



# ENPA 2021: Mind Embedded and Embodied – Futures of Psychological Anthropology

1–3 June 2021, online



Graffiti: Timore Art Graffiti // Photograph: Thomas Stodulka, 2019

# Conference Programme

All times are Helsinki time (EEST/GMT+3)

## DAY 1: Tuesday June 1st

TIME	ACTIVITY	PANELS & SPEAKERS
11:00-11:30	Welcome address	Anni Kajanus & Thomas Stodulka
11:30-12:30	<a href="#">Keynote</a>	<a href="#">Tyyne Claudia Pollmann</a>
12:30-13:30	Lunch break	
12:45-13:30	<a href="#">Junior scholars mixer</a>	
13:30-15:30	<a href="#">Panels 1</a>	1) <a href="#">Home: Well-being and becoming</a> 2) <a href="#">Learning and developmental processes in contexts of diversity and inequality</a> 3) <a href="#">Technology, body &amp; senses</a>
15:30-16:00	Coffee break	
16:00-17:30	<a href="#">Movie screening</a>	<a href="#">"The healer and the psychiatrist"</a> <a href="#">Introduction: Edward Lowe</a>
17:30-18:00	<a href="#">Q&amp;A</a>	<a href="#">Q&amp;A with Director Mike Poltorak</a>

## DAY 2: Wednesday June 2nd

TIME	ACTIVITY	PANELS & SPEAKERS
10:00-11:00	Session on Publishing	Greg Downey
11:00-11:45	<a href="#">Keynote:</a>	<a href="#">Charles Stafford</a>
11:45-13:00	Lunch break	
13:00-15:00	<a href="#">Panels 2</a>	1) <a href="#">Feeding and the formation of social relationships in childhood</a>

- 2) [The production of social norms: discipline strategies, agency and asymmetries in children's education](#)
- 3) [Mental health & therapeutic encounters](#)

**15:00-15:30** Coffee break

- 15:30-17:30** [Panels 3](#)
- 1) [Sensing and knowing: relational modes of engagement](#)
  - 2) [Cognition, mind & body](#)
  - 3) [Covid-19 Open Mic Session](#)

### DAY 3: Thursday June 3th

TIME	ACTIVITY	PANELS
<b>10:00-12:00</b>	<a href="#">Panels 4</a>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <a href="#">Creating safer spaces: navigating the impacts of sexualized violence in academic settings</a></li> <li>2) <a href="#">Anthropological insights into searches for meaning across the life course</a></li> <li>3) <a href="#">Theoretical and methodological investigations of the interplay between culture and cognition</a></li> </ol>
<b>12:00-13:00</b>	Lunch break	
<b>13:00-15:00</b>	<a href="#">Panels 5</a>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <a href="#">Student panel</a></li> <li>2) <a href="#">Marginalized perspectives on mental health and suffering</a></li> <li>3) <a href="#">Coherence and anthropological knowledge</a></li> </ol>
<b>15:00-15:30</b>	Coffee break	
<b>15:30-17:30</b>	<a href="#">Panels 6</a>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <a href="#">Predatory psychologies east and west</a></li> <li>2) <a href="#">Development of children's understanding of social roles and norms in comparative perspective</a></li> <li>3) <a href="#">Neoliberalism and mental health</a></li> </ol>
<b>18:00-</b>	Official closing & party	

## DAY 1: Tuesday, June 1st

### KEYNOTE: Madeness

*Tyenne Claudia Pollmann, Conceptual artist and professor of anatomy and morphology in the field of Artistic Basics at the Kunsthochschule Berlin-Weißensee; working at the intersection of artistic research, psychiatry and critical epistemologies,  
pollmann@kh-berlin.de*

My contribution commences with questioning the conference's title terms.

From here I will critically unfold the basic approaches and methods developed and tested during our artistic research project *visions4people*, realized from 2016 to 2018 in a collaboration between the Clinic for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy Charité Berlin Mitte and the kunsthochschule berlin weissensee.

A crucial project outcome was initiated by questioning our roles in psychiatry, leading to a renunciation of conventional design and research methods. This again enabled a change of the patient's role from being affected to getting involved.

Furthermore, investigating our investigations and us as investigators challenged not only our temporary situatedness in psychiatry, but also elicited the "madeness" of the structures in educational institutions, knowledge production, and research - and initiated new ways of teaching and collaborating.

From here, we will turn to the current conference conditions and start our dis/embodyed participation session for unmuting and getting involved.

### Lunch Break Session: Junior Scholars Mixer

*juniorfaculty@enpanthro.net*

A conference is the perfect time to meet and connect with our colleagues. Yet the virtual formats we have gotten used to over the last year have left little space for the pleasure of chance face-to-face meetings and the new connections and fresh ideas they spark.

The ENPA Junior Faculty Group invites all junior faculty and students at every stage of their academic path to join us for a virtual "Junior Scholars Mixer" event at the 2021 Biennial ENPA Conference. The event will take place during the lunch break of the first day.

The idea is to have a space to connect with other junior scholars, and to also know more about the ENPA junior faculty community, as you are welcome to join us!

There is no pressure to pitch your research, make an impression or network as a professional. This is simply an informal space to meet new people (and perhaps run into old friends), get inspired, and connect over the big questions and ideas we all have been pondering.

As it is lunch break, you are welcome to show up with your food, in a virtual communal meal.

## PANELS 1: 13.30-15.30

### 1) HOME: WELL-BEING AND BECOMING

*Eva Melstrom, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), emelstrom@ucla.edu*

Contemporary anthropology is in the midst of unsettling established categorical renditions of social and psyche life. Undergirding such attentional and theoretical disruptions are questions concerning, for example, how might a self respond to an atmosphere that swells with the unexpected? How does a self direct and respond to its environment particularly as it relates to cultivating well-being or goodness? Or, more specifically and in the case of this panel, in what ways does an atmosphere of “home” articulate with subjective understandings of what constitutes desired forms of becoming? Panelist will offer insights about embodied forms of precarity, giving attention to specific meaningful life moments and historical events.

Drawing on experience-near narratives from individuals across genders and life courses, panelist will examine how the nature of the good—bodily, spatiality, and ethically—articulates with the intimate domestic sphere—i.e., home. An emphasis on the lived experience of the obligatory as a mode of being-in-the-world undergirds how “home,” both real and imagined, operates as a space of relational practice and an orienting moral modality. Discussions will specifically highlight how individuals can experience “home” as an ephemeral domain of personal and affective relations. Socially, historically, culturally, and economically configured routines of ordinary and extra-ordinary character are central to our examinations and in so being, demonstrate how “home” can move from a space of rest to one of chaos, from one of tranquility to precarity and brutality, and a place of care and security to a place of uncertainty and fear, and back again.

#### **Sleep and rest: an anthropological view of rest manners in the hyperactive Bucharest**

*Lavinia Țânculescu-Popa, Hyperion University Bucharest, lavinia.tanculescu@comunicare.ro*

The way in which the spaces dedicated to the rest, day or night, manage to relax the active Bucharest, whether or not the people around them tire them or rest them, the associations on which the pillow, the mattress, the bed in general impose on them and if they remain at the stage of concrete objects or acquire elements of inner space of the being in which a person feels to sink to be reborn for the work of the next day, all these themes are followed in the current paper. The main objective of the current study is to map, in an anthropological manner, how today's person, from Bucharest, relates to this part of her/his existence, theoretically spontaneous, practical, in some cases, bearing the painful repercussions of the will of "I", which is not always aligned with oneself. The hypothesis from which the current field research started is related to rest, in its capacity as a multifaceted construct. We talk, on the one hand, about the current persons, busy and tired, and about sleep and how they sleep, using one technique or another bodily (Mauss, 1973) (the natural perspective of rest). On the other hand, we are talking about how the same person determines or schedules it. Are people perceiving it or not as obligatory, in the absence of natural constraints, approaching, in this way, the cultural perspective of rest.

For the ease of analysis, I propose in this paper, a clear distinction between **sleep**, as a natural state, unsolicited, instinctual and **rest**, as a state (self) -proposed, consciously adopted and assumed. That is, between what I see as a natural and a cultural way of rest. This natural way is an observable, objective way, while the cultural one is one of a subjective nature, hardly observable on the outside, in the short term.

The conclusions point out the importance of taking an approach to "militant anthropology" (Scheper-Hughes, 1995), as it emerges after the "crisis of representation" of the late twentieth

century. The researchers have the option to place themselves as agents of change, even if only by indicating a problem that can become chronic and can contribute to the deterioration of health at the societal level.

**“Everyday routines and ‘world annihilating’ doubts: Urban middle-class women in Sri Lanka make meaning of their lives during COVID-19 lockdown.**

*Tania Perera, University of Colombo, perera.tania@gmail.com; Asha L. Abeyasekera, University of Colombo, asha.abeyasekera@gmail.com*

This paper examines how middle-class working women in urban Sri Lanka coped with and reproduced everyday life in the midst of COVID-19 lockdowns, and in doing so imbued meaning to the ordinary and the everyday in extraordinary circumstances. From 20th March to 11th May the Sri Lankan Government imposed a nationwide curfew, which meant, with the exception of people working in essential services, no one could leave their homes even to buy groceries or exercise. For the urban middle-class, the ‘new ordinary’ meant working from home, online schooling, and managing the household without the help of domestic workers. Drawing from narrative interviews conducted with fifteen women residing in various urban locales, this paper illustrates the ways in which women framed and interpreted this period as a time of great peril where the self must manage emotional turmoil to ensure stability for others. Following Veena Das’ (2020) claim about the dual character of ordinary life, the paper details how women devised and performed everyday routines and habits while coping with ‘world annihilating’ doubts about the self and their relations to others. By paying close attention to women’s narrative forms, the paper uncovers how the perils of everyday life are expressed through the trivial details of that which is explicitly articulated, but also implied through ellipses. In doing so, the paper reveals the structures of power within which women make meaning of their lives, specifically the intersections between gender, ethnicity, and middle-class-ness.

**The Home-Self as a Result of Out-of-Home Placement. The Home-Concept among Adults who were Educated in their Childhood at a Therapeutic Boarding School for "At-Risk Children"**

*Avihu Shoshana, University of Haifa, avihush@gmail.com*

This article proposes to examine the phenomenology of home among adults who were referred to as "at-risk children" and forcibly removed from home (by court order) in their childhood on the grounds of risk and neglect (called out-of-home placement). This examination is important in light of forced removal from the home being external intervention in the self-concept. For a comprehensive understanding of the long-term impact of out-of-home placement, adults of different ages were interviewed. The research findings indicate the close connection between home-concept and self-concept (what we call home-self), a long-standing internal dialectic between the home that did not exist and the home (as an internal-emotional space) that the adults would have liked to have. This dialectic in turn perpetuates what is absent and maintains a desire for the "normal" home-self that the adults imagine. Furthermore, the research findings reveal what we call "the life-career of the home concept," that is, the various diachronic phenomenological definitions that adults grant to the home-self in childhood in the family home, during therapeutic boarding school (also known as a "home substitute"), adolescence, and adulthood. The discussion section lingers on the unique self-concept and home concept of therapeutic boarding school graduates, engaging in the homecoming concept, and living without familiar and powerful cultural scripts that facilitate emotional and social navigation in life and help to achieve emotional well-being.

## **“Reckoning with Returning Home: Negotiating the Nature of the ‘Best-Good.’”**

*Eva Melstrom, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), emelstrom@ucla.edu*

This paper examines narratives from returned female Ethiopian migrants following their experiences of migration to the Persian Gulf for domestic work and their subsequent encounters with disorder and violence. Drawing on anthropological discussion of becoming (Mattingly 2010, 2014) and illuminations about the ways in which individuals become dynamically “coupled with” their environment (Hollan 2012), this paper will discuss how the plasticity and unfinished nature of a life in a particular context figures into aspirations and failures for the “good life”. A focus on individual women permits a discussion about what happens when such aspirational quests are foreclosed, and one becomes something unforeseen. This discussion will attune to the tensions within this desire for a good life and the tether failure and subsequent mental and emotional unwellness. By exploring the precipitated unwellness that emerges following the foreclosed possibilities for a better life, this paper seeks to offer novel ways of understanding how individual women view their past, present, and future selves in relation to their current situation.

At the core of this discussion are women who reside at one of two Addis-Ababa shelters, which work to “reintegrate and rehabilitate” former domestic workers back into Ethiopian society. While their experiences of unwellness precipitated by their participation in transnational migrant domestic work are predominately framed by local mental health care providers as matters of “psychosis,” I will instead explore how individual women articulate their experiences of unwellness.

## **2) LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESSES IN CONTEXTS OF DIVERSITY AND INEQUALITY**

*Paula Shabel, University of Buenos Aires, paulashabel@gmail.com*

*Mariana García Palacios, University of Buenos Aires, mariana.garciapalacios@gmail.com*

This panel proposes a transdisciplinary and transnational exploration of the processes of learning and development. It will discuss an assumption that has governed these two fields of enquiry: the existence of a more or less homogeneous and more or less expected trajectory, predetermined either by nature or by the social context, in which people evolve towards a maximum point.

On the basis of empirical research using a variety of methodologies carried out in various contexts of the “Global South”, the complexity of learning and developmental processes can be approached as a multidimensional phenomenon that occurs in the minds of the subjects, their material bodies, affectivities and communities at the same time. In other words, these processes always occur in relation to others and to the world. From this perspective, the panel offers clues for (re)defining the concepts involved, in line with different disciplinary traditions.

Along the way, we will analyse the learning activity of Tibetan children in between two teaching traditions, as well as the learning practices of adults who attend school in prison in Buenos Aires, Argentina. We will also study how the ideal of “normal development” is configured for children in the healthcare setting of Buenos Aires, and how children living in conditions of inequality construct knowledge about their daily reality, in an indigenous neighbourhood and in a squatted house also in Argentina.

While we do not intend to reach fixed conclusions on these issues, we invite you to share your thoughts on how people learn, know, and grow up in situations marked by cultural diversity and socio-economic inequalities.

## **Embodiments of Marxism Ideology Education with Chinese characteristics on Tibetan Teenagers' Moral Development**

*Xue Han, University of Chicago, xuehan1@uchicago.edu*

“The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function.” –F. Scott Fitzgerald said that in 1936.

