

2022 – 2024

“Afflicted Minds–‘Madness’, Morality and Emotions in rural Bali and Java”; DFG, with Florin Cristea, M.A.

This project contributes to current debates on illness experience, care and therapeutic landscapes in Bali and Java, Indonesia. The island has established itself as a hub for international cooperation on mental health and illness. Based on the collaboration with professional networks already initiated during previous fieldwork, this project is well connected to local and international institutions. It investigates the illness experience associated with severe psychiatric disorders as intertwined moral, cognitive, and emotional processes. This analytic link has not been studied so far and promises to provide an in-depth description of how global knowledge flows influence personal and social illness trajectories and outcomes outside of the Global North, by methodologically particularizing the diverse Balinese and Javanese therapeutic landscapes.

Cooperation partner: Universitas Gadjah Mada Yogyakarta, Indonesia

2022 – 2027

Public Anthropology; DFG network (with Prof. Dr. Hansjörg Dilger, Prof. Dr. Gisela Welz et al.)

The network is pursuing three goals with its activities: First, it aims to trace the highly diverse approaches and practices in the field of Public Anthropology in the historical context of the anthropological disciplines. Second, it strives to establish an internationally connected Community of Practice in the field of Public Anthropology in Germany, reflecting the practices and conditions of public-oriented scientific research and work. Finally, the network seeks to establish sustainable cooperative structures between European and non-European Social and Cultural Anthropology, in which scholars from both disciplines work together on social challenges based on their ethnographic expertise(s), strengthening the exchange with existing networks.

<https://anthro-publics.de/>

2017 – 2024

“Shaping Asia” network consisting of partner organizations in Asia and Germany (convenor working group “Knowledge Production and Circulation”; DFG Network, with Prof. Dr. Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka, Prof. Dr. Christiane Brosius, Prof. Dr. Claudia Derichs, Prof. Ursula Rao, et al.)

This initiative brings together scholars from the Humanities and Social Sciences working in and on different regions of Asia (including Asia’s diasporas). The aim is to establish a platform for generating collaborative projects geared at grasping past, present and future dynamics in Asian societies and cultures. These collaborative

endeavours are expected to reach beyond national boundaries and cultural compartments. Using 'Shaping Asia' as a key trope, we propose that it is fruitful to examine the shaping processes - captured in synchronic and diachronic dimensions - that contribute to various notions of Asia as well as practices in the region. For this, diverse agents, temporalities and points of venture must be considered. These will be understood in their plural and pluralist qualities.

Such a relational approach may include Asia's geophysical 'contact zones' (e.g. within Asia as much as, for instance, with Africa or Europe) and transregional mobilities (e.g. triggered by education, changing labour conditions or protest and activism). It can also add value to a critical rethinking of area studies, and to a discussion on the formats needed, and concepts repositioned to further strengthen relations between the 'systematic' and the 'small' disciplines. Researchers will engage in designing research strategies and projects that allow for synergetic and transboundary approaches towards various ways in and through which 'Asia' has been imagined and altered, politicised and legitimized. This shall be done by means of comparison, the tracing of connectivities (including rupture and friction) and by enhancing collaborations driven by a commitment to interdisciplinarity.

<http://shapingasia.net/>

2021-2023

"Orders of Feeling and Economies of Solidarity: Understanding the relationship between work, health systems, and well-being in five European countries during Covid-19 (OFES-19)" with Dr. Lauren Cubellis; una-europa, Seed Funding for Developing Future Transnational Teaching Modules, EU Commission

This collaboration examines the relationship between changing work and labor conditions, psychological well-being, the provision of mental health services, and social solidarity initiatives during the Covid-19 pandemic in Germany, Scotland, Finland, Spain, and Poland. New constellations of employment, differential access to services and support, and the toll for the mental health of populations reflects changing "orders of feeling" (how are we supposed to feel through the pandemic?) and "economies of solidarity" (what are we supposed to do in the pandemic?) in the wake of Covid-19. The five institutions included here represent countries in which the experience of the pandemic has put radically different strains on local institutions and populations, revealing significant differences in the reliability of work, the consequences of unemployment, the availability of health care, and the experience and treatment of mental illness.

Consortium partners: University of Edinburgh, Prof. Jessica Cooper & Cristina Moreno Lozano; Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie, Prof.

Marek Pawlak & Katarzyna Słaby; Universidad Complutense de Madrid,
Prof. Marta Pérez

2020 – 2024

Working Group “Children and Nature” (with Prof. Dr. Katja Liebal, Prof. Dr. Daniel Haun, Prof. Dr. Patricia Kanngiesser; Dr. Ferdiansyah Thajib et al.; Leipzig Lab, Universität Leipzig)

The working group „Children and Nature“ researches the attitudes of children and adolescents towards animals, the development of these attitudes up to adulthood and their variation in different socio-cultural contexts. In addition, it investigates which connections children perceive between the animate and inanimate world.

