by another member of the team. The researcher will lead the research and writing on German agriculture circuits and will engage in collaborative research and dissemination. We seek highly motivated candidates who enjoy fieldwork, social theory and teamwork to:

- work effectively as part of a team in an international, innovative and multi-circuited project,
- effectively integrate the investigation on German agriculture, migration and social difference within the frameworks and social theory literature of the project,
- read and engage social theory and ethnography in relation to the project themes in dialogue with the fieldwork,
- in conversation with the PI and advisors, take initiative to develop and to conduct in-depth, immersive, full-time ethnographic field research, with some relation to embodied and reflexive aspects – particularly leading the German Agriculture and Social Difference Circuit of the project with collaboration from the PI and support from advisors,
- help build on, critique, and develop social theory from the context of in-depth fieldwork,
- actively seek to innovate collaborative research and dissemination activities – including potentially paraethnography as well as multi-modal, artistic, dramatic, sonic and visual, and
- write and publish social science scholarship from the research – some of which will be co-authored, some of which will be in English.

#### **Key responsibilities**

- Develop and lead German Agriculture and Social Difference Circuit of research project
- Conduct in-depth fieldwork with migrant farmworkers (production), transportation and supply chain workers (transportation), and consumers (consumption) – with collaboration from PI and support from advisors
- Engage respectfully with minoritized or marginalized migrant workers in fieldwork
- Read literature and conduct research to prepare the investigation on German agriculture at the intersection of migration, labor, food systems, embodiment and health, the history

and identities of East and Western Germany, Germany and Eastern Europe (or other regions involved in migration to Germany), social inequity and racialization

- Engage with the team in collaborative research and collaborative dissemination – the latter of which could be multi-modal and sensory (artistic, visual, sonic, dramatic, etc).
- Analyse ethnographic data and interact actively with other team members through the process of analysis and theorization.
- Write and publish articles and chapters – some co-authored - in top journals in English – and consider other local and regional languages.
- Help in leading the development and publication of special issues to disseminate findings in top journals, some of which will be in English, especially during the years of the project as well as after the years of the project.
- Help support and foster the work of the visual ethnographic member of the team.
- Present research with the team in conferences and panel discussions
- Co-organize the final conference for the project with the PI and the rest of the team
- Help the project have positive impact on social change beyond the academy.
- Show dedication and flexibility to the project.
- Follow the project's ethics and data management protocols.
- Participate actively in the team's collaborative or participatory research activities with research interlocutors.
- Participate actively in the activities of the UB research group, including being present at the UB and in Barcelona during crucial times of preparation, analysis, writing, discussion, conferences, workshops and meeting. Interact actively virtually during times when the team is not present together at the UB and in Barcelona.

## **2. Expertise/Competence/Skills**

1. Motivation to conduct in immersive, field ethnographic research methods, ideally with embodied and reflexive components.
2. Top-level written and verbal command of academic English is required, top level command of the German language, and one of the languages spoken by migrant farmworkers in Germany (see below), including such languages as Romanian and/or Romani.
3. Evidence of expertise, dedication and motivation to write and publish top-quality publications, including in English.
4. Knowledge of and interest in social theoretical, ethnographic and social science literatures relevant to migration and its relation to Germany and migration.
5. Interest in social difference and differentiation, particularly in relation to East and West Germany as well as migration.

### 3. Languages:

English	Excellent
German	Excellent
Romanian	Good – see above
Romani	Good – see above
Hungarian	Good – see above
Polish	Good – see above

4. **Process and Deadline:** If you are interested in this position, please email your CV and a cover letter describing your motivation for, interests in, and suitability for the position to [mateufontimugnaini@ub.edu](mailto:mateufontimugnaini@ub.edu) **by 23:59 on Thursday December 12th.**
5. **Contact:** *Please contact [mateufontimugnaini@ub.edu](mailto:mateufontimugnaini@ub.edu) with any questions.*