Contemporary Tibetan teenagers are obligated to receive a uniform Marxist ideological education in the formal schools supervised by the China central government. Yet Tibetan Buddhism is also passed on to them and ingrained in their families as their traditional belief system. This creates a conflict for Tibetan teenagers, who are confronted with an ideological tension between their theistic beliefs and their atheistic Marxist education. Directly asking them “which side do you stand with?” is not appropriate or feasible given government surveillance issues, and safety and honesty issues. As an alternative and somewhat more indirect interview methodology I have studied the judgments of Tibetan teenagers in cultural-specific and context-rich moral dilemmas as a proxy to reveal to what extent they reason more like a Marxist or more like a Buddhist. One can logically classify the possible responses to this conflict into four separate options: (a) reasons like a Tibetan Buddhist (b) reasons like a Chinese communist (c) refuses both ideologies (d) accepts both ideologies and finds a way to reconcile them. My research discovered a fifth possibility: Tibetan teenagers do not typically feel the need to reconcile the apparent ideological conflict or choose between the two belief systems. They find ways to live a calm, peaceful and happy life without taking sides or reconciling the conflict. Whether consciously or not, they incubate diverse functional strategies while holding two opposed ideologies, for example, utilizing tolerance to tolerate intolerance. Lessons are drawn from the adaptive strategies of Tibetan teenagers for co-existence in our increasingly multi-polar and multi-ideological global world.

### **“You have to allow yourself to look wide”. Practices and meanings of learning, in a context of criminal imprisonment in a jail in Buenos Aires, Argentina**

*Carolina Di Prospero, Universidad Nacional de San Martín (UNSAM),  
cdipropero@unsam.edu.ar*

In a prison in the Province of Buenos Aires a public university, as an agency of the state, assumes in 2008 the task of reducing the situation of social vulnerability of a marginalized group, from the management of a University Center. My paper is a part of an ethnographic study about practices and meanings in the appropriation of educational rights in a context of criminal imprisonment from the approach of learning experiences of different social actors involved not only in a pedagogical project, but in an individual and social transformation.

Given the life trajectories of the inmates and the number of years of imprisonment, the incorporation to the university is usually the closest thing to a first experience of incorporation and production of knowledge in emergency. At the beginning of the learning process a successful technique can be the copy of models: a student who has to present a text in a class will probably copy the teacher's presentation form. But, we even improvise when we copy: copy or imitation implies a complex and continuous alignment of the observation of the model with action in the world (Hallam and Ingold, 2007).

From the starting point of affection, constitutive of the potential space (Winnicott: 1971) that fosters individual and collective creativity and amplification of experiences, the multiplicity of interactions, contribute to the development of a type of special connection, which is lived and goes beyond mere informative interaction, towards an experience as co-presence, in terms of becoming substantial and significant presences for each social actor.

## **Against dualisms. Emotions in ethnographic research on knowledge**

*Mariana García Palacios, National Council of Scientific and Technical Research, University of Buenos Aires. mariana.garciapalacios@gmail.com*

*Paula Shabel, National Council of Scientific and Technical Research, University of Buenos Aires. paulashabel@gmail.com*

Various dichotomous pairs are often part of the epistemological frameworks of research on knowledge from modernity. In particular, it is still usual the underlying dualistic conception of the subject that splits individual and society, mind and body, rationality/cognition and emotionality. This binary operation has crystallised in many of the studies on knowledge construction processes that, in the end, are usually analysed as mental operations of universal subjects or as elaborations that society uniformly produces on individuals.

In this paper we propose to carry out a critical review of this paradigm and to recover, specifically, the contributions of anthropology that dialogues with constructivist psychology to advance in a dialectical (non-dualist) conceptualisation of the ways in which cognition is produced in everyday practices. From there, we will deal with the ethnographic analysis of the links between the knowledge that subjects construct about objects and the emotionalities forged around these objects, embodied in particular bodies. On the one hand, we present the study of the construction of religious knowledge of Toba/Qom children in the provinces of Buenos Aires and Chaco (Argentina), and, on the other, the study of the construction of political knowledge of children living in squatted houses in the Buenos Aires City (Argentina).

## **Childhood Development as a Cultural Model: Intersections between Anthropology and Pediatrics**

*Carolina Remorini, Laboratorio de Investigaciones en Etnografía Aplicada, Universidad Nacional de La Plata (LINEA, UNLP-CIC) & Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET), Argentina; carolina.remorini@gmail.com; linea@fcnym.unlp.edu.ar*

*Esteban Rowensztein, Hospital de Niños "Dr. Ricardo Gutiérrez" & Sociedad Argentina de Pediatría, Argentina; estebanrowensztein@gmail.com*

The observation of changes in the life course and their typification and classification in stages is culturally universal. However, only in some cultural and historical contexts, sophisticated models for describing and explaining those changes lead to institutionalized ways of study and interventions in people's lives. Such classifications and labels for life stages and individuals have turned into criteria, values, and tools for medical practices oriented to "normalize" children's developmental pathways.

In this paper, we aim to contribute to the interdisciplinary discussion about what is behind the Western obsession for the quantification and cronologization of developmental milestones defined as "normal" for every child. This "theoretical child" is far from those children we meet at school, on the street and at the pediatrician's office.

Based on the author's ethnographic research data and clinical experience, we first describe routine approaches to children's growth and development with broad consensus still in the mainstream of medical and psychological communities. Second, we analyze their theoretical implications and their consequences in everyday clinical practices, taking into account the wide diversity and inequalities that characterize the settings in which children live in Argentina. In this regard, we seek to highlight the limitations of our understanding of children's complex lives by assuming some models and categories as universal despite their specific cultural and ecological validity. Third, we pose an ethical issue, as those clinical and research approaches

– based on the association of ideas such as universal/natural/normal and the pathologization of human differences- have a crucial impact on children's ordinary lives and identity.

### **3) TECHNOLOGY, BODY & SENSES**

*Suzana Jovicic, University of Vienna, [suzana.jovicic@univie.ac.at](mailto:suzana.jovicic@univie.ac.at)*

*Thomas Stodulka, Freie Universität Berlin, [thomas.stodulka@fu-berlin.de](mailto:thomas.stodulka@fu-berlin.de)*

Dwelling with technologies has become a central practice of social engagement and communication, worlding and world-making processes. This panel explores generative moments when technologies enter ethnographers' emerging relationships with interlocutors, the data, and digitally reproduced selves. The papers focus on the interplay between technologies, bodies and the senses when listening (to interviews), seeing (films), touching (screens) and performing virtual selves (digitally). The authors illustrate and theorize on the entanglement of embedded and embodied minds in a mediatized world.

#### **Listening to the recordings of interviews**

*Molly Hurley, CUNY Graduate Center, [mollyhurleydepret@gmail.com](mailto:mollyhurleydepret@gmail.com)*

The work we do as anthropologists contains within it the possibility to transform us and possibly also our interlocutors. In this paper presentation, I will theorize the ways in which listening to the recordings of interviews with my interlocutors spurred a profound transformation, particularly the realization of the lasting effects of violence that I experienced and my avoidance of my interviews for a decade - themselves often about experiences of violence in Belfast, Northern Ireland as well as people's attempts to transform themselves and find "spaces of possibility" (Collins 2015). Is the act of hearing - the corporeality of listening - somehow integral to beginning to heal? Does the sound become material by virtue of its embodiment? I would like to think through, especially, fear, vulnerability, and anger as transformative and potentially liberatory experiences for anthropologists and our interlocutors.

#### **Sensory experiences and film**

*Judith Albrecht, Freie Universität Berlin, [Judith.albrecht@fu-berlin.de](mailto:Judith.albrecht@fu-berlin.de)*

Visual media produce intercultural documents simply in their co-inscription of filmmakers and their subjects in the same work. The filmmaker's acts of looking are encoded in the film in much the same way as the subject's physical presence. This is fundamentally different from a written work, which is a textual reflection upon prior experience. That means that visual formats are an important enhancement in social anthropological research and presentation. The audio-visual and synesthetic aspects of film also lend support and contributed to recent anthropological interest in sensory experience. This has strengthened anthropology's links to fields like medicine, psychology, musicology and art. Film may also provide a more accessible ground than words for what Renato Rosaldo (1986) calls "novelistic narrative" in ethnography, and for incorporating the suspense and responses of listeners that he considers crucial to oral narratives.

The paper will discuss ethnographic film examples about sensory experiences. These audiovisual works were produced over the last 2 Years in the ethnographic Film seminars: "audiovisual works about sleep" and "Exploring the body with the camera". In the panel we would like to introduce and discuss filming as a method rather than just a different mode of representation.

## **The Affective Triad: Smartphone in the Ethnographic Encounter**

*Suzana Jovicic, University of Vienna, [suzana.jovicic@univie.ac.at](mailto:suzana.jovicic@univie.ac.at)*

“Hanging out” and establishing “rapport” has been a longstanding and essential part of the ethnographic encounter within anthropology. However, what happens when the smartphone materializes between the anthropologist and the interlocutor, as perhaps a literal, immediate distraction from the relationship in forming? What seems like a methodological challenge at first in fact goes straight to the heart of anthropological concerns with how digital technology is becoming a symbol of new forms of mediated sociality, neither here, nor there. The moment in which the smartphone, alongside the researcher and the interlocutor, becomes part of the affective triad – it also emerges as a window into the entanglement of digital technologies into the cracks of the everyday; into the moments of many mundane (Pink et al. 2017) and barely visible, yet analytically rich “non-events” (Ehn, Löfgren 2010). In my ethnographic research among marginalized visitors of two Viennese youth centres in the course of 2019, I focused on the porous design of smartphone technologies, a design based on the premise that the engagements with the digital should be quick, effortless and able to seamlessly seep into the rhythms of everyday life. My attention was mostly directed at “in-between” moments, including practices of scrolling, swiping and “snapping” across social media platforms where online and offline overlap and are mutually constitutive (Boellstorff 2012). With every casual, non-eventful movement of the thumb, design is embodied and embedded into the context of waiting, boredom and uncertainty particularly among the unemployed young men. While the smartphone appears to be literally in-between the ethnographer and social actors, its very “in-betweenness” enables the researcher to come along on the online/offline journey, without leaving the youth centre. In this presentation, I argue that in such contexts smartphone becomes a methodological blessing rather than a curse and a distraction from the seemingly “authentic” ethnographic encounter.

## **“Abyssal Self”- Psychoanalytical Reflections on the Age of Digital Biopolitics**

*Gabriella Calchi Novati, <https://gabriellacalchinovati.academia.edu>, [calchinovati@gmail.com](mailto:calchinovati@gmail.com)*

In this paper I instigate a dialogue between what I call digital biopolitics and psychoanalysis. With the advent of Web 2.0, the space of the virtual has eroded our daily space of experience, becoming the space of our being par excellence. Jaron Lanier, a major pioneer of the self-generated technology of Web 2.0 has voiced his doubts about any constructive potential of such technology, claiming that ‘you have to be somebody before you can share yourself, for ‘persons’ have become ‘rarities’ in the twenty-first century ‘lifeless world of pure information.’ Digital rather than existential, the contemporary abyss is not a space where one could spiritually travel, but has become the place for narcissistic fascination and digital vertigo. Boaventura de Sousa Santos reminds us that the travel motif not only is symbolically double, but also always contains its own opposite, namely the idea of a fixed home - domus and oikos. To me the self is domus and oikos, in that it is the individuation journey’s point of departure and point of arrival. Such a journey, however, in the age of digital biopolitics, is in crisis for, what a person is, in the truest sense, counts less than the virtually infinite number of self-generated copies, aliases, and avatars of that self. And since we have moved far beyond the post-modern era of simulacra, in our age of digital biopolitics the self has become vertiginously abyssal. Thus, I propose to apply de Sousa Santos’ concept of ‘abyssal thinking’ to delve into what I call “abyssal self”. By employing a Lacanian lens of investigation, where the Real and the Symbolic can be understood via Aristotle’s distinction between tuché and automaton, I conclude by advancing that one of the main traits of the “abyssal self” is its incessant fall outside of signification.

## **MOVIE SCREENING: "The Healer and the Psychiatrist" and Q&A with Director Mike Poltorak**

*Introduction: Edward Lowe, SOKA University, [elowe@soka.edu](mailto:elowe@soka.edu)*

*Director: Mike Poltorak, University of Kent, [m.s.poltorak@kent.ac.uk](mailto:m.s.poltorak@kent.ac.uk)*

2019 | UK | 75min

In the South Pacific Island group of Vava'u, the traditional healer Emeline Lolohea treats people affected by spirits. One day away by ferry, the only Tongan Psychiatrist Dr Mapa Puloka has established a public psychiatry well known across the region. Though they have never met in person, this film creates a conversation between them on the causes of mental illness and spiritual affliction. Their dedication and transformative communication offers challenges and opportunities to help address a growing global mental health crisis.

The film is the result of 20 years collaboration with a healer and a psychiatrist in the South Pacific island group of Tonga.

You can find more information here: <https://valueofvideo.com/healerpsychiatrist/>

## DAY 2: Wednesday, June 2nd

### **KEYNOTE: The politics of cognition – or why we need a more radical economic psychology**

*Charles Stafford, Professor at the Department of Anthropology, London School of Economics and Political Science, c.stafford@lse.ac.uk*

This lecture will focus on the (sometimes difficult) relationships between three human science disciplines: anthropology, psychology and economics. It will examine in particular the approach of these disciplines to questions of economic psychology, broadly defined. For reasons that are well known, anthropologists have long rejected economists' models of rational choice. The idea that 'individual decision-making' is at the heart of economic agency in the flow of human history is not only wrong, as anthropologists see things, but in fact ideological: part of the apparatus that sustains capitalism. As a consequence, however, anthropologists have failed to properly examine not only economic psychology, as a general category of human experience, but also its political implications. I will argue for a substantivist economic psychology that sets out to address this.

### **PANELS 2: 13.00-15.00**

#### **1) FEEDING AND THE FORMATION OF SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS IN CHILDHOOD**

*Leberecht Funk, Free University of Berlin, Leberecht.Funk@fu-berlin.de*

*Gabriel Scheidecker, Free University of Berlin, Gabriel.Scheidecker@fu-berlin.de*

*Discussant: Nandita Chaudhary, University of Delhi, nandita.chaudhary@gmail.com*

In this panel we examine the connections between intergenerational feeding practices and the formation of social bonds in early childhood and beyond. After the crisis of kinship in the 1970-80s, a new generation of anthropologists was able to show that in many socio-cultural settings ties of relatedness were built up by giving, receiving, and sharing food (e.g. Carsten 1995, 1997; Janowski & Kerlogue 2007). They did not, however, consider much the psychological consequences that might arise from these practices nor their implications for major developmental psychological theories of relationship formation. According to attachment theory, for instance, arguably the world's most influential approach to relationship formation, feeding is considered irrelevant for bonding. Instead, the formation of secure bonds and healthy development is assumed to be based on 'responsive parenting', which means that parents should constantly respond to their children's emotional signals in a sensitive manner. Although attachment theory has been criticized for its Western middle-class bias and universal claim (e.g. Quinn & Mageo 2013; Otto & Keller 2014; Morelli et al. 2017) new theory-building has hardly occurred. We invite papers introducing ethnographic examples of relationship formation through food-giving. Questions that might be addressed are: What are the local ideas of personhood, development, and good parenting? What are the culturally specific meanings of food and relationship formation? Which practices are considered conducive/ detrimental for the creation of affective bonds? How do the ethnographic cases relate to dominant theories such as attachment theory?

