

**60 Minutes in Ethnography, Theory, Anthropology**  
**Summer Semester 2022**  
**Wednesday, 2-3 PM**  
**Organized by Professor Dr. Sandra Kurfürst**

DATE	SPEAKER	TOPIC
13. April	<b>Tat Thanh Duong</b> Vietnam National University	<p><b>History of The Collective Living Quarters in Hanoi (1954-2000)</b></p> <p>“The collective living quarter” is a common term used to distinguish itself from other constructions having similar functions from the 2000s onwards in Hanoi. These constructions are imprints of Soviet architects and characterize Hanoi’s lifestyle in the past. The collective living quarter soon became a symbol of modern life at that time with all essential conditions integrated inside a specific area. Thereby, the research helps people memorize the beauty, the values in the past so that they will be aware of keeping, appreciating the achievements and promoting tradition to contribute to building up a modern capital.</p>
20. April	<b>Ognjen Kojanić</b> Humboldt Fellow University of Cologne	<p><b>To Build or Not to Build a Port in “Belgrade’s Amazonia”            Infrastructure and Human-Wetland Relations in Belgrade, Serbia</b></p> <p>Human-environment relations are (re)shaped by infrastructural projects. In turn, these projects reflect the political-economic regimes under which they are developed, while simultaneously allowing those regimes to be contested. To illustrate this claim, I will focus on one proposal that has drawn a lot of attention: the construction of the new port of Belgrade in Beljarica, a wetland area on the north bank of the Danube popularly referred to as “Belgrade’s Amazonia”. Between 2015 and 2020, this project was occasionally floated as part of the growing footprint of Chinese capital in Serbia within the massive international Belt and Road Initiative. The meaning to this proposal stemmed from the modernist narrative of infrastructural and economic development, which was unquestioned by its opponents. Rather, strong opposition to the project foregrounded the endangered species that inhabit this area, the ecosystem services it provides, and its potential for ecotourism. Moreover, while opposing the specter of new infrastructure development, other infrastructural specters lingered unexamined—the long history of management of the Danube River to enable shipping, flood protection, and erosion reduction that had profoundly shaped Beljarica. I analyze the competing value claims articulated in this case to trace multiple ways of relating to wetland landscapes.</p>

27. April	<b>Jonathan DeVore</b> University of Cologne	<b>The Historical Construction of White Supremacy: The Case of Table Manners in Brazil</b>  This talk examines the emergence of “whiteness” and white supremacy as transnational historical phenomena, with a focus on a particular manner of eating that rural families in Northeastern Brazil today describe as “eating by hand” (comendo de mão). Drawing on ethnographic research, and 19th century travel writing, the talk traces how the practice transitioned from being an unmarked and widespread commensal practice in the 19th century—even among Brazil’s social elites—to become a stigmatized and racialized practice. While the use of utensils became a sign of whiteness, eating with one’s fingers was reconstituted as a mark of non-whiteness. The talk draws on recently published research in Anthropological Quarterly and Anthropological Theory, while presenting new lines of investigation.
4. May	<b>Nguyen Van Minh</b> Université libre de Bruxelles	<b>Intimacy on Two Wheels: Traffic Sensescapes in Ho Chi Minh City</b>  In this presentation, I will analyse the haptic and sonic strategies that motorbike users in Ho Chi Minh City perform to achieve intimacy. I use intimacy as a theoretical framework that extends the ontological role of the sensory from the individual to the relational, and from the subjective to the social. Theorising traffic as a forum of embodied sociality highlights not only the heightened sensory ambience of streetscapes, but also the agency of street users in producing a sensorially complex social world. Based on thirteen months of motorbike ethnography, I draw on concepts from sensory anthropology and urban studies to rethink the affective time-spaces of street ambiances. Firstly, I deploy the concept of somatic work to analyse the senses as dispositions of a habitus that are socially constructed rather than biologically determined. Secondly, I apply the concept of sociothermic affect to sensory experiences of roads to explore co-production of urban ambiances. Finally, I reflect on invisibility and civil inattention to understand traffic as a site of embodied politics, which blurs the threshold between public and private.
18. May	<b>Michael Kleinod</b> Universität zu Köln	<b>Spirits with Morality: Social Criticism and Notions of a Good Life in Laos through the Bangbot Imaginary</b>  This talk approaches notions of a good life in Laos via the imaginary of bangbot, a benevolent forest spirit of high moral integrity. Bangbot tie morality to undisturbed, remote forests as they live in observance of the monastic precepts of Lao Buddhism in the deep jungle, far away from human settlements. The paper argues