Disciplines involved: Human Biology, Anthropology and Developmental, Cross-cultural and Comparative Psychology at the Leipzig University and at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology.

<https://www.uni-leipzig.de/en/research/research-profile/leipziglab/children-and-nature>

2013–2018

“The Researchers’ Affects”; VolkswagenStiftung, (with Prof. Dr. Katja Liebal and Prof. Dr. Oliver Lubrich)

Researchers and their affects are perceived as an irreconcilable dichotomy. Affects are considered as nuisances that jeopardize ‘objective’ science. At best, they are regarded as marginal apparitions of limited anecdotic, biographic or artistic interest. Many scientific disciplines have excluded them from their discourse. In contrast, our assumption is that affects inevitably influence the research process: from the choice of research subjects, the researcher’s positionality and the generation of data, to their interpretation and public representation. We argue that their critical analysis should be part of and not excluded from scientific practice. Instead of obliterating or deeming them as esoteric by-products they should be scrutinized systematically and thus rendered productive for science and the communication of its results to the wider (academic) community.

In particular, fieldwork of anthropologists, primatologists and travel writers triggers a range of affects that impact observation, influence comprehension and guide the formation of theories. Our continued assumption is that fieldwork in its manifold appearances can serve as a paradigm for the researchers’ affects in general, since only fieldwork has created an extensive corpus of subjective reports (e.g. field diaries, notes, letters) that can be studied exemplarily. Based on these materials we integrate anthropology, primatology, psychology and literature studies and thus intend to combine humanities, social and natural

science. Herein, we perceive the various disciplines' examinations of field research as central theoretical and empirical interface. This integrative framework shall be coined with the term 'fieldwork studies' referring to the systematic analysis of fieldwork experience from interdisciplinary perspectives. Parallel to the analysis of affects in contemporary texts (travel writing, ethnographies, reports of primatologists), we intend to assess the affects of ethnographers and primatologists before, during and after fieldwork by means of qualitative and quantitative methods.

The interactions between researchers and the researched are not limited to humans, but shall be extended to the work with non-human primates. The interdisciplinary project examines the role of affects within science and intends to scrutinize how the subjective experience of affects can be assessed more 'objectively'. Thereby, the researchers' affects are not only studied from different disciplinary angles, but new methods and models of knowledge production shall be developed and empirically tested.

Research sites: Yogyakarta, Java/Indonesia; East Java/Indonesia; Pasir Panjang, Kalimantan/Indonesia; Hongkong

2020 - 2022

"Learning for Democracy from Interfaith Initiatives: Civic Education, Democracy, and Religion" (Berlin University Alliance Global Engagement Grant; with Dr. Saskia Schäfer, Mona Behnke, M.A., Ronja Eberle, M.A. et al.)

In this interdisciplinary project we discuss the conditions under which religious and political education can strengthen democracy. In Germany, political and religious education are largely structured separately. Long neglected, the democratic potential of religious education is only slowly developing. With regard to Islam, the focus – beyond Europe – lies mostly on the Middle East. Our project is dedicated to making Indonesian perspectives visible. The world's largest Muslim-majority country has decades of experience in pro-democratic religious and inter-religious education. In a series of interviews and talks, scholars and practitioners working in Germany and Indonesia discuss pitfalls and opportunities of political and religious education. If politics and religion cannot be separated – how can they best work together?

<http://democracyandreligion.com/de/uber/en/about/>

2019 – 2021

"Encounter": media workshops, collaboration with the public library Tempelhof-Schöneberg and the Mauerpark Institut e.V. (Kulturstiftung des Bundes, with Dr. Judith Albrecht, Dr. Victoria Kumala Sakti, Dr. Sarah Fichtner, Dr. Boryano Rickum, et al.)

The Media Workshop is a platform for dialogue which combines media training with a deeper reflection on life in a diverse urban community. The organisers have presented a collection of various perspectives of equal importance. Together with the Mauerpark Institut e.V., the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the FU Berlin, and residents, the project has created a pool of local protagonists, artists, researchers and students who have enriched the project with a wide range of cultural backgrounds. In workshops and events designed to cultivate cross-generational and cross-lingual communication, the participants addressed relevant urban- and community-related issues and reflected on these from their personal standpoints. Bringing together various perspectives, experiences, cultural practices and expertise, the participants developed concrete formats in which the issues are clearly presented, e.g. as podcasts, films, books, blog entries and graphic depictions. The results were presented in both analogue and digital versions.