## **Feeding the body - feeding the soul in women circles in contemporary Athens**

*Aglaia Chatjoui, University of the Aegean, aglaiachatjoui@yahoo.com*

This paper draws from ethnographic research taking place in Athens, Greece, on how specific parenting theories and practices are believed to be central to ideal child development and wellbeing. Against the prevailing culture of modern motherhood, of extended medicalization regarding reproduction (conception to childbirth), and early feeding practices, *other* beliefs regarding proper parenting are emerging, aspiring to ensure the wellbeing of the woman/mother, of the child and the bond between them via a more “natural” reproduction and child rearing along with a critical use of (patriarchal) biomedicine.

The main ethnographic setting are women’s groups, aiming at supporting mothers, natural and home birth, the role of doulas, breastfeeding, by bringing women together, empowering them and mediating their connection to a lost feminine-natural and tribal self. In these “women’s circles”, where infants, babies, toddlers and warmly welcomed, food is offered and shared, breastfeeding and baby-led weaning are encouraged.

Drawing also from interviews and facebook groups this paper discusses how formalized ideas on women’s wellbeing and child development (such as attachment parenting, natural parenting along with “how our parents raised us”) are entwined in personal stories of be(coming) a woman, a mother, of properly feeding a child, of properly socializing a child into the world and of what this world should be like. Furthermore, this paper discusses how feeding and nourishing both one’s body and soul, the woman’s and the child’s, and consequently society’s, involves and formulates specific social relations. The nature/culture divide along with a modernized normality seem to be problematized.

## **Feeding and being fed: child care and food consumption among the Runa of the Ecuadorian Amazon**

*Francesca Mezzenzana, University of Kent, F.Mezzenzana@kent.ac.uk*

The Runa – a Kichwa speaking indigenous people living in the Ecuadorian Amazon – do not tend to verbally elaborate or speculate about others’ inner feelings or thoughts nor talk about emotions with their children. Care or love is not demonstrated, as in Western contexts, through the sharing of intimate feelings and thoughts, but rather it is entirely conceived as being manifest through the consumption of food and drink. As highlighted by Amazonian ethnographers, commensality is a central means through which indigenous Amazonian people entertain a process of “familiarization” (Fausto 1997): by eating together and sharing food, people turn into kin (Vilaça 2002) and forge intimate relationships. Drawing on Amazonian ethnography and cross-cultural research on attachment theory, in this paper I am going to explore how specific understandings of personhood and theory of mind underpin Runa practices of feeding babies and children. I conclude by arguing that the Runa case can provide a meaningful example to contrast with normative Euro-American practices to foster emotional attachment which focus on imagination and emotion talk.

## **Being Fed by Hand: Cultural Models of Relationships in Children’s Everyday Experiences in Rural Sri Lanka**

*Bambi L. Chapin, University of Maryland, bchapin@umbc.edu*

Children learn about the world and themselves in fundamentally physical ways, shaping their ways of being, making sense, and relating. Further, those encounters with the world and with important others in it vary in patterned ways across communities and over time. Close observation of children’s everyday interactions in particular contexts are required in order to

understand not only what they are learning and how they are leaning it, but how those lessons are fundamentally culturally shaped. This paper demonstrates this with observations of mealtimes in Sri Lankan homes during which children are typically fed directly from the hands of their mothers or other caregivers, along with a discussion of related cultural models of hierarchy and personhood. Drawing on fieldwork conducted over the past two decades with Sinhala families in rural Sri Lanka, this paper examines everyday episodes of feeding and being fed and the cultural models of relationships that these episodes emerge out of and convey to developing children. Further, the paper suggests that, as these embodied experiences are repeated and varied over the life course and over time, these cultural models maybe be reinforced, added to, and transformed. Through this example, the paper contributes to the panel's argument for the importance of close ethnographic observation of feeding in a range of settings in order to develop better understandings of human development as embedded in cultural contexts.

### **Feeding as an attachment system among the Tao (Taiwan)**

*Leberecht Funk, Free University of Berlin, Leberecht.Funk@fu-berlin.de*

If the evaluation criteria for attachment styles were to be applied to Tao children, almost all of them would be classified as insecurely attached to their mothers and other caregivers. They neither have frequent eye contact with caregivers, nor do they often engage in conversations with them. From late infancy/ early toddlerhood onwards, Tao children are expected to regulate negative emotionality on their own. Caregivers make use of „anxiety“ and „shame“ inducing socialization practices like frightening, threatening, laughing, and teasing which from a local perspective serve the function of anchoring young children's yet unknowing souls more firmly to their „bodily selves“. What from the viewpoint of contemporary Western middle classes looks like a pathological situation, has to be analysed more carefully in order to do justice to the Tao. I argue that early life experiences of disciplining and teasing have to be seen in conjunction with caregiving. Subordination to parental authority and caring by feeding are two sides of the same coin. In Tao society, children are much pitied for their „neediness“ by everyone. „Securely attached“ children are those who have sufficient food at their disposal. Hierarchical relations are expressed by giving and receiving food. In emotional terms these transactions are accompanied by „empathy“ on the side of the food-giver and and by „joy“ and „gratitude“ on the side of the receiver. In this socio-cultural setting, feeding has to be understood as a non-fear based attachment system connected to positive emotionality.

## **2) THE PRODUCTION OF SOCIAL NORMS: DISCIPLINE STRATEGIES, AGENCY AND ASYMMETRIES IN CHILDREN'S EDUCATION**

*Chantal Medaets, State University of Campinas (Unicamp), chantal@uol.com.br*

*Mitra Asfari, Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism Iran,*

*mitra.asfari@hotmail.com*

When we study learning processes outside the frame of experimental methods, observing them as they occur “outdoors”, in day-to-day social relationships, we must consider hierarchies and power relations that shape ordinary interactions. This panel envisages learning as one dimension of broader social relations and focuses on interactive processes pertaining to the transmission of social norms. By bringing together heterogeneous contexts and theoretical inspirations, the aim of this panel is to reflect on asymmetries, agency and authority in the production of social norms. We will especially consider the adult's discipline strategies and the role of corporal punishment and verbally violent attitudes towards children in their education. How do parents in different parts of the world conceive the role of physical punishment in the

education of their children? To which extent do children reproduce the adult's conception of these techniques and to which extent do they oppose it? In peer groups or multi-age groups of children without adults, do children reproduce the "body techniques" of adults who have the power of authority over them, or do they subvert or adapt them? This panel will invite participants and the audience to discuss the relation between discipline strategies, learning processes, and the very content of social norms being produced.

### **Understanding the practice of corporal punishment**

*Michelle Lokot, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine,  
Michelle.Lokot@lshtm.ac.uk*

There is increased recognition that incorporating a social norms approach provides useful insights for understanding the practice of corporal punishment (CP) against children within homes and schools. However, the connections between social norms and CP have not been systematically analysed to date. We conducted a systematic review to explore the literature on how social norms and CP interact in low- and middle-income countries. The final review, which included 37 studies, found that many studies draw attention to how social norms sustain CP, making the practice acceptable. We found that children extend the norms of acceptability of CP from parents to teachers, positioning their teachers as having the same authority to punish as parents. However, we found that in some studies the social norms supporting CP also established limits to the severity of CP, and were thus protective. Children themselves found CP acceptable only when it occurred for specific reasons, and not when random or inconsistent. Adults affirmed that they disapproved when other parents used CP excessively, and would even intervene to stop CP in such cases. These findings suggest there are opportunities to leverage the protective norm around the limits of CP to bring about broader social change. It suggests that intervention design strategies might benefit from being grounded in understanding the limits to the acceptability of CP, rather than viewing norms as unequivocal.

### **Mendicant children's agency implemented within lineage hierarchy: reconstruction or destruction of social norms?**

*Mitra Asfari, Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism Iran,  
mitra.asfari@hotmail.com*

Ġorbats constitute a minority group with a wandering tradition in Iran. Since fifteen years, they have been settled in towns; however, they continue to travel back and forth between at least two different regions. Through their history, they have continuously faced rejection and the despising attitude of the wider society and neighbor populations. Nonetheless, they continue to exchange with adjacent groups through mendicancy. In its urban form, this activity implies the use of child workforce. Besides this lucrative activity, Ġorbat children participate in every domain of the social life (language, entertainment, food, cultural goods, consumption and money gaining) alongside adults. According to my participant observations for more than three years among this population, there is no obvious distinction between social and cultural world of adults and children. Young Ġorbats live and work in the same spaces and consume same goods that adults. Nevertheless, parents, elder siblings and cousins maintain certain distance and try to keep the younger ones in a subordinate status. On one hand, Ġorbats' educational values encourage a strict and verbally violent attitude towards the children and on the other hand, they disapprove the docile behavior of younger ones. In this regard, young individuals get the chance to make use of their agency in daily power relations. By describing concrete scenes of interaction between individuals in different positions within the lineage hierarchy, this

communication will discuss the reconstruction or destruction of social norms and values in children versus adult relations among Górvat population.

### **Brazilian parents: between nonviolent discipline and corporal punishment**

*Viviane Caldeira Ramos (Unicamp), State university of Campinas (Unicamp),  
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The notion of nonviolent parenting has been disseminated among Brazilian urban parents, especially middle- class mothers, through books, television, and social media. According to this model, children should have their feelings and ideas acknowledged by parents through constant dialogue and negotiation, with no physical nor moral violence. Its advocacy has reached legal status in the country with a 2014 law that forbids corporal punishment (CP) or cruel treatment against children and teenagers. However, this does not mean that CP is not still being used, as nonviolence ideals clash with how most mothers and fathers were themselves raised, following a sociocultural model that relied on parental power, obedience, strong hierarchy, and corporal and moral punishment. To better understand this tension, I analyzed Instagram posts on CP and their subsequent comments published in profiles which advocate for nonviolent parenting. I perceived 4 basic responses: 1) complete support for the model; 2) mothers retelling the punishments suffered during childhood and their negative consequences; 3) mothers positioning themselves against nonviolent discipline, highlighting the need for mild corporal punishment; 4) mothers who seem open to the idea of following a nonviolent discipline, but find barriers to enact it, be it by their own limitations or for the lack of family support (mostly the fathers or grandmothers). This shows that, despite its mediatic popularity and legal status, nonviolent discipline is not a consensus among Brazilian parents, including those interested in the model.

### **The "fools," the "savages" and us: conceptions of parenting at lower Tapajós (Brazilian Amazon)**

*Chantal Medaets, State University of Campinas (Unicamp), chantal@uol.com.br*

When criticizing parenting styles they perceive as different as theirs, adults and children at the lower Tapajós region explicit their own conceptions of a good education, otherwise taken for granted. Urban southern parents, for whom some of them work, are thus thought to turn their children into "fools" (tolos), as they praise them and give them too much attention. In turn, Munduruku indigenous parents that live not far away are considered too lenient and quite "savages" (brutos), as they refuse to use corporal punishment and let children play "freely." Taking into account these native appreciative comments, as well as my ethnographic observations among the Tapajós river dwellers, I will show that in this context harsh discipline and care are tied up; they are seen, by the adults and the children in the region, as two sides of the same coin.

## **3) MENTAL HEALTH AND THERAPEUTIC ENCOUNTERS**

*Lavinia Țănculescu-Popa, Hyperion University Bucharest, lavinia.tanculescu@thewings.ro  
Andrew Hodges, info@andrewjohnhodges.com*

This panel explores the relationship between mental health, social relationships, and therapeutic encounters. All contributions link various therapeutic modalities to social relationships in some way. There is also a focus on the mind as embodied, and on the links between mental health and spirituality.

The panel includes research conducted into cultural models of socioeconomic disadvantage and its impact on mental health disparities in Kyiv, Ukraine; research into trauma-sensitive yoga sessions in a trauma therapy centre for refugees; Druze therapists in Israel and their talk about earlier incarnations; and anthropological understandings of attention through the lens of a particular form of hagiotherapy, or spiritual healing, in Croatia.

### **Culture, socioeconomic disadvantage and causal pathways to mental health disparities**

*Kateryna Maltseva, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, maltsevaks@ukma.edu.ua*

The empirical research into the associations between culture, cognition, and mental health has a long tradition in psychological anthropology, and it continues to be widely employed for applied research. The project conducted in Kyiv, Ukraine in 2018-2019 uses the cultural models theoretical framework and the principles embedded in Pearlin's stress model to explore the mechanism by which the intergenerational transmission of mental habits and practices associated with the economical disadvantage occurs. One of the foci of the project includes the effects of these processes in the domain of health, and the role of complex collective knowledge agglomerations such as cultural models in the process of maintenance of health disparities, especially in mental health. Building on my previous research on stress and mental health the current project explores the role of cultural factors as chronic stressors and specifically focuses on internalization as a mediator variable. The research design uses mixed methods to assess both cognitive and material aspects of the stress process to better understand the inter-linkages between culture, cognition and health. The perspectives for bridging medical sociology and psychological anthropology in a joint interdisciplinary effort focusing on closing the health gap are discussed.

### **In-between: Body-psychotherapies, a beyond-transcultural therapy**

*Mayssa Rekhis, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris; CESPRA Linköping University, Sweden, mayssarekhis@gmail.com*

The traumatic-memory has been a pillar in the conceptualization of the Post-Traumatic-Stress-Disorder (Young 1996), (a concept criticized for its Western approach (Summerfield 2001)), and at the heart of trauma-focused therapies (Watkins et al. 2018).

While not part of trauma-focused therapies, body-psychotherapies, which 'primarily work on releasing and reshaping somatic memories' (Totton 2008), are gaining a growing place in the field. Through them, traumatic-memory is taking an embodied form.

Through an ethnography conducted in a trauma-therapy center for refugees, with an analysis-focus on the dance-movement and trauma-sensitive yoga sessions I attended as a participant-observer, this paper explores the role of body-psychotherapies in trauma-therapies, and in "integrating" traumatic-memories. This analysis will be guided by the questions of the body-mind relationship; how much are these therapies breaking the (Western cartesian) dualism, and those of their universal versus cultural positioning, as while both yoga and dance practices are culturally-grounded, a body-anchored traumatic-memory, tackled through non-verbal therapies, may seem to over-step the cultural towards a universal conceptualization (and treatment) of trauma.

## **Notq arrives at the clinic: How Druze therapists deal with the phenomenon of remembering and talking about previous incarnation among the Druze in Israel**

*Maha Nator, University of Haifa, Maha\_nator@yahoo.com*

This paper addresses the question: What characterizes the therapeutic encounter between Druze therapists and Druze clients who raise the cultural idiom Notq—remembering and talking about previous incarnation— as an explanation of emotional and behavioral difficulties? The findings reveal how therapists perceive reincarnation and Notq; therapists' accounts when Notq arrives at the clinic; and therapeutic practices when dealing with Notq. Furthermore, the research shows that while all therapists understand and respect Notq as a cultural idiom, they typically suspend it, with only a few incorporating it in the clinic. The findings also reveal that the Druze therapists are confronted with a complex conflict: They have no internal religious-cultural legitimacy to reject Notq, and they have no external professional basis for accepting it. The discussion joins recent claims regarding the relation between Western knowledge and local ethnopsychological knowledge and considers the unique position of the Druze therapists as minority therapists.