		<p>that this connection of morality and deep forest enables criticism and narratives about the good life in times when the turning of "land into capital" materializes in rapid deforestation. I suggest that the potential of this imaginary for socio-ecological criticism and alternative visions depends on social structure and historical context.</p> <p>While bangbot were instrumental in violent anti-colonial revolt, lending political legitimacy to rural ethnic elites, in today's context of frontier plunder vs. conservation, they are tamed to lend legitimacy to emerging urban milieus with socio-ecological orientations. Thus, the cultural, sociological, and ecological dynamics of Lao late socialism are entangled in the spirit-figure of bangbot.</p>
25. May	<p><b>Rosalia Namsai Engchuan</b> Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg</p>	<p><b>Attuning to the Whisperings: on the affordances of moving image as a space for multi-species storytelling</b></p> <p>Aiming at a complex understanding of situated issues pivoting around environmental crises—as experienced, made sense of, and acted upon by those who are affected by it—in my talk I will center cinematic epistemologies from Indonesia in the study of environmental crises mitigation practices. There is no way out within. The intellectual territory and foundational assumptions of mainstream environmental discourse and visibility fail to acknowledge persisting roots in the colonial, capitalist and patriarchal logic of modernity enabled by epistemicide. In order to escape this fatal logic of alienation and extractivism, new languages as well as different knowledges are needed. I will propose to turn the gaze to cinematic epistemologies—as multi-species assemblages—bearing transformative potential for cultivating the grounds for care as a process of relating, for a different way of becoming attuned to the world. Their inherent micro-political potential lies not in putting forward alternative knowledges, but in alternative (intuitive, experimental, affective) conventions of knowledge production and dissemination. Looping this back to my own practice I will critically reflect on academic, in particular anthropological vs. ethnographic, modes of knowledge production.</p>
1. June	<p><b>Simone Pfeifer</b> Graduiertenkolleg „anschließen-ausschließen“</p>	<p><b>“I was touched by the mercy in his voice“: Gendered and affective dimensions in the appropriation of religious images and videos on social media</b></p> <p>The presentation explores gendered and affective dimensions in the appropriation of Islamic images and videos distributed via YouTube and WhatsApp. Drawing on insights from a digital media ethnography on women’s media practices and forms of belonging within</p>

		<p>female Mosque spaces in Germany, the contribution reflects the notion of mercy and the importance of the voice as a medium of spiritual experience (Schulz 2012) to affect and being affected. Drawing on discussions in anthropology about “aesthetic formations” and “sensational forms” (Meyer 2009/2011) the presentation explores religious audio-visual images and the pious and media critical engagement by different viewers as a form of religious learning in everyday settings. Through different online and offline learning engagements and related practices of inclusion and exclusion in everyday contexts, women position themselves in gendered ways within their own communities but also within broader segments of society.</p>
08. June	<p><b>Jason Cons</b> University of Texas at Austin</p>	<p><b>Delta Futures: Time, Territory, and Capture on a Climate Frontier</b></p> <p>This talk outlines a broad project exploring the making of incommensurate futures in the Bengal Delta—specifically, Bangladesh's southwest delta zone. The delta is a space regularly described as one of the most climate vulnerable places in the world. It is home to, among other things, the Sundarbans—the world's largest remaining mangrove forest. It is also a borderland space, shaped by the past, present, and future politics of the India-Bangladesh border. Ethnographically tracing climate resilient projects, conservation initiatives, criminal networks, policing initiatives, fishing cartels, industrialization, and more, <i>Delta Futures</i> makes a case for thinking this delta zone as a climate frontier. That is to say, the Bengal delta is a place where opportunity, expropriation, and exploitation are increasing organized around and in relation to climate change. <i>Delta Futures</i> maps the ecologies of power that unfold in and through this climate frontier. It shows the ways that networks of more-than-human capture, the material complexities of the delta, and competing projects of bringing about conflicting futures in the present overlap in often surprising and troubling ways to produce a hydroscape rife with emergent forms of predation and peril.</p>
22. June	<p><b>Katharina Gröne</b> Wuppertal-Institut</p>	<p><b>Growing Politics. Power and the political dimension of sustainable urban agricultural practice in Cape Town, South Africa</b></p> <p>In a divided city, social practices of all kinds - even rather philanthropic and environment-friendly ones such as urban agriculture - have the tendency to reproduce or even reinforce this division. When approached as a</p>

		<p>political field, urban agricultural practice unveils the cultural dimension of power as one of its specific forms. Drawing on empirical data from a multi-sited ethnography of three urban agricultural projects in Cape Town, South Africa I discuss aspects of cultural dominance that are embedded in and reinforced through urban agricultural practice. Urban inequality - in terms of unequal access to resources, rights, political representation and power - is part and parcel of urban agricultural practice in Cape Town, while the practice itself is entangled with broader and underlying cultural hegemonic claims that translate into a struggle for the Right to the City.</p> <p>Claims to the Right to the City are carried through symbolic practices of distinction, be they corporeal, conceptual, or aesthetic identifiers. In my presentation I will show examples of how the three urban agricultural projects, which operate in distinct socio-spatial and socio-economic settings, construct specific forms of imaginary and symbolic markers of the political in the three dimensions of corporeal, conceptual, or aesthetic claim-making.</p>
13. July	<p><b>Eva Fuhrmann</b> University of Cologne</p>	<p><b>Serving the nation: Discourses about women and war in Vietnam in past and present</b></p> <p>This presentation examines the trajectory of discourses producing gendered subjects ready for combat in Vietnam over a period of approximately 80 years. Vietnamese national history knows several famous female warriors, revolutionaries, and soldiers who are venerated for their courage and dedication. However, this presentation will consider the (dis)continuities of female participation in the Vietnamese military from the 1940s to the present. In the 20th century, Vietnam experienced a period of war that lasted more than thirty years. These devastating developments impacted all sectors of society and were accompanied by a process of militarization. During these wars, women voluntarily participated in the struggle for the country's independence and reunification, and women continue to volunteer to join the Vietnamese military today. Female soldiers who join the struggle for the nation's independence and security navigate between expectations of femininity and the military.</p>