With the project, the library attempted to strengthen its role as an innovation driver and bridge builder within the urban community. It accompanied the creative process with its core programme and presented the media workshop inside the library as a public service. The competence and networks of the cooperation partners contributed extensive expertise to the project.

https://www.kulturstiftung-des-bundes.de/de/projekte/transformation_und_zukunft/detail/medienwerkstatt_encounters.html

2017–2018

“Knowledge Complexity”-Project (K-PLEX; work package leader, EU Horizon2020, with Dr. Jörg Lehmann and Dr. Elisabeth Huber)

One of the major terminological forces driving ICT development today is that of ‘big data.’ While the phrase may sound inclusive and integrative, in fact, ‘big data’ approaches are highly selective, excluding any input that cannot be effectively structured, represented, or, indeed, digitised. Data of this messy, dirty sort is precisely the kind that humanities and cultural researchers deal with best. It will therefore be the contribution of the K-PLEX project to investigate these elements of humanities and cultural data, and the strategies researchers have developed to deal with them. In doing so it will remain at the margins of ICT so as to better shed light on the gap between analogue or augmented digital practices and fully computational ones. As such, it will expand our awareness of the risks inherent in big data and to suggest ways in which phenomena that resist datafication can still be represented (if only by their absence) in knowledge creation approaches reliant upon the interrogation of large data corpora.

K-PLEX approaches this challenge in a comparative, multidisciplinary and multisectoral fashion, focusing on 3 key challenges to the knowledge creation capacity of big data approaches: the manner in which data that are not digitised or shared become 'hidden' from aggregation systems; the fact that data is human created, and lacks the objectivity often ascribed to the term; the subtle ways in which data that are complex almost always become simplified before they can be aggregated. It will approach these questions via a humanities research perspective, but using social science research tools to look at both the humanistic and computer science approaches to the term 'data' and its many possible meanings and implications.

As such, K-PLEX project defines and describes key aspects of data that are at risk of being left out of our knowledge creation processes in a system where large scale data aggregation is becoming ever more the gold standard.

<https://kplex-project.com/>

2009–2013

"Are Germans really green-eyed monsters?—Envy in transcultural perspectives: Japan, Indonesia, Germany" (PI; Cluster of Excellence Languages of Emotion, DFG, with Christian von Scheve, et al.)

The behavioral consequences of envy can be either destructive or emulative. Which of these facets are prompted by distinct cultural and socio-economic environments? How do you react if you encounter a person with a fancy car or expensive clothes that you would like to own but cannot afford? If it makes you feel envious, what would be the consequences? Would you try to work harder, to be able to afford the things one day, or would you talk pejoratively about the other person?

Envy is a most intriguing social emotion because it is exclusively elicited by a core feature of human sociality: relative social standing. There is but one process that generates envy: upward social comparison. Envy is a human universal found in almost any known culture, and at the same time closely linked to culture-specific appraisals of social comparison. Remarkably, the behavioral consequences of envy can be quite opposite: either destructive and conflictual or emulative and competitive, with profoundly different consequences for societies and social relationships. These qualities provoke the question whether characteristics of distinct cultural and socio-economic environments systematically prompt one or the other form of envy in response to upward social comparison.

The project investigates this question by examining envy-responses to identical comparison situations with participants from different cultures. Using functional magnetic resonance imaging and semi-structured interviews, we assess cross-cultural differences in the

experience of both kinds of envy. We hypothesize that distinct envy responses between participants with different cultural background can be explained by differences in ego- and socio-centric orientation as well as in socio-economic background between these cultural groups. The study sheds light on the socio-cultural dynamics in processing genuinely social stimuli on a psychophysiological level and holds policy-implications with respect to potentially detrimental behavioral effects of perceived inequality.

Doctoral Research Projects

Completed 2020: Edge of Tolerance: Politics of Emotion of Muslim Queer in Indonesia; Dr. Ferdiansyah Thajib

Completed 2022: Between Stigma and Disease Comfort – Illness Concepts and their Implications for Psychiatry Experienced Persons; Dr. Svenja Thornau

Perception and representation of outer space in Thailand: An anthropological inquiry into how sensation and imagination shape our understanding of other worlds and beings; Lauren Reid

Home Making and Belonging in Return Migration: Korean Chinese as International Laborers; Jingyi Li

Methods of Child-Centered Research; Annett Hofmann

Navigating academic culture: ethnographers' emotion work in greedy institutions; Julia Baumann

Learning and becoming a person: A collaborative ethnography of emotions among young girls in Bali; Irina Savu-Cristea

Images of a Contested Space: The Case of the 2009 L'Aquila Earthquake and its Aftermath; Raffaele Gallo

Women's Organizations' Navigating Role in Java, Indonesia: An Investigation into Emotional Labour and Gender-based Violence; Mona Behnke

Affective Minds: Understanding Emotional Dimensions of Schizophrenia in Indonesia; Florin Cristea

What do migrant divorcees in Germany cry about when they experience their divorce? A sensitive look at post-divorce loss(es) and disenfranchised grief; Sara El-Dayekh

Deadly intimacies, gendered deaths: A psychological anthropological inquiry into the affective encounters of men with the phenomenon of intimate femicides in Greece; Panos Tsitsanoudis