## **“That is the therapy”: an anthropological analysis of attention through the lens of hagiotherapy in Croatia**

*Miguel Alcalde, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE),  
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Attention lies at the core of many contemporary societal preoccupations. This is especially evident in the media's concern with the 'crisis of attention' supposedly brought about by new technologies, in the widespread use of mental health interventions that rely on the cultivation of particular forms of attention, such as cognitive behavioural therapy, and in the increasing interest in mindfulness-based interventions for well-being and productivity. However, despite attention's salience and apparent importance, only a handful of anthropologists (e.g. Jo Cook, Nick Seaver and Morten Axel Pedersen) have turned their gaze towards this topic. This paper joins these scholars by foregrounding attention as a feature of human cognition that can drive anthropological understanding of psychological and sociocultural phenomena. Drawing on long-term fieldwork in Croatia among practitioners of a spiritual healing practice known as hagiotherapy, the paper illustrates how a focus on attention can illuminate the complex relationships between individuals' praxis, their subjective experience and their wider sociocultural context. By analysing practices of hagiotherapy as techniques that train, redirect and attune attention, this paper shows the fundamental role that attention has in the processes of healing and personal growth that practitioners seek. More broadly, the paper suggests that attention can be a powerful thread to weave together analyses at multiple scales, from the intimate to the global. Ultimately, it seeks to further advance discussions about attention that approach the topic in all its socially embedded complexity and critically engage with research and theories of cognitive science and psychology.

## **On the search for meaning in the therapeutic encounter: applying psychological anthropology to a deconstructive psychotherapy**

*Tom Regel, thomasregel3@gmail.com*

Meaning is often described as something we “discover”; it's something we “find” or “come to” in our lives. In this sense, true meaning is something quite elusive; it's simultaneously a part of our subjective experience, and yet is distinct from us; it exists *out there*, or more often rather, *within us*; and although accessible, we often need or seek the guidance of experts to help us locate meaning in our lives. This is what therapy helps us do. It shows us why we suffer, it

helps explain our pain, and this in turn helps us live more honest, more meaningful lives. This relationship with our innermost truths is an integral aspect of psychotherapeutic discourse (what psychologist Ian Parker calls *intellectualisation* in his elaboration of the “psy-complex”); it is a powerful framing mechanism through which an apparently governable and ostensibly predictable subjectivity emerges and is reproduced. In this paper, I consider a different way of conceptualising our relationship to meaning, which forces us to realign the aims and thresholds of conventional therapeutic wisdom. In this account, the truly significant moment in the therapeutic encounter is neither the revelation nor the acceptance of true meaning, but the experience of how things *come to matter*; the process, in other words, by which we learn to judge what we deem relevant in the world and how this moves us. I will show how powerful ideas in deconstructive psychotherapy can be read alongside recent work in psychological anthropology, to reveal a more generous and plural view to therapy and its possibilities.

### **PANELS 3: 15.30-17.30**

#### **1) SENSING AND KNOWING: RELATIONAL MODES OF ENGAGEMENT**

*Tamara Turner, Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin,  
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Privileging sensory, bodily, and inter-affective learning in the field, particularly as it pertains to our methodology and collaborative learning with interlocutors, this panel asks: what does it mean to “know” and how do arrangements of the self or selves foster or constitute such proficiencies? Sharing relational contexts of health, well-being, healing and trance, and underscoring modes of listening and presence required of ethnographers, the four papers in this panel stress embodied, sensory modalities and practices of “knowledge” transmission.

#### **Embodied expertise as anubhava**

*Pooja Venkatesh, Central European University, Venkatesh\_Pooja@phd.ceu.edu*

This paper unpacks anubhava as a guided process of apprenticeship as a paramparika vaidya (traditional healer). Anubhava—loosely translated as experience—is, among novice and elder practitioners, defined variously: as physical ability, service to the teacher, practical resourcefulness, technical abilities (in recognizing plants and their valid substitutes, for example), and experience with patients. Yet, the path towards cultivating anubhava is anything but straightforward—With the advent of revitalization schemes and coinage of ‘local health traditions’, state peer networks have redefined the role of the vaidya. This paper takes the example of a training initiative by one such peer network in Davangere, Karnataka, to situate the pedagogical process not only through medicine- in- the- making, but in the speculative learning of novices. In the context of the training program, speculations were part of cultivating anubhava through ‘improvised theory’, or the departure from the main recipe which, in turn, protected the teacher’s personal anubhava and legitimized the need for each participant to cultivate their own. In considering how such negotiated speculations are embodied (rather than explicit in speech), this paper hopes to contribute towards an alternate view on apprenticeship.

## **Non-Western Notions of music, mind, and the body: Challenging the scaffolding metaphor of an embodied mind**

*Tamara D. Turner, Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin, turner@mpib-berlin.mpg.de*

Like notions of “the mind” and supposedly mental processes, felt dynamics of “embodiment” are highly variable in how they might be “embedded” with the environment. In Algeria, music rituals utilized as mental-emotional health care are entirely structured by dozens of song suites, each linked to a meaningful personage to the community such as a saint or prophet. Sound here, as palpable affect, is felt knowledge. Hearing, the most prioritized sensory capacity, is inextricable from the other senses which, in ritual, must be carefully activated through aesthetic protocols. For example, each song has very particular associated colors, a representative smell, kinds of food or drink that must be consumed, gestures particular to the songs’ namesakes, and ritual objects that must be danced with. Such sensory-environmental entanglement is critical to the therapeutic efficacy of rituals. That is, songs are not ‘about’ personages. Music does not function as ‘scaffolding’ here as it is sometimes theorized within extended mind theory. Rather, sound is constitutive of thinking-feeling; it is directly felt as the textures of consciousness. In ritual, songs must manifest (not scaffold) the affective presences of these figures to be rendered in ritual. Ideally, when all of the senses of the body are cultivated (also taste, smell, touch), those attendees with particular affective connections to songs are stirred into various categories of trance. I suggest that the critical contributions of Sheets-Johnstone need to inform our thinking; notably, that current theorizing of ‘extended mind theory’ too often neglects the moving “tactile-kinaesthetic-affective body” (2018).

### **Agenda of the other: Alternate encounters of theories and practices**

*Sibel A. Güngör, PUHU Research and Consultancy, sibel.gungor@puhu.com*

Researchers of psychological anthropology employ traditional and emerging types of ethnographic interviews to collect data. They establish rapport with their informants for validity and reliability. Although the researchers’ agenda is disguised by the notion of understanding, they aim to find a valid answer to their research question. Therefore, the objective of the research is the actual agenda. Researchers refer to the theories only for the sake of shedding light on phenomena under investigation. They aim to give an academic account of their analysis. What’s in it for the researched other than to be heard? Research is a transforming process for both parties. Equipped with academic knowledge along with professional achievement, the researcher is beneficial in this transformation whereas the researched is left only with their particular experience.

Coaching, on the other hand, provides an egalitarian relationship that promotes the maximization of the potential of the coachee. The coach attends to coachees’ agenda for their esteem and self-actualization needs. The coach employs relevant tools to create awareness and to enable the flow state for the coachee. Maintaining her/his presence marked by curiosity to the coachee’s agenda, the coach listens actively not just to answer a research question but to mirror the coachee. However, as a profession of practice, coaching lacks the theoretical background that has the potential to serve both parties. This paper investigates the alternate encounters of theories and practices inside and outside academia. It suggests utilizing the theories of psychological anthropology in other practices to serve the benefit of all parties.

## **Embodied Knowing: Healing through Mediumistic Trance in Brazil**

*Emily Pierini, Sapienza University of Rome, emily.pierini@uniroma1.it*

Spirit mediumship and possession have been at the center of debates that have too often explained away these phenomena through pathological categories overlooking the dimension of experience. Ethnographic approaches, however, have penetrated this field of contested categories to illuminate the therapeutic mechanisms involved in these experiences. Participation in these practices may indeed be part of a therapeutic trajectory that unfolds between spirituality and biomedicine. This paper explores how learning a mediumistic practice may be framed as a therapeutic process besides a spiritual one, addressing in particular the experiences of spirit mediums of the Brazilian Spiritualist Christian Order Vale do Amanhecer (Valley of the Dawn). With temples opening all across Brazil and worldwide, the Vale do Amanhecer offers spiritual healing rituals through trance mediums to patients visiting the temple. In some instances, patients choose to develop their mediumship through an initiatic path, becoming skilled in this practice through what mediums call 'conscious' and 'semi-conscious mediumistic trance'. Moving beyond the disembodied approaches to mediumship and healing interested in social structures and symbolic efficacy, I examine the sensory and affective underpinnings of mediumistic experience. I argue that the process of crafting a mediumistic body during the training develops embodied knowledge and skills that foster the healing process, including discernment, the regulation of bodily boundaries, and extended notions of the self.

## **2) COGNITION, MIND & BODY**

*Katja Pettinen, Mount Royal University, kpettinen@mtroyal.ca*

*Eero Saukkonen, University of Helsinki, eero.saukkonen@helsinki.fi*

Mental states are a persistent challenge for all disciplines working with living organisms. This is because mental states, including affect and cognition, are not transparent for the individuals themselves or their observers. Another challenge in this process of decoding is the nature of language itself. Even when language is present, both individual and cultural variation can pose challenges as similar mental patterns can be named differently. Based on certain theoretical frameworks, such naming in and of itself can bring out differences in experience and perception. This session examines the interconnections and entanglements between cognitive and affective states through a range of ethnographic and embodied contexts and through this explores the classic challenges of theorizing and interpreting mental states. We bring attention to the feedbacks between sensorial and mental states, as well to social relations that impact how affective states are culturally structured. As a whole, the session will bring forth key insights into psychosocial phenomena through innovative use of ethnographic data, both on a theoretical and pragmatic level.

## **The Good and Bad Pain. An Anthropological Approach to Understanding Pain in Female Fitness Culture**

*Dominika Czarnecka, Polish Academy of Sciences, d.czarnecka@hotmail.com*

Pain is understood as a sensory and emotional experience, a medium of perception. It can't be observed independent of the culture of individuals, within which sex-based differences need to be taken into account. Female fitness culture is a special field that accepts pain to another degree of other parts of social life – female participants of fitness culture are even seeking the "good" pain. However, despite some similarities, pain in fitness culture is understood differently than in sports. Applying the holistic paradigm, where pain is not a simple mechanical process

but rather a complex event, I aim to discuss how the category and experience of pain in female fitness culture is conceptualized, negotiated, expressed and explained from the perspective of exercising women.

This presentation is based on a qualitative, ethnographic approach – the fieldwork conducted in fitness clubs in Poland. Various qualitative measures include not only in-depth interviews with female participants of group trainings and fitness instructors, but also participant observation and personal experience of the researcher herself, as she has been working as fitness instructor for years.

### **The Grammar of Somatic Learning**

*Katja Pettinen, Mount Royal University, kpettinen@mtroyal.ca*

Learning constitutes one of the most central psychological processes, reflecting both our phylogenetic and cultural heritage as a species. In this paper I examine learning from a somatically grounded point of view highlighting the manner in which minds and bodies are interconnected and interrelated, such connectivity being sutured by sensoriality. I draw on long-term ethnographic work in the context of Japanese martial arts and examine the ways in which advanced practitioners cultivate their bodily comportment in order to acquire key somatic codes of a given martial tradition.

I approach learning as both social and somatic; a process that is embedded within a context and as such always relational rather than an abstract generality. In other words, learning, particularly somatic mimetic learning—never reducible to mechanical replication—is premised upon intersubjective co-presence wherein the structures of minds and bodies become overlapping in time and space.

The specific aspect of somatic learning that this paper highlights is the nature and the role of sensorial consciousness in somatic learning. Drawing on Peircean semiotic framework and grounded in ethnographic data, I suggest that consciousness challenges any clear Cartesian division between minds and bodies. Embodied learning occurs within the domain of what Tim Ingold names as in-between (rather than between), or what Peirce called firstness and secondness: when sensation becomes perception. Finally, instead of viewing somatic learning as secondary to conceptual learning, this paper will position conceptual learning to be a specific subset of somatic learning.

### **Mentalizing and culture – a culture of mentalizing**

*Barbara Götsch, Austrian Academy of Sciences, barbara.goetsch@oeaw.ac.at*

Mentalizing is the activity (and ability) to reflect about oneself and others in terms of internal mental states. In my presentation, I want to draw together work on mentalizing (or mentalization) from cognitive and developmental psychology (with a focus on “theory of mind”) and recent treatments in social anthropology (anthropology of mind) and psychodynamic theory.

After countless WEIRD studies in cognitive and developmental psychology, in recent years anthropological studies have contributed to a better understanding of theories of mind across the globe. They showed that it mattered whether people had a habit of verbalizing their thoughts and feelings – or not, and whether it was opportune to speculate about the mind-states of self or others (Robbins & Rumsey 2008), and that even the way people thought about thinking in different parts of the world, shaped what they experienced as real (Luhmann 2020).

What is more, there has been an increased focus on the early development of mentalizing, viewed from an interest in object theory and a renewed interest in attachment theory within psychoanalysis (Fonagy, Gergely, Jurist, Target 2002). This work emphasized the linkage between mentalization and affect regulation in early childhood, arguing that the sense of oneself as an agent was rooted in the experience of the attribution of mental states by a significant other and via interaction with the caregiver through a process of marked affect mirroring. Next to clinical research and theorizing, this led to the development of the so-called "mentalization based therapy".

I want to reflect on these developments with a cultural perspective in mind (see Quinn & Mageo 2013) and see how one can make a psychodynamic understanding of mentalizing fruitful to anthropological work – and in what way one can study this ethnographically.

### **Revisiting Shame and Stagefright**

*Ward Keeler, University of Texas at Austin, ward.keeler@gmail.com*

I published an article about shame and stagefright in Java in the journal *Ethos* in 1983. I would like to reconsider the topic in light of my more recent research on hierarchy, expanding the range of my remarks to extend to Bali and Burma, where I have also done fieldwork.

Although most Westerners equate hierarchy with inequality, it actually implies much more. It names a common pattern of exchange relations among parties of different degrees of structural power or prominence. Hierarchical relations generate feelings of security, and even affection, when they work out well, and moral indignation when they are seen to disappoint expectations. Feelings of "shame" label intense emotional states that shore up hierarchical relationships by generating discomfort when parties fail to act in accordance with their role. Shame marks incidents in which individuals appear not to know their place. This refers to subordinates who act with insufficient deference and to superordinates who act with insufficient authority.

