

We'll meet again!

Cafés, inns, bars, eateries, and restaurants in a globalising world

A guided field course of the institute of anthropology

"We'll meet again" was the title of a famous song and musical film during World War II. The lyrics were devoted to the longing for one's absent loved ones.

The song has had a long and multifaceted, sometimes controversial history. On May 5, it is played every year in the Netherlands to close the Liberation Day concert in commemoration of the end of World War II. *We'll meet again* has been referenced or covered by many artists, for instance by Pink Floyd in their 1979 album *The Wall*. It was performed or remixed in no less than nine feature films, among them Stanley Kubrick's 1964 black comedy film *Dr. Strangelove*, where *We'll meet again* is the soundtrack to the final scene, accompanying the doomsday scenario of a nuclear war. The Byrds covered it in their album *Mr. Tambourine Man* in 1965, and Johnny Cash in his 2002 album *The Man Comes Around*, and last but not least, Queen Elizabeth II quoted the song on April 5, 2020, when she expressed her gratitude to the people who were fighting the Covid-19 pandemic.



Interested?

Join us on June 3, 2021, 12:15 AM via Zoom, please contact the secretariat of the institute of anthropology by email: ethnologie@unibas.ch



The aims of the guided field course

This course will guide you through your first fieldwork experience. You are invited to choose a setting and a place where you will want to engage in encounters with others for six weeks. It may be a simple wooden bench at the entrance of an African railroad station deep in the bush where snacks and drinks are offered to passengers who have to wait for their delayed trains, it may also be a bourgeois coffee house somewhere in Vienna or Paris, it may be a restaurant of an international fast-food chain in Tokyo, New York or Cape Town. You will be free to identify the place for your project, while experienced lecturers will help you to find a setting where you can successfully conduct such research. Those who will want to work together with other students and to have the opportunity to exchange regularly with experienced anthropologists can do so in the target area of this guided field course, which is Mali, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire in West Africa.

The Thematic Focus:

Encounters

Encounters are an essential part of human existence. Anthropology is about encountering others, listening, and talking to them, learning about their points of view, making sense of others' life worlds. Encounters can happen unexpectedly, but there are also places and spaces where one is time and again faced with the experience of others. Where, when and how to meet is a basic social practice that is often framed by settings that foster the exchange of knowledge, feelings, and experiences. In such settings, encounters can lead to long dialogues between individuals as well as larger groups of people.

Cafés, bars and eateries as social artworks

There is an intimate connection between consuming food and drinks and meeting others. Drinking and eating together creates bonds, which may confirm existing relationships, but they may also be the beginning of something new, of lasting friendships and partnerships of all kinds, of networks that have a significance for entire societies. Refusing to eat and drink together is, on the flipside, a deferral of interpersonal ties and can weaken them to a degree that questions their mere existence. And then again, in case of crises, the end of a crisis is often celebrated by sharing drinks and meals.

The experience of diversity

Places where drinks and meals are shared are often open to people of many different social and cultural backgrounds. They thus foster the experience of diversity, of others who come from rich or poor social strata, of individuals who do not share the same convictions or beliefs, of people who speak different languages and express themselves in a wide variety of bodily idioms. Tolerance and curiosity are prerequisites for everyone who is interested in learning more about others and the spaces where encounters happen – and anthropologists are no exception. ■