



**Colloquium Series
Sociology of Transnationalization
“The Transnational Lens”**

On the Portability of Home across Displacement and Migration: a Conceptual Framework

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This presentation revisits my comparative study of the lived experience of home among (in)voluntary migrants. It starts from an analytical concern with the renegotiation of place attachment and appropriation – as opposed to a simple "loss of home" – under circumstances of displacement and migration. I advance a layered conceptualization of home and retrace the ways in which home may travel, as an assemblage of settings, relations, emotions and narratives, along with migrants and their cross-border connections. How does home change and how far is it retained, on multiple scales, along the way? How does the (re)production of home, as long as it is achievable, desirable or unavoidable, interact with migrant's struggles to make home anew, and with the predominant home constellations they encounter? What does this mean in terms of its selective and unequal portability? By exploring how different categories of migrants negotiate the material, relational, emotional and moral bases of home, I aim to advance a twofold debate – on the determinants and consequences of the transnational (un)portability of infrastructures, things, lifeworlds, memories and rights, but also on the ongoing dialectic between the ascriptive and the achieved (or achievable) dimensions of our life experience. This leads me to discuss five idealtypical configurations of home portability: the embodied, the suitcase, the immobile, the unhomey and the remote-control home. At the intersection between migration, displacement, home and housing studies, my presentation is meant to facilitate our understanding of migrants' unequal ways of carrying along what has been most important and critical for them, and of reshaping it during transit and settlement through their ways of dwelling, and beyond. This calls for a formal sociological analysis, inspired by grassroots fieldwork and supported, in turn, by relevant empirical examples.

**Wednesday, 31st May 2023
16:15 – 17:45**

**Bielefeld University
Room: X-C3-107**

*Paolo Boccagni is a Professor in Sociology (University of Trento). A former ERC grantee, he has written extensively in migration, home, diversity and social welfare studies. He is currently doing comparative research on the lived experience of home, with a particular focus on the temporalities and boundary-making of asylum seekers in reception facilities. His

emerging research interests involve the practice of homing, the social working of metaphor, the ways of coping with absence and distance and the significance of future-related imaginaries and practices. Recent publications include *Migration and domestic space* (co-ed, OA, Springer-Imiscoe) and the *Handbook on home and migration* (ed. Edward Elgar, forthcoming).