### **Imagining Profound Intellectual Disability – Navigating Uncertainty as a Carer (and as a Researcher)**

*Eero Saukkonen, University of Helsinki, eero.saukkonen@helsinki.fi*

While no-one can ever truly know for sure what goes on in the mind of another, this fact is especially salient for those working with persons with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD). Persons with PIMD generally have various sensory and cognitive impairments, and due to cognitive and physical impairment, possess very little capability for any kind of formal language with which to describe their inner worlds. For a long time this meant that their mental capabilities were assumed to be minimal in every way, but in recent decades research and advocacy have thrown this presumption into question. At least on the surface level, official stances have shifted towards affording persons with PIMD with the same rights and consideration as other people.

In this environment, carers must balance differing understandings and experiences of the cognitive capabilities of persons with PIMD. Carers' interpretations of the senses, the preferences, the motivations and the communication of persons with PIMD all have practical and ethical implications for how the former conduct and feel about their work.

In this paper, I examine how carers can construe persons with PIMD in different ways in different situations, and explore reasons for why they might do so. I also consider the ethical and methodological difficulties involved for a researcher working with persons whose inner goings-on are so very hard to access.

### **3) COVID-19 OPEN MIC SESSION**

*Lavinia Țânculescu-Popa, Hyperion University Bucharest, [lavinia.tanculescu@thewings.ro](mailto:lavinia.tanculescu@thewings.ro)  
Mona Behnke, [mona.e.behnke@web.de](mailto:mona.e.behnke@web.de)*

In March 2020 the SARS-CoV-2 virus was announced as a worldwide pandemic, and while the term emphasizes on the global scale of the spread of the virus, experiences of illness, healing and the psychological impact vary widely based on individual, social and cultural aspects. Personal as well as collective behavior, perceptions and coping mechanisms go along with public measurements, restrictions, capacities of local health care systems, and even can become a form of political expression.

In our Open Mic session, we invite everybody, no matter what field of interest, research area or working experience to participate in an engaging exchange about the pandemic and its diverse influences. Through the unique format of a panel discussion, we encourage participants to share advancements, be it of personal or professional origin. The two main objectives of the discussion are first, the influence on our fieldwork, as researchers, during the pandemic and how it affects our academic and nonacademic activities. This can be related to labor conditions, employment, and the researcher's position. Second, we will investigate how cultural scripts create a narrative or a drive of illness treatment, health and suffering in different regions and during different stages of the pandemic, unfolding new areas of interest, interaction and, insight on distinct cultural concepts.

To discuss the issue, we are looking forward to a multivocal and multicultural exchange, which allows us to share personal experiences, next to theoretical and conceptual ideas and insights with the hope to gain further knowledge on the social subject, the collective experience and a relationality of both.

## DAY 3: Thursday, June 3rd

### PANELS 4: 10.00-12.00

#### 1) CREATING SAFER SPACES: NAVIGATING THE IMPACTS OF SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE IN ACADEMIC SETTINGS, FutureLab-Roundtable

*Laura Thurmann, University of Manchester, laura.thurmann@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk*

*Julia Nina Baumann, Freie Universität Berlin, j.n.baumann@fu-berlin.de*

In the wake of the #metoo movement, debates in academia have contributed to uncovering mechanisms that reproduce and re-enforce risks of being exposed to acts of sexualized violence. In social and cultural anthropology, recent studies have shown that students and scholars are prone to such risks in both (familiar) academic spheres and fieldwork contexts.

In this panel, we want to discuss what kind of structures facilitate and reinforce risks of sexualized violence for social researchers. Therefore, we ask the following questions: How does experiencing or witnessing violence influence scientific research, academic everyday life and one's own emotional experience as an academic? What impact do past experiences of violence in fieldwork/academia have on researchers' mental wellbeing and what are the possibilities of dealing with these experiences? How can support systems be created within academia and how can we end the reproduction of harmful structures? How can we shape our work environments to create safer and more compassionate spaces for everybody?

To find answers to these questions, we want to provide a platform to discuss and find solutions, particularly from within the ENPA network. We understand the Panel as a FutureLab, a workshop to elaborate work in progress and unconventional ideas, which is part of a critical and engaged anthropology that goes beyond mere academic work.

In the beginning, Roundtable researchers from different disciplines will present their experiences, research findings and dealing strategies. Our focus is not on a mere theorization and analysis of sexualized violence in academic settings, but aims explicitly at ethnographic work practice. We would therefore also explicitly like to give non-presenting participants the opportunity and space to actively participate in the FutureLab, especially in the panels' second part in which we collectively aim to develop practical ways of preventing sexualized violence.

#### **Academic mother-/sisterhood and an international researcher's community combatting sexualized violence in higher education**

*Katja Girr, Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) and the Department of Geography (GIUB), katja.girr@uni-bonn.de*

Having experienced sexualized violence in academia, within the university environment and during fieldwork, the creation of safe spaces, support structures and information exchange networks are major topics accompanying my academic career. Thus, not primary from a scientific perspective but from personal and practical experience, I like to share my major coping strategies (one on the individual level and the second on the community level) possible to discuss and develop further during the FutureLab workshop.

'Academic mother-/sisterhood' describes my personal relationships to PhD candidates, post-doc researchers and professors informally build up in recent years and especially in the last months and weeks. Based on the individual level, these close relationships allow to address incidents of sexualized violence and emotions, they provide support and make me feel safe. The possibility to ask researchers from all levels of the higher education system for advice and

who further work at different universities/countries is a strong support for me. Linked FutureLab discussion points could be: while aiming for a Feminism for the 99%2 how to establish academic father-/brotherhood? In addition to this informal approach, how to institutionalize trainings, support structures and juridical processes within academia?

An international researcher's community combatting sexualized violence in higher education is emerging on a local, national and international level. Here I like to address the community-based initiatives, mostly informal, in which I take part: at Bonn University as well as on the German and international level (mainly France/ French speaking). A linked FutureLab discussion point could be: how to further connect and develop the different initiatives?

### **The Hidden Labor of Staying Safe by Women in Global Public Health Fieldwork**

*Corey McAuliffe, University of British Columbia, corey.mcauliffe@ubc.ca*

Increasing numbers of Canadian and U.S. academic global health programs in post-secondary education has translated into increased student demand to participate in internationally-based fieldwork. Yet, much of this work remains precarious and the long-term repercussions of challenging or traumatic experiences have been understudied.

Our research question aimed to understand the lived experience of a U.S. or Canadian woman graduate student participating in global public health fieldwork. As evidenced in earlier publications, considerations for the health, safety, and well-being of women students has not been adequately addressed and insufficient attention in research has been dedicated to this area. Methodologically, Max van Manen's phenomenology of practice was applied throughout the research process, capturing lived experience descriptions through participant in-depth phenomenological interviews and a guided writing exercise.

We found that the loss of environmental familiarity combined with graduate students' lack of power created a considerable amount of hidden labor to keep one's self safe from sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) while participating in global public health fieldwork. This can be both alleviated or intensified due to negotiated strategies, coping styles, and management techniques. Additionally, students' labor to avoid or reduce instances of SGBV may preclude them from having any material "of substance" to report once returned home. This study holds the potential to positively affect an individual's experience, and thus practice, through offering new meaning structures, language for foreign experiences, or ways to describe, conceive of, and respond to global public health fieldwork

### **Female researcher safety: the difficulties of recruiting participants at conventions for people with dwarfism**

*Erin Pritchard, SFHEA, Liverpool Hope University, pritcher@hope.ac.uk*

Disability research often favours the use of disabled researchers carrying out research with disabled participants. It is believed to empower disabled people, as they are given a voice. However, little consideration has been given to the ethical implications of this type of research process, including in relation to female researcher safety.

This paper provides an autoethnography of my experience of being sexually assaulted when recruiting participants for my doctoral research, at a convention held by an association for people with dwarfism. Drawing on Bolt's notion of the 'unforbidden relationship' the paper demonstrates how some men with dwarfism use these spaces to try and form intimate relationships with women who share the same condition as them.

Focusing on gender, disability and sexuality, situated in space, this paper explores the problems encountered when trying to recruit participants within a particular space. The paper demonstrates how the researcher had to alter recruitment tactics and was faced with tough decisions which impacted both her safety and academic work. This paper suggests that the safety of the researcher needs more consideration and offers recommendations to increase researcher safety.

### **Students for students – tackling (experiences of) sexualized violence during fieldwork in a self-organized student group**

*Hannah Bartels, University of Hamburg, hannahbartels@posteo.de*

This proposed input statement for the “Creating safer spaces” panel will be shaped around the experiences of founding, maintaining, and working in a self-organised student group, KEWTA. I plan to bring forward practical approaches, and suggestions on how to positively impact students’ and young researchers’ awareness towards sexualized violence and well-being on a student-organized level. For this input statement I plan to discuss, and collect perspectives within KEWTA, to be able to compose a statement that channels their voices to this FutureLab table.

Firstly, I will share my insights into how the classroom preparations and discussions beforehand shaped the risk-taking, and decisions made in the field. Secondly, I will discuss the strategies through which KEWTA tries to make topics such as sexualized violence, danger, and risk approachable. This includes the time before research, and the ensuing steps to creating a final thesis, possibly burdened with heavy experiences while collecting data.

KEWTA is a self-organized group of roughly 30 Master students and alumni of Hamburg’s Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology. It was founded two years ago to create a platform for communication and guidance between master students at different stages of their studies. While our collective’s name is anecdotal, we aim to offer serious support to Master students, with a focus on the challenges and precarities of field work for (in most cases) first-time researchers.

## **2) ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSIGHTS INTO SEARCHES FOR MEANING ACROSS THE LIFE COURSE**

*John Loewenthal, Oxford Brookes University; The Centre for Research and Advanced Studies, IPN, Mexico, j.loewenthal@brookes.ac.uk*

Anthropological focus on meaning has tended to examine significance at a societal level. This panel asks what contributions anthropology can make to the study of personal searches for meaning in life. Individual lives are embedded in social and cultural worlds, yet there is a complexity and idiosyncrasy in how people embody such influence and develop their own subjectivities and desires. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted such diversity. Individuals and households worldwide have been provoked into (inter-)subjective reckonings over the state of their lives, and the personal significance of different factors. Psychological anthropology may engage broad philosophical questions about what makes life meaningful at an intimate empirical level. This panel asks such questions as: What meanings do people seek or find through work, leisure, marriage, kinship autonomy, the cultivation of luck, or confrontation with death? Where do people of different ages, backgrounds, or circumstances focus their time, energies, or preoccupations? Indeed, what do people (want to) do with their lives, and why? Existential anthropology highlights that prosperity may be ambivalent: that people may lack clear wishes and may be unsatisfied even after the attainment of goals; that

metrics of success are plural and may not overlap; and that happiness may be determined by perspective. Following Viktor Frankl's therapeutic notion that a 'will to meaning' is a route to purpose in life – and yet recognising that 'passions' do not necessarily come naturally – the panel explores the cultural construction of personal meanings and how their pursuit may be transient, contested, elusive, or achieved.

### **Meanings of Life and Fear of Death Across the Lifecourse in Japan and the United States**

*Gordon Mathews, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, cmgordon@cuhk.edu.hk*

In this paper, based on ten years of ethnographic interviews with Japanese and Americans about senses of life after death, I analyze life meaning as shaped by the fear of death. Scholars such as Ernest Becker have argued that human beings' fear of ultimate insignificance have led us to adopt fictional senses of life meaning, while scholars such as Phil Zuckerman have argued that fear of death may have minimal impact on human beings' meaningful lives. I discuss how, while fear of death is very real in both Japan and the United States, it differs by one's place in the lifecourse: those who are 20 may assume they will never die, while those who are 50 may worry substantially about what their lives may mean in the coming shadow of death, and those who are 90 may welcome death. Whereas in the US, the legacy of the Christian God and heaven remains central, even among atheists who wonder how American society can cohere without a sense of ultimate meaning, in Japan, ancestor veneration is more personal: "I know there's no life after death, but I will meet my late husband again!" The fear of death has a profound effect upon senses of personal life meaning in the United States and Japan, but this differs both by age and by society in our increasingly post-belief late-modern world.

### **Why do what with one's time or life? Graduate deliberations about where to find meaning, and whether it should be through work**

*John Loewenthal, Oxford Brookes University/ The Centre for Research and Advanced Studies, IPN, Mexico, j.loewenthal@brookes.ac.uk*

This paper presents findings from an 18-month ethnographic study of the aspirations of students and graduates from a prestigious university in New York City who are living either there or as graduates in Los Angeles. Participants appeared to largely adhere to a cultural imperative to define their social identity and sense of purpose through the construction of a career. Bound within their immediate transitions were broader existential concerns about where their lives were going, how much latitude and freedom they could enjoy, and where the ultimate sources of meaning in their lives should be from. While such themes are specific to university graduates, they may also be viewed through a universal frame, regarding what human beings may consider is a worthy usage of their time, and their lives, and why. This paper examines four patterns underlying the graduates' aspirations: a rejection of corporate work, citing concerns about alienation and a dissatisfaction with material rewards; a corresponding search for meaning through intrinsically motivated work, chiefly dreaming of experience and expression in the arts; alternatively, finding meaning through money and the pursuit of simple pleasures outside of work ("that 75% of my day is actually meaningless. And I do it to enjoy the 25% of my day"); and finally, a haunting emptiness and lack of drive ("I don't know what my concerns are"). An abstract quality lingers throughout, as young adults envisage ideals from limited experience; however, it is argued that there may be meaning in simply imagining the future.

## **How cousin Patrick didn't become a seaman: refusal and the difficulties of kinship and social mobility**

*Resto Cruz, University of Edinburgh, resto.cruz@ed.ac.uk*

In conversation with recent work on subjectivity and subjectivation, the vitality and texture of kinship, and the relational consequences of social mobility (e.g. Bear et al. 2015; Das 2018; 2020; Friedman 2014), I consider how the new might arise, if only slowly and tentatively; how it emerges from, and creates ruptures in, people's relations. I do so in the context of social mobility in postwar and contemporary Philippines. Here, upward mobility is propelled by relationships and associated models of personhood, while also transforming these, including through heightened expectations, geographical dispersal, inequalities, and conflicts. Taking the perspective of those born in the wake of upward mobility, I examine the place of refusal to follow an entrenched and valued (but previously, novel) life course and path to upward mobility.

I focus on my classificatory cousin, Patrick, who, on the cusp of becoming a seaman, refused and decided to pursue other lines of work instead. His refusal reflected recent economic transformations, with repercussions for maintaining and furthering upward mobility. It also stemmed from, and deepened, existing breaks in his kinship universe involving the previous generation. It thus highlights how the next generation might inherit, make sense of, and navigate, injuries caused by upward mobility on their elders' kinship ties and personhood. It foregrounds not only how kinship is simultaneously generative (including of social mobility) and saturated by ambivalence and the potential to fail; but also, how concrete others seek meaningful paths of life amidst the difficulties of kinship and social mobility alike.

## **The "Happiness Impasse": Exploring the Ambivalent Pursuit of Marital Happiness in Contemporary Urban China**

*Lin Sun, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, lynnsun@link.cuhk.edu.hk*

Today, the attainment of happiness has become one of the most "legitimate" meanings of life for many living in industrialized societies. Among a vast array of things that now are said to contribute to individuals' happiness, marriage no doubt occupies a central position, especially in societies like China where marriage, to a large extent, is still regarded as a life requirement. This paper thus examines what a dominant ideal of marital happiness in contemporary China, which I call "marital happiness recipe", does to some Chinese urban middle-class married women of the post-1980s generation. While the gap and tension between this "marital happiness" as a social aspiration and the "marital happiness" as felt/lived experience are self-evident and inevitable, the "space" opened up by such incongruities is what this paper will focus on. Based on my 12-month fieldwork in Shanghai from 2015 to 2016 and the subsequent follow-up visits, this paper explores the "thickness" of this "space" and reveals it as a point of conjunction where personal and institutional efficacy meet and get entangled. Essentially, this paper exposes the unhappiness of "marital happiness" through revealing various "impasses" — the infinite loop resulting from the inevitable tensions caused by the macro structural forces at various levels that simultaneously generate and undermine the promise of marital happiness — these young women faced in their continued endeavors to live a marital life that themselves deemed happy or at least meaningful.

## **"You Make Your Own Luck": Positive thinking, Luck and Meaning Making amongst the serial entrants of promotional competitions in Australia and the United Kingdom**

*Cynthia Sear, University of Melbourne, c.sear@student.unimelb.edu.au*

In anthropology a small group of scholars have considered the cultural specificity of ideas concerning luck (e.g. Mosko 2012 and Da Col 2012) while in psychology, luck and 'luckiness'

have been deemed an important means by which people experience as well as seek to improve their place within the world (see Wiseman 2004). Drawing on ethnography in Australia and the United Kingdom amongst people who serially enter promotional competitions, known as “compers”, in this paper I will bring together these perspectives to explore the idea, oft expressed by my informants, that in both competitions and life: “you make your own luck”.

While ostensibly people enter promotional competitions to win the advertised prizes of cash, cars and holidays, for many self-described ‘compers’, the diligence required to find and enter hundreds of competitions requires and enforces a particular form of meaning making. Namely, to be a successful compers, one must ‘be positive’ and cultivate a sense of luckiness. As I will explore, this ‘labour of luck’ (Daniels 2012: 142) at times bleeds beyond the winning of competitions and is used by compers to make sense of their lives and the broader world. Based on this research, I argue that luck in the West is not always reducible to its definition as “impersonal probabilistic chance” (Mosko 2012: 20). Instead, I examine how compers’ ideas about luck combine a sense of theodicy (cf. Weber 1922-23) with a pragmatic form of positive psychology.

### **3) THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS OF THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN CULTURE AND COGNITION**

*Victor de Munck, Vilnius University, demunckv@gmail.com*

All the researchers use an ethnographic mixed method approach to examine the relationship between culture (often conceptualized in terms of social justice and morality) and cognition in particular context. Walker (LSE) conducted ethnographic research on two Amazonian groups and used experimental methods to test if features of modernity affected moral judgements. For a holistic understanding of both decision making processes and the cultural contexts that abed them both ethnographic and experimental methods are. Kuchynskyi (National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy) similarly connects Bourdieu’s theory of habitus and capital with cultural models theory to examine how to signal prestige as a form of personal capital and the extent to which those signals can be regarded as cultural models. The link between a person’s presentation of self and cultural representations of status are combined using theories and methodology in both epistemological arenas. De Munck, continues this move toward synthesis by proposing a synthesis of the radical enactivist position of a ‘contentless’ mind and the cognitive science position of mental representations composed of content. Seo-hong & Gyuseog consider two facets of Maum (or “mind) in Korea in both it is agented but on one cotext it may emphasize personal discipline, in the other it emphasises alignment with the social demands that vary across social situation. An implication of this is that folk psychologies of mind vary across cultures.

#### **A New View of Cultural Models Through a Case Study of Courtship Practices.**

*Victor de Munck, Vilnius University, demunckv@gmail.com*

I will argue that cultural models consume Gibsonian affordances in order to learn about the world. This statement is in stark contrast to Roy D’Andrade’s basic precept that culture is in the mind. Cultural model research has dominated the field of cognitive anthropology and indeed has found a home in a diverse set of human behavioral disciplines, but not in its root field of cultural anthropology. I believe this is because the contingencies inherent in participant observation in the “wild” do not lend themselves to a Cartesian distinction between thought and action. Clark and others have thought to make a compromise by extending thought to the body and cultural artefacts. Yet this just extends the mind out a bit but does not problematize

the idea of mental models that guide action. In this paper I draw on the theoretical work of Ruth Millikan to synthesize the “affordance” position, taken by many radical enactivists, who argue that the mind is “contentless”, with cultural model theory. I will use sequence analysis to analyse courtship processes among young adults in the U.S. Sequence analysis is particularly interesting because one of the primary arguments made against culture as cultural models, is that any model in the mind is too static to guide behavioural flow over time, space and circumstances. By viewing cultural models as cognitive transformers that learn and opportunistically adopt affordances presented in the behavioural and physical environment we can gain insight into the flow of behaviour rather than rely on the idea that behaviour emerges, somehow, from static models.

### **Combining the social theory of Bourdieu and the school of cultural models in language behaviour studies**

*Oleksandr Kuchynskyi, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy,  
o.kuchynskyi@ukma.edu.ua*

Language behaviour is a complex social, cultural and political phenomenon that can be studied using different logic of explanation of an individual and group behaviour. In particular, it can be regarded as a social marker of a shared collective model of prestige internalized on an individual level. In order to study collective knowledge informing these models, the social theory of Bourdieu and the framework of cultural models are relevant. Namely, the theory of habitus by Bourdieu states that any social behaviour stems from a cognitive system through which individuals perceive the social world (includes habits, emotions, intuitions etc). In his theory, Bourdieu also explains the interconnections between different types of capital (financial, cultural and social) which can advance one’s overall capital and modify one’s habitus. Cultural models theory also states that a system of social beliefs needs to be internalized, but the emphasis is placed on how these beliefs are shared and what is the acceptance level of a model within a group. While the theory of Bourdieu is more related to the concept of prestige, it is not focused on the degree to which individuals comply with shared cultural knowledge, unlike cultural models school. The latter component is crucial in understanding the practical social functioning of a model. This paper offers a synthesis of the two theoretical frameworks applied to language behaviour, and specifically how these theories can be used in measuring shared cultural knowledge and mental landscapes of different social groups.

### **Maum: The Korean construction of mind**

*Seo-hong Kim, Chonnam National University, obiwan2000@naver.com  
Gyuseog Han, Chonnam National University, ghan@chonnam.ac.kr*

The term ‘Mind’ is translated commonly into ‘Maum’ in Korean. However, a close examination of the two terms in daily use in each language reveals greater differences than similarities. While the major meaning of mind revolves around thinking and memory, the major meaning of *maum* is twofold. In intrapersonal domain, it refers to self-control and discipline. Here, *maum* is a holistic concept encompassing and superseding motivation, cognition, and emotion. In interpersonal domain, it refers to caring concern about the other. Although authenticity (truthfulness) of *maum* is considered important in this domain, personal exercise of agentive *maum* is also important. In both domains most important characteristics of *maum* is personal agentivity. By exercising agentivity one can transcend the reality constraints (cognition, emotion etc.) as we can see in the practice of mindfulness meditation. Because of this agentivity, one is also obligated to strive to align with critical social demand. The folk meanings of *maum* underlies moral judgments, hitherto unheeded aspect. The folk psychological

meaning of each term can facilitate our understanding of different constructions of psychology as academic discipline in each culture. We substantiate our arguments with some empirical investigations.

## **PANELS 5: 13:00-15:00**

### **1) STUDENT PANEL**

*Siiri Sintonen, University of Helsinki, siiri.sintonen@helsinki.fi*

#### **Personality homophily in female Japanese macaques (*Macaca fuscata*)**

*Siiri Sintonen, University of Helsinki  
siiri.sintonen@helsinki.fi*

Social bonds in primates influence the cooperative interactions and thereby individual fitness. The determinants of close bonds include age, sex, rank, and kinship. In addition, increasing evidence shows that personality, particularly similarity in personality characteristics among partners, also known as personality homophily, is an important factor in bond formation. In Japanese macaques, kinship and sex are the main determinants of close bonds, reflecting the social structure of this despotic, nepotistic macaque species. However, whether and how these socio-ecological factors may constrain the significance of personality in determining bonding is unstudied. The aim of this thesis is to examine whether dyadic personality similarity influences female relationships in a group of semi-wild Japanese macaques.

I assessed several personality traits as well as an indicator of curiosity by the frequency of exploring enrichment and experimental devices. 155h of focal data was collected (5h/ind.) of 31 adult and adolescent semi-wild Japanese macaque females living in Affenberg Zoo, Landskron, Austria. Results are currently being analyzed. The results will be discussed in the light of comparative data on macaque and other primate personality and, more broadly, the influence of ecology on primate social bonds and individual differences in behavior.

#### **Humour and Hate – emotional reactions to antimuslim memes on the platform 9gag.com**

*Frauke Dornberg, Freie Universität Berlin, frauke.dornberg@fu-berlin.de*

This bachelor's thesis examines the question how users of the online platform 9gag.com deal with antimuslim memes through the expression of their emotions. Using Monique Scheer's concept of doing emotion with the addition of Christoph Bareither and his notion of doing emotion through digital media, it analyses antimuslim memes and their comments on the website 9gag.com. This thesis points out three different ways -humorous, serious and hateful-how users express their emotions in relation to those memes. With a focus on hateful comments, it highlights how users use humour to discuss antimuslim stereotypes as facts and to infringe the taboo of antimuslim racism and the desire of violent treatment of Muslim people. Additionally, this thesis argues that users solidarize with each other not only by identifying Muslims as the negative Other, but also by expressing the same kind of hateful and humorous emotions against them online. Facilitated by the infrastructure and affordances produced and provided by the platform, the humorous infringement of racist taboos leads to an antimuslim shift within the discourse about Islam and Muslim people.

## **Touch Narratives in Isolation**

*Mariam Lekveishvili, Tbilisi State University, mariam.lekveishvili@gmail.com*

The purpose of the research is to identify, document and study the myths/narratives regarding touching, manifested on social media in the context of COVID-19 isolation conditions. The psycho-anthropological framework of the research is the interdisciplinary concepts of anthropology, social semiotics, communication and cognitive science - embodiment and multimodality.

Based on these two perspectives, the research demonstrates the organization of physical and social experiences in communication and focuses on the role of different communication modalities in the process of meaning-making. It assumes that the resources that language, as one of the communicative channels, offers, are conditioned by the functions and the communication needs of the people serve to meet these functions. People express meaning in a particular time and social situation through the use of semiotic resources available to them; this choice is always socially conditioned and regulated by a certain discourse.

To illustrate aforementioned, we decided to identify myths/narratives of touching and study their representation in terms of pandemic-driven isolation and lack of physical contact.

After finding relevant material for the research, thematic and metaphorical analysis was performed. Through the use of open coding, the main narratives found in the conditions of lack of physical contact were identified.

## **Yearning for 'the good life', suffering precarity: the struggles and the life philosophy of a professional artist in austerity UK**

*Yang Yang, University of St Andrews, yy47@st-andrews.ac.uk*

Could the inspirational social imaginary of 'the good life' makes one's life daunting? The paper examines this question by analysing the struggles and the life philosophy of a professional artist in austerity UK. On the one hand, this professional artist yearns to live a sane, comfortable and self-reliant life; on the other hand, this artist asserts that they 'choose' their living even though such living is precarious. Yearning for 'the good life' sustains one's sufferings by reproducing a broadly shared illusion that a better life is as close and tangible as one can dream of. This paper further questions whether this social construct of 'the good life' obscures the fact that while the imagined life's possibilities can be infinite, the 'correct' life choices can be minimal.

## **Resonating meaning in the unexpected encounters: how religion and the concept of yuanfen shape meaning-making in life**

*Sami Huttunen, University of Helsinki, sami.huttunen@helsinki.fi*

This talk considers the ways how meaning is found in the everyday encounters and events through the lens of yuanfen, a cosmological principle in which entities become intertwined to each other even across multiple lifetimes. This is done through the examination of fieldwork done at Weimingtang, 'Rabbit god temple', which is a religious organisation based in Taipei, Taiwan and its clientele. The temple provides an unique insight to religion in Taiwan through its positioning in the religious field of contemporary Taiwan. The temple, like so many other Taiwanese temples, combines folk religion, daoism and buddhism to serve specific clientele – LGBTQ+ individuals. Yuanfen provides an example on how religious concepts and ways of worship become adapted to contemporary life and how they are utilised in religious meaning-making in everyday life.

## **2) MARGINALIZED PERSPECTIVES ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUFFERING**

*Matyas Müller, National Institute of Mental Health, Czechia, matyas.muller@hotmail.cz*  
*Mayssa Rekhis, School of advanced studies in social sciences, Paris,*  
*mayssa.rekhis@ehess.fr*

The field of mental health is currently rapidly undergoing the process of globalization, as any other field of modern societies. The interdisciplinary movement of Global Mental Health (GMH) is taking over other approaches – in the 2018 Global Ministerial Mental Health Summit mental health was declared a major challenge for the 21st century. The discipline combines the epidemiological and transcultural approach and promotes integrative and biopsychosocial models of mental health and illness, thus claiming to overcome the old ideological disputes over mind and body, nature and culture and the like. However, it brings its own dilemmas and controversies, such as medicalisation, shady economic links to the pharmaceutical industries, ignoring the political and economic contexts to suffering, and a “neo-colonialist” approach exporting Western psychiatric schemes and forcing them into the world (Cooper, 2016).

In fact within this \_relatively new\_ movement, new norms, priorities and guidelines are being created, exported and disseminated, pushing to the side many voices, experiences and knowledge in relation to mental health and suffering, that are being marginalized. This panel aims to be a space where we present and discuss some of these perspectives, and to reflect collectively on what contribution can psychological anthropology make at these margins.

### **Ageing in Displacement and Memories of Violence in Rural Indonesia**

*Victoria Sakti, Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Göttingen,*  
*sakti@mmg.mpg.de*

The health problems of older refugees are often related to poor living conditions and structural difficulties of adapting to their new host country. Past experiences of persecution and collective violence further contribute to a more significant deterioration in the later years of their life, as traumatic experiences leave indelible marks and strongly impacts on their physical and mental health (Ager, 2014). In later life, trauma can re-emerge and take the form of various mental and physical problems (Bolzman, 2014). In this paper, I examine the case of ageing East Timorese exiles living in rural Indonesia. I center the discussion on my interlocutors' narratives of suffering and multiple experiences of forced migration and explore the ways care<sup>3/4</sup>in its various forms and expressions<sup>3/4</sup>is given or withheld. I shall argue the importance of situating older refugees' memories of violence within the broader sociocultural, historical, and political contexts, as well as in the ways emotional distress are locally expressed and dealt with in order to better respond to this group's needs.

### **Experiences and attitudes of (mental) healthcare providers with patients who have a culturally different explanatory model on (mental) health.**

*Hanne Apers, Centre for Migration and Intercultural studies, University of Antwerp,*  
*Hanne.Apers@UAntwerpen.be*

The concept of 'explanatory models' (EMs) was coined by anthropologist and psychiatrist Arthur Kleinman and refers to the fact that people can have different notions of what 'health' or 'disease' is (Kleinman et al. 1978). People perceive the causes of a disease, its symptoms, how it should be treated, etc. differently because of the influence of diverse individual factors (such as age, gender, education, social class, experience, ...) as well as group-level

characteristics (such as cultural influences and religious beliefs). The EMs on (mental) health of people with a migration background, who enter the Belgian healthcare system, may thus differ significantly from the EMs the healthcare practitioners entail and practice. Therefore, during the first phase of my doctoral research, I applied the methodology of in-depth interviews, to explore how (mental) healthcare practitioners perceive and act upon possible differences in culturally-mediated EMs between them and their patients with a sub-Saharan African (SSA) background. Within this diverse group of practitioners - both general and specialized practitioners, both with or without a (SSA) migration background themselves - I aim to understand how their personal understanding of mental health, as well as their professional orientation, influences their professional approach when they encounter a patient with a different EM of (mental) health.

### **Recovered, empowered, or proud? Kinds of people with mental illness in the Czech Mental Health Care Reform**

*Matyáš Müller, National Institute of Mental Health, Czechia, matyas.muller@hotmail.cz*

Since 2017, the Reform of the Czech mental health care system has experienced a rapid development, following four years of stagnation. The aim of the Reform is a transition from a hospital based system towards a community based one. One of the aims of the Reform is lowering the stigma of mental illness in the society. A nationwide anti-stigma project (Destigmatization) is part of the Reform which is unique in the region of Central and Eastern Europe. It draws inspiration from similar successful campaigns in the UK, Netherlands, Denmark and other “Western” countries, principally stemming from the Global Mental Health movement. The central message of various kinds of destigmatization activities is that people can recover, or better “be in recovery”, from mental illness. However, mental health movement is far from being united in the Czech Republic and various conflicting narratives of a “recovered person” compete. Although all of them oppose the traditional Neo-Kraepelian image of a “chronic schizophrenic”, their notions of both stigma and recovery differ substantially. In my contribution, I will draw from my experience of being an anthropologist within the anti-stigma project and amid the “battlefield” of mental health ideologies ranging from Global Mental Health movement to anti-psychiatry. I will describe various new “kinds of people” living with mental illness that are currently emerging within the mental health field and how they are related to these ideologies. I will also show instances in which these conflicting discourses hybridize and where dialog is possible.

### **Applied research in recreational drug use in Kyiv, Ukraine**

*Ievgeniia-Galya Lukash, National University of “Kyiv-Mohyla academy”,  
ie.lukash@ukma.edu.ua*

Drug use is one of the pressing issues in sociological, psychological and health research. Often drug consumption is positioned as a marginalized behavior that becomes a defining characteristic of individuals engaging in it. Scholars focus on various topics in the context of drug use: motives and reasons people have to use drugs, the risks and misuse, types of narcotic substances, different ways of drug use perception, and the place of practice in people’s life. This paper attempts to illustrate the recreational drug users’ perception of themselves, narcotic drugs and “other” people in the context of Kyiv, Ukraine, based on empirical data. In the period of July-December 2020 with the use of free-listing technique and interview method was collected the data from 30 people. The information about the prevalent narcotic substances, the perception of drug use, place of drugs in their lives, and different kinds of experience people have with drugs (recreational use/experimenting with drugs/dependent behavior) was received. It was the first step into the field in the context of the broader

dissertation project, which aim is to explore and illustrate the cognitive landscape of drug users in connection with their environment. The empirical data received during these procedures became the foundation for further research decisions and activities.

### **3) COHERENCE AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE**

*William Matthews, London School of Economics, w.matthews1@lse.ac.uk*

*Ivan Deschenaux, London School of Economics, i.deschenaux@lse.ac.uk*

Humans do not typically hold coherent, stable beliefs, nor do they behave consistently through time and across contexts. Although anthropology generally recognises this fact, too little effort has been dedicated to studying incoherence systematically. Instead, anthropologists have tended to pay lip service to incoherence but continued to write as if stable, coherent mental states guide behaviour. This panel suggests that conversely, coherence is the exception, and the assumption of coherence generates misleading theoretical claims. Anthropological theories rarely account, for example, for contradictions between intuitive and reflective beliefs, post-hoc rationalisation of judgements, the impact of mood and social context on behaviour, or the importance of inattention – all of which play a central role in sociality. Ironically, this means that many theories in social anthropology lack an adequate conceptualisation of human behaviour.

A general model of the human mind and behaviour is necessary if anthropology is to be more than purely interpretive, but this model must at the very least accommodate the inconsistencies that ethnographers routinely encounter in the conduct of their research. This panel explores the ways in which findings from the cognitive sciences regarding inconsistencies in thought and behaviour can inform anthropological theory, whilst also paying attention to how ethnography, decoupled from unfounded assumptions of coherence, can contribute to an understanding of such cognitive mechanisms ‘in the wild’. Is it plausible that anthropologists’ own cognitive predispositions, and the ethnographic method itself, promote a more coherent portrayal of human mental life than justified? If so, how may we overcome this limitation?

#### **Mental Illness, Therapy, and the Real: Reflections from Post-Earthquake Nepal**

*Liana E. Chase, SOAS, University of London, lc54@soas.ac.uk*

The rapid expansion of psychiatry in the Global South under the auspices of global mental health has raised concerns about the effacement of non-biomedical approaches to mental illness. Critics frame biomedical psychiatry as a hegemonic discourse that systematically undermines alternative claims about the world, leading people to abandon indigenous, often spiritual forms of therapy. Embedded in these critiques is an assumption that people hold coherent ideas about reality that shape the way they seek care. Drawing on 14 months of ethnographic fieldwork among mental health service users in Nepal, my paper contests this assumption, calling for greater attention to the role of incoherence and irresolution in the therapeutic trajectories of people suffering from mental illness. I argue that it is often illness, rather than ideology, that destabilizes people’s ontological commitments, and that it is through experiments in therapy that the ensuing ‘struggle over the real’ (Das & Das 2006, p. 203) plays out. Through a series of case studies, I show that engagements with psychiatry don’t always lead to the embrace of a biomedical worldview; instead, psychiatric discourses, like others new and old, are taken up and discarded within an open-ended process of discovery in which the mindful body always has the last word. I conclude that psychological anthropology requires a more dynamic conceptualization of the relationship between illness, therapy, and ontology – one which accommodates the failure of orientations towards the real to cohere and conclude.

## **Homo anthropologicus: the anthropological model of a coherent mind and its problems**

*William Matthews, London School of Economics, w.matthews1@lse.ac.uk*

*Ivan Deschenaux, London School of Economics, i.deschenaux@lse.ac.uk*

This paper addresses unexamined assumptions about human behaviour and cognition often made in anthropological analysis. It has three aims: 1) to identify some characteristics of human behaviour as assumed in ethnographic methods and interpretation, 2) to identify where these characteristics are implausible or underspecified, and 3) to make recommendations for how these issues can be mitigated in the creation of anthropological theory. We aim to point out what we see as significant theoretical and methodological flaws in social anthropology stemming from its model of human behaviour, which we are calling Homo anthropologicus by close comparison with the analogously flawed model of Homo economicus. We examine this via two examples of anthropological argument which demonstrate problems with ethnographic inference and theoretical conclusions.

First, we examine the classic interpretive conundrum posed by Evans-Pritchard's observation that the Nuer say that 'twins are birds'. Anthropological approaches have typically taken this contradictory statement as an ethnographic problem to be solved by searching for an underlying coherence; such approaches stem from a flawed model of cognition which creates more problems than it solves. The second example we examine is the anthropological explanation of 'replication'. This is a well-documented phenomenon in South Asia whereby low-caste individuals treat other low-caste individuals in ways which they explicitly state to be reprehensible. Anthropology has produced multiple interpretations of this phenomenon, which suffer from similar issues. Finally, we consider some possible ways to address the theoretical problems arising from Homo anthropologicus.

### **The Contradictory Schemas of Motherhood**

*Mohaddeseh Ziyachi, Queen's University of Belfast, mziyachi01@qub.ac.uk*

*Nematallah Fazeli, Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, Tehran*

In this paper, we would like to argue that the cultural understanding of motherhood in Iran consists of contradictory schemas. For instance, pregnancy is perceived both as a natural and supernatural phenomenon. Although motherhood has become scientized and medicalized being known as a controllable biological process, it is also understood as a supernatural happening. In other words, although having children is understood like a project which is based on the conscious decision of human, simultaneously, it is supposed to be dependent on God's will. These contradictory beliefs are also reflected in the Iranians' behaviors. For example, in the case of infertility, people primarily see doctors and take infertility treatments. However, at the same, they make vows and do religious practices to get pregnant. These actions are even common amongst people who are not very committed to religion in their everyday life. These inconsistencies could be found in other aspects of motherhood and familial relationships too.

In this paper, we discuss that although these conflicting beliefs have been historically constructed through social changes over time, the human cognitive system makes the existence of incoherent beliefs possible. It is the property of the mind that allows competing schemas to be compartmentalized or integrated. Using first-hand ethnographic data drawn from semi-structured interviews with middle-class women living in Tehran as well as second-hand data come from other studies, we will demonstrate the possibility of inconsistencies in human's thought and behavior in different domains.

## PANELS 6: 15.30-17.30

### 1) PREDATORY PSYCHOLOGIES EAST AND WEST

*Deborah Tooker, Le Moyne College, Syracuse, New York, tookerd@lemoyne.edu*

Papers in this panel look at contexts in which concepts of mind have moved from West to East and from East to West and the possible power dimensions of those movements. We look at both “indigenization” of mind concepts of the “other” as well as “retraditionalization” of mind concepts. We look at cases in Asia where a globalized, western ‘psychoboom’ has hit and those where it has not. For the latter context, papers address how localized concepts differ from western folk psychologies as well as possible pressures from western ideas when they occur. For the first context, papers will address the effects of western concepts spreading into Asia. One paper also looks at the effects of Eastern concepts spreading to the West and reintroductions to the East.

The idea is to look at how western psychological concepts and practices make truth claims and emphasize access to a singular reality, making them particularly seductive. Some cases will illustrate contrasts with these concepts and practices and others will illustrate how these concepts and practices have been successful in encompassing and changing local notions sometimes being used for political purposes. Papers will also consider localized “readings-back” of indigenous assumptions onto these psychologies, “readings-back” that involve reaffirmation of multiplicities relating to Asian concepts of mind.

#### **“Believe It And/Or Not”**

*Felicity Aulino, University of Massachusetts, felicity@anthro.umass.edu,  
felicityaulino@gmail.com*

This paper will focus on ideas about belief as a foil for discussing “concepts of mind” and “predatory psychologies” from the vantage point of Northern Thailand. Listing the overlapping ways people make reference to believing, I will argue that a kaleidoscopic theory of mind, in conjunction with a particular logic of listing in a Pali philosophical lineage relevant to Thai tradition, can help bring to light common sense reasoning about minds, selves, and relationality in certain northern Thai contexts. The sense of karmic contingency and multiplicity coursing through this type of common sense offers an alternative to the imperialist ontological presumptions implicit in many forms of knowledge production, cognitive and developmental psychology included. In turn, understanding what is and is not true at the same time in some ways of knowing and acting offers a way forward, in terms of thinking about thinking academically as well as in providing individual and social support.

#### **“The multiple valences of western psychology among the Akha of Northern Thailand”**

*Deborah Tooker, Le Moyne College, Syracuse, New York, tookerd@lemoyne.edu*

Having undergone processes thought of as typical of “modernity” and “globalization” such as the penetration of capitalism, incorporation into a nation-state, and access to the global internet, members of an Akha upland community in Northern Thailand present themselves using new western psychological terminology. For example, younger Akha say that now they are in a “new” world and can “use their own thinking”, “follow their own desire”. This paper raises the question of what kinds of pressures are exerted by western, globalized psychological concepts and how to characterize these new, emerging concepts of self and emotions. While there are continuities with past Akha concepts of self and emotions (for example, ‘losing face’ by expressing one’s emotions too directly and emphasis on group harmony), there are also

discontinuities, strategic usage of western psychology, indigenization of western psychological concepts, dual notions, and resistance to these concepts, all at the same time. These usages, apparently contradictory to the western eye, beg for a new, conceptual framework for a better understanding of Akha/Asian concepts of mind. This paper is based on anthropological fieldwork over a 30 year period in an Akha community in Northern Thailand.

### **“Mindfulness in the Mekong”**

*Dessa Bergen-Cico, Syracuse University, New York, dkbergen@syr.edu*

This paper presents research on the trends in westerners coming to the Mekong region for recovery from substance use disorders (SUD) and traumatic stress. Since the 1970's westerners have both adapted and incorporated the Buddhist teachings and mindfulness-based meditation practices that Thích Nhất Hạnh helped bring to the West following the American-Vietnam War. More recently westerners began coming to the Mekong region for recovery from SUD and traumatic stress with some degree of success in sustainable recovery that has been lacking in traditional western psychology and mental healthcare. The ways in which mindfulness and Buddhist psychology and practices are being used for recovery from trauma and SUD in the Mekong region and how these practices are revolutionizing mental health in the west will be highlighted. While western psychology situates the focus of power with the clinician who directs change from the outside; Buddhist psychology and eastern mindfulness-based practices are self-directed and aim to cultivate insight and change from within the individual. Evidence increasingly supports a re-envisioning of how to improve mental health and reduce human suffering through culturally appropriate mindfulness-based practices across diverse cultures.

### **“What does a “full” mind look like, anyway? Global trajectories of mentality and mental health from Southeast Asia”**

*Julia Cassaniti, Washington State University, julia.cassaniti@wsu.edu*

This paper will examine some of the ways that local ideas about the mind in Southeast Asia have recently been globally exported, reinterpreted through Euro-American perspectives on mentality and mental health, and reintegrated into local Southeast Asian settings. It uses as a case study the Buddhist idea of mindfulness (Pali: sati), a robust concept with a long religious and therapeutic history in the region, and points to the implications of the concepts' changing psychological contours carried in its global travels. The spread of mindfulness to Western contexts is in a sense the opposite from typical trajectories of Euro-American psychologies that move from West to East; instead of imposing western folk models of mental health on to others, the recent global 'psychoboom' of mindfulness makes use of local practices to expand and reshape ideologies in Western contexts. In doing so, however, ideas about the mind become reframed through Western folk lenses, refracted as they do and reintegrated into formal and informal health settings. Based on data gathered on mindfulness from over 600 people in contemporary psychiatric hospitals, Buddhist monasteries, universities and rural areas in Thailand, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka, the paper argues for changing perceptions in mindfulness' psychological associations to temporality, affect, power, ethics and selfhood, and ideal approaches to them for mental health. By approaching the issue of 'predatory psychologies' (or 'psychological colonization') through attention to the minds' multiple global circulations, rather than any single directionalities of influence, we can better understand how assumptions about what a “full” or healthy mind looks like become part of the power-laden movements of health and wellbeing around the world.

## **“Confucianism, Counseling and Moral Psychology in China“**

*Jie Yang, Simon Fraser University, jie\_yang@sfu.ca*

This paper engages the trend of “retraditionalization” in China’s psychoboom by looking at how Confucian precepts are invoked to create new forms of “indigenous” psychology in China. Based on ethnographic research, I argue that the current understanding of retraditionalization is inadequate as a way to understand the popularity of psychotherapies in China that invoke these precepts presumably from the Chinese cultural tradition. While it is true that these therapies bring Confucianism back into (mental) health care practices, they always hybridize the Confucian precepts with Western forms of knowledge and behavior, resulting in therapies that are both old and new. These methods actually optimize the inner force of the individuals for relief and salvation, penetrating their hearts and minds more thoroughly and more profoundly than Western psychotherapy. In this sense, the Confucian notion of the self with a collective ambience is mobilized to do more than what an automatic, individualistic self can achieve in terms of self-reflexivity and self-governing. “Retraditionalization” is not simple nostalgia or a return to traditional values; it borrows from tradition as a means of acculturating “Western” psychology in service of both individual and political ends. The integration of Confucian thought into counseling inevitably inculcates certain Confucian ideologies that are identified with or that parallel government interests. Such parallels intensify clients’ attachments to official ideologies and nation-building projects.

## **2) DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN’S UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL ROLES AND NORMS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE**

*Anni Kajanus, University of Helsinki, Anni.kajanus@helsinki.fi*

Roles and norms are key to human sociality, yet human societies vary according to their relative standardisation, formalisation and explicitness. In this panel we combine anthropological and psychological approaches to the development of children’s understanding of roles and norms, in relation to evolved capacities and culturally specific social orientations.

The distinguishing feature of human sociality is not the ability to create relations – a trait shared with nonhuman primates – but the ability to assign special status to social roles such as “spouse” and “teacher”, which create certain entitlements and obligations (Searle 1995). Theories of cooperation posit that this ability evolved in contexts of interdependence and mutualistic collaboration. Children enforce norms in their direct interactions from early childhood, and importantly, by the age of 3, also as third-party observers, which has been taken as an indication of the development of agent-neutral morality (Tomasello and Vaish 2013). Developmental theories, however, say little about the extent to which agent-neutral moralities become the object of reflection and/or formalisation. Focusing on adults, anthropologists commonly argue that patterns of social interaction, group size, demographics and different moral outlooks influence the relative standardisation of roles and norms in a given community (Bird-David 1995). Anthropological work on child development has explored how these elements of the social world correlate with explicit rules (e.g. turn-taking) on the one hand, and subtle alignment of interests, on the other, as a basis of joint action (Lancy et al 2012, Rogoff 2003)

We explore the development of children’s understanding of social roles and norms, by looking at how norms emerge, are enforced and monitored in avoidance, distribution and cooperative activities in peer groups and among adults, as well as through comparisons between contexts of more and less formalised roles/norms usage.

## **The forgotten role of emotions in the transmission of cultural values**

*Fabrice Clément, University of Neuchâtel, fabrice.clement@unine.ch*

Anthropologists have made us aware that norms and values can differ from one culture to another. This fact underlies the importance for children to learn what is worthy of attention, or valuable, in their cultural group (e.g. other people, events, or behaviors). As cultural differences are essentially about what is socially relevant, and that what is socially relevant can be learned by observing relevant others' expressions, we recently proposed the concept of Affective Social Learning to explain how values can be learned through the observation of others' emotions (Dukes, D., & Clément, F. (Eds.) 2019. *Foundations of Affective Social Learning: Conceptualizing the Social Transmission of Value*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). By explaining how the different dimensions of Affective Social Learning interact in the socialization process (emotional contagion, affective observation, social reference and natural pedagogy), our aim is to propose a conceptual toolbox that can be very helpful to anthropologists in the field who are trying to understand how children gradually become full members of their cultural group.

## **Children's cooperation in two Chinese communities**

*Anni Kajanus, University of Helsinki, Anni.kajanus@helsinki.fi*

This paper combines ethnographic and experimental approaches to explore how patterns of joint action, responsibility and authority the children encounter, shape their cooperative and uncooperative relationships. I draw from research in two schools and communities in Nanjing, China, located less than five miles from each other. The experience of growing up in the two communities is similar in many aspects that pertain to the development of cooperative patterns, such as the majority of children having no siblings, and the predominance of formal school activities in their lives. However, there are also differences in the ways children come to learn about and engage with social norms and roles, which in turn shape the patterns of cooperation they develop. While the urban middle-class school emphasizes explicit moral teaching and individual moral deliberation on the basis of formalised social norms, these are much less prevalent in the semi-rural working-class school. Instead, children learn about norms through active participation in communal activities, peer responsibility and role-based ethical conduct. Overall, the two groups of children develop cooperative patterns that differ from each other in relation to emphasis on formal rules vs. subtle coordination of interests, reliance on adult authorities vs. self-regulation, and the frequency of explicit conflicts vs. pre-emptive policing.

## **Co-operation and Responsibility in Aché Children's Peer Group Interaction**

*Jan David Hauck, London School of Economics and Political Science,  
jandavidhauck@protonmail.com*

In this paper I discuss the emergence of different understandings of cooperation and responsibility relative to different environments among children in the indigenous Aché communities. The Aché used to live as nomadic hunter-gatherers in the subtropical rainforests of eastern Paraguay until the 1960s when they settled on reservations after years of persecutions, disease, and deforestation. Small-scale societies have long been of interest to anthropologists for the study of cooperation and its role in the development of culture and morality. Hunter-gatherers are often contrasted with agriculturalists for their relatively more egalitarian sharing patterns and cooperative ethos. While the Aché now live in villages and subsist by agriculture, families continue to go on hunting treks regularly in a few forest reserves. Comparing interactions between the same participants in both environments allows us to analyze if and how different modes of subsistence may entail different moral frameworks.

Here I discuss children's understandings of duties and responsibilities, rights and entitlement, as evidenced by their participation in subsistence activities, such as assisting with gathering in the forest or tending to gardens in the village. I will look specifically at directive-response sequences, requests, negotiation of turn-taking in collaborative activities, and their commentary and evaluation of their own and their peers' contributions in ongoing interaction.

### **Follow the Leader: A study of children's understanding of social hierarchies in Finland**

*Maija-Eliina Sequeira, University of Helsinki, maija-eliina.sequeira@helsinki.fi*

In this paper I explore how children in Helsinki, Finland, learn, navigate and construct social hierarchies. I am interested in how an early-emerging cognitive ability to reason about hierarchy is shaped by the particular values and norms found in different sociocultural contexts. Using ethnographic methods, I identify the norms, values and models that children in Helsinki are exposed to in their homes and communities, both through the teaching of formalised norms - such as 'sharing' or 'taking turns' - and through exposure to shared values such as 'equality'. I discuss how children actively navigate and construct hierarchies in their everyday lives – such as in resolving conflicts or cooperating with their peers - and in what ways they draw upon these norms and values to do so. Through experiments that draw upon a framework of hierarchy that identifies dominance and prestige as two pathways to high status, I then explore the development of children's rank reasoning abilities with age by determining their ability to recognise dominance and prestige processes and their expectations of high-ranking individuals.

### **3) NEOLIBERALISM AND MENTAL HEALTH**

*Keir James Cecil Martin, University of Oslo, k.j.c.martin@sai.uio.no*

*Discussant: James Davies, University of Roehampton, JP.Davies@roehampton.ac.uk*

In recent years, many writers have drawn a link between neoliberal economic and political reform and increasing levels of mental distress. Such theories mark one of the most significant contemporary alternatives to biological models that characterise 'mental illness' as the outcome of bio-genetic factors. At the same time they are also open to critique from some anthropological perspectives for reifying 'neoliberalism' as an external causative force that does not take seriously the different socio-cultural life-worlds that a variety of psychological phenomena manifest themselves within. In this panel, we seek to explore what a psychologically inspired anthropology can contribute to the discussion of the relationship between neoliberalism and mental health. Questions we could explore might include, but are not limited to: what is the relationship between 'neoliberalism' and models of 'cultural difference'? - Are psychological therapies and psychiatric drugs best seen as bulwarks against the emotionally disruptive effects of 'neoliberalism' or techniques for 'governing the soul' and deepening the hold of neoliberal governmentality? - In what ways, if any, are current mental health ideas, interventions, local languages of distress and/or grassroots service-user movements disrupting or explicitly engaging with neoliberal objectives? - Are there any spaces in which aspects of the wider mental health movement are becoming politically radical? If so, how and why?

## **Psychotherapeutic Deixis and the End of History, or Why Neoliberal Agency Thrives in the “Here-and-Now”**

*Sean Dowdy, University of Chicago, sdowdy@uchicago.edu*

Anthropological attempts to define the dynamics of so-called “neoliberal agency” and its presupposed models of the self—i.e., a sort of personhood modelled on business—tend to underplay the deictic modes and scales that orient such entrepreneurial selves to the world. In this paper, I propose that the “here-and-now” approaches of interpersonal psychotherapy and relational psychoanalysis exemplify a mode of deixis that is syntonically with neoliberal subjectivity and its spatio-temporal emphases on urgency, acceleration, the collapse of private/public space, and an overall devaluation of the thickly bi-directional temporalities of play. Rather than critique these approaches, this paper is an attempt to hypothesize (in an anthropological register) about their continued popularity alongside the much more clearly “neoliberal” therapies of short-term, behavioral, and “evidence-based” approaches. Drawing on case material from a former patient of mine (in psychoanalytic psychotherapy), I explore how visceral resistances to speaking about the past and playfully interpreting it coincided with my patient’s incapacity to imagine a different future for himself. Instead of addressing ways various “there-and-then” scenarios were activated in the “here-and-now,” my former patient preferred to indulge in the transference and to use its space for what, elsewhere, has been called the “network time” of neoliberalism. In reflecting on what led to my patient’s eventual termination of the therapy, I conclude with a series of provocations about the role of cultural critique in both clinical and anthropological work.

### **"The globally mobile person: neoliberal narratives of privilege, or empathy embodied?"**

*Ragnhild Bjørnsen, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences,  
Ragnhild.Bjornsen@inn.no*

This paper is based on a PhD thesis that analyses 42 autobiographical texts and interviews of former Norwegian Foreign Service children. Its findings indicate that this type of childhood is embedded in a cultural narrative, which characterises them as the ‘privileged global elite’. Its symbols are what represent ‘the successful’ in a neo-liberal ideology taking on a globally personified form: wealth of commodities, understood as material surroundings and entertainment (exotic travel); freedom understood as endless opportunity and potential; a limitless global identity, fluid in its possibility of taking on ever new colour and form; and finally that this adaptability is indeed voluntary (you could always return ‘home’). The discussion reveals how such symbolism is indeed reductionist, because the meanings of places and beings, even the embodied self, are reduced to things that will be replaced in the next relocation. As the lifestyle is arguably incompatible with being emotionally attached ‘on the ground’ over time, the international, in his or her high-mobility lifestyle, grows stumped. The diplomat children who experienced an ‘expectation gap’ between emotions as expected and the way they felt about their own lives, developed symptoms of psychological distress. Leaving the high-mobility family to start college triggered existential crisis in some informants as they were confronted with life in standstill. However, such crisis also initiates reflection and emotional processing in adult life, and we see an emergence of a form of ‘global citizen’, attached across national borders, possibly bringing new models of emotional closeness and distance.

## **Somehow We Can Help: Negotiating Social and Economic Inequality within the Counselling Process in Sri Lanka's Central Province**

*Nadia Augustyniak, CUNY Queens College, [naugustyniak@gmail.com](mailto:naugustyniak@gmail.com)*

The critique of therapeutic approaches such as psychological counselling has been that they align with neoliberal notions of personal responsibility and obscure the systemic nature of distress, which becomes individualized and disconnected from the economic and political conditions that produce it. Yet this critique seems to draw on therapeutic models that reflect psychology's Euro-American tradition—the way therapy and mental health are scripted if not necessarily actually practiced in the West as primarily individual interventions that aim to work on the self, to allow the individual to manage their feelings and strive towards “happiness.” Focusing on counselling services established in Sri Lanka's public sector over the last 15 years, in this paper I consider what happens when therapeutic care reflects alternative scripts informed by diverse, culturally-shaped, understandings of sociality, personal responsibility, spirituality, and wellbeing. Drawing on 20 months of ethnographic fieldwork with psychological counselors working in the public sector in Sri Lanka's Central Province, I examine the multiplex, shifting discourses that guide these practitioners' efforts to help low-income clients work through depression, stress, and family problems, among other issues. I illustrate how social and economic inequalities become enmeshed, reproduced as well as challenged in the process of psychological counselling. Shifting away from the critique of therapeutic approaches as depoliticizing distress, I argue that the day-to-day practice of psychological counselling in Sri Lanka's public sector, while far from challenging systemic injustices, does not obscure these realities but rather is profoundly shaped by them.

## **She's an earthquake – and the joy of my life: ADHD and everyday life of Colombian families**

*Kathrin Bauer, Freie Universität Berlin, [ka.bauer@fu-berlin.de](mailto:ka.bauer@fu-berlin.de)*

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is the most commonly diagnosed psychiatric disorder in Colombian minors. Social scientists criticise the bio-psychiatric understanding that views ADHD predominantly as a neurobiological disorder by examining medicalization processes and highlighting the importance of the sociocultural context. However, most of this work is based on theoretical reflections, analysis of (media and scientific) discourses or fieldwork in the West.

This paper suggests that to understand the situatedness of ADHD, exploring the interpretations, experiences and positionalities of the affected actors and their families is as fundamental as analysing discourses related to ADHD. By drawing on a neurodiversity approach, the paper addresses the embeddedness of ADHD in everyday life, social context and paisa culture with special attention to the role of the educational system.

During 7 months of field research – carried out in close cooperation with a Colombian psychiatric study – semi-structured and narrative interviews were conducted with families from rural and urban communities and diverse sociocultural backgrounds. Research partners include children diagnosed with ADHD (and their families), without ADHD and children with suspected ADHD whose parents opted against psychiatric interventions. Participant observation, school reports, surveys, observations in schools and interviews with teachers and health care professionals provide further insights.

The paper presents a nuanced description of the ways in which ADHD is socially embedded and proposes a bio-socio-cultural model, that aims at fostering new approaches to support children and their families.