INQUIRIES INTO EPISTEMOLOGIES AND ETHICS – COLLABORATIVE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION IN CROSS-GENERATIONAL RESEARCH

Lina Franken/Lara Hansen/Samantha Lutz/Teresa Stumpf/Alejandra Tijerina García/Gertraud Koch[1]

Introduction

Collaborative research is not a new concept in cultural anthropology. Still, it has become increasingly relevant, and this new relevance may be most visible in the foundation of the journal Collaborative Anthropologies (University of Nebraska Press) in 2008. Today, collaboration is seen, in a broad sense, as referring to the whole research process including the collaborative development of research design and theory building.[2] This has not always been the case. Starting from the writing-culture-debate at the latest,[3] social and cultural anthropology has established an understanding of people in the studied field as research partners rather than as a researched population and has developed a large variety of forms of relationships and research strategies for practicing this collaborative attitude. The discussion and epistemological reflection of how researchers collaborate in their varying field approaches has become an integral part of most ethnographic studies, and is often aligned to research-ethical questions as another unavoidable dimension of anthropological knowledge production.[4]

The lay expert or reference person from the research field is a figure with a long-standing tradition in anthropological research, reaching far back to its beginnings and still being of relevance today, albeit with changing faces. To-

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2   *Beate Binder, Friedrich von Bose, Katrin Ebell, Sabine Hess, Anika Keinz* (eds.): Eingreifen, Kritisieren, Veraendern / Interventionen ethnografisch und gendertheoretisch. Münster 2013; *Les W. Field:* Abalone Tales: Collaborative Explorations of Sovereignty and Identity in Native California. Durham 2008; *Luke Eric Lassiter:* Collaborative Ethnography and Public Anthropology. In: *Current Anthropology (*2005) (Vol. 46, No. 1), p. 83–106; *Joanne Rappaport:* Beyond Participant Observation: Collaborative Ethnography as Theoretical Innovation. In: Collaborative Anthropologies (2008), 1, see p. 1–31.

3   *Clifford, James; Marcus, George E.* (eds.): Writing Culture. The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography. Berkeley 1986.

4   *Kim Fortun:* Figuring out Ethnography. In: James Faubion & George E. Marcus (eds.): Fieldwork Isn't What It Used to Be. New York 2008, p. 167–183; *Christopher M. Kelty:* Collaboration, Coordination and Composition: Fieldwork after the Internet. In: James Faubion & George E. Marcus (eds.): Fieldwork isn't What it Used to Be. New York 2008, p. 184–206.

day, the ways how collaborators are collaborating[5] and the expertise they contribute to the research is acknowledged as para-ethnographic knowledge.[6] The concepts of these kinds of research practices emerge out of postmodern and feminist anthropology, mainly focusing on the integration of actors in the field from different research perspectives into the ethnographic production of knowledge in the sense of multi-perspectivity and equal participation in research processes and their representations. In applied anthropology, collaboration results out of practical cooperation between economy, industry, welfare and the public sector. Such collaborations are continuously debated in respect to their relevance for academic knowledge production, particularly theory building in anthropology.[7] From another point of view, the collaborative role of the researcher is an issue of discussion. The idea of researchers becoming accomplices of people in the field[8] has broadened over time into activist and interventionist modes of field engagement.[9] Under the label of ›Public Anthropology‹, the contribution of anthropological research to civil society is integrated into the engagement with collaborative approaches and reflected increasingly in respect to the consequences for research designs and representations.[10] More recently, design anthropology introduced a new turn in collaborating by understanding the anthropological research as part of the design, creation and shaping processes of information technologies. Furthermore, design anthropology aims at a future oriented production of knowledge rather than a reconstructive approach to what has been given

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5   Cf. *Monica Konrad:* Collaborators Collaborating. Counterparts in Anthropological Knowledge and International Research Relations. New York [u.a.] 2012.

6   *George E. Marcus:* Jostling Ethnography Between Design and Participatory Art Practices and the Collaborative Relations It Engenders. In: Rachel Charlotte Smith, Kasper Tang Vangkilde, Mette Gislev Kjaersgaard, Joachim Halse und Thomas Binder (eds.): Design Anthropological Futures. Exploring Emergence, Intervention and Formation. London/New York 2016, p. 105–120.

7   *Barbara Ryklo-Bauer; Merrill Singer; John van Willigen:* Reclaiming Applied Anthropology: Its Past, Present, and Future. In: American Anthropologists (2006), Volume 108 Issue 1, S. 178–190; *Sarah Pink/ Vaike Fors/ Tom O'Dell:* Theoretical Scholarship and Applied Practice. New York/Oxford 2017.

8   Cf. *George E. Marcus*: The Uses of Complicity in the Changing Mise-en-Scène of Anthropological Fieldwork. In: Representations (1999) 59, S. 85–108, see p. 88.

9   *Alayne Unterberger:* The Blur: Balancing Applied Anthropology, Activism, and Self Vis a Vis Immigrant Communities. In: Annals of Anthropological Practice (2009), p. 1–12; *Beate Binder:* Troubling Policies. Gender und Queertheoretische Interventionen in die Anthropology of Policy. Unter Mitarbeit von Jens Adam, Asta Vonderau. In: Jens Adam und Asta Vonderau (eds.): Formationen des Politischen. Anthropologie politischer Felder. Bielefeld 2014, p. 363–386; *Setha M. Low, Sally Engle Merry:* Engaged Anthropology. Diversity and Dilemmas. An Introduction to Supplement 2. In: Cultural Anthropology (2010) (51), p. 203–226.

10 *Sam Beck/Carl A. Maida:* Introduction: Toward Engaged Anthropology. 2013. In: Sam Beck und Carl A. Maida (eds.): Toward Engaged Anthropology. New York/Oxford 2013, p. 1–15; *Jeremy MacClancy* (ed.): Anthropology and Public Service. The UK Experience. New York/Oxford 2019; *Philip Vannini:* Doing Public Ethnography, How to Create and Disseminate Ethnographic and Qualitative Research to Wide Audiences. Abington/New York 2018.

for a long time. These approaches go beyond applied anthropology and move on from facilitating project ideas of other stakeholders with ethnographic knowledge by setting one's own agenda for design processes and options for »presents in the making«.[11]

In this context, (design) studios can be seen as a way to collaborate in knowledge production. With the idea of a studio, collaboration is given »a shared space, a cooperative and collaborative intellectual space. […] The result would be a back-and-forth, a recursive shaping of each other.«[12] This explicitly opens up for different levels of research expertise and experience. Seeing collaboration as a way of »learning as increasing participation in communities of practice",[13] a studio can serve as a space for this community of practice to develop. Within studios in their best sense, critique is formulated within the group »through materials and operative concepts«,[14] finding ways of working together and to develop alternative ideas with »a combination of fieldwork, conceptual work, and collaborative work«,[15] where research itself is regarded as a design process. Even though the community of practice reproduces itself with newcomers becoming apprentices and masters while others might be leaving,[16] the studio as a format enables the community to engage in a »collaborative effort, among experts, of knowledge-making«.[17] This goes far beyond the discussion of one's own research within a group and changes the way research is done.

In light of this, the present work refers to a variety of such collaborations. By introducing cross-generational – Bachelor, Master, and PhD students alongside postdoctoral researchers and professors – projects and studios at the Institute of Cultural Anthropology at University of Hamburg[18], we propose a particular form of cooperation in ethnographic research. More precisely, we discuss how collaboration across different generations of researchers as well as in collaboration with the field can enable an inherent acceleration, consolidation and amplification of ethnographic research processes. Based on domain-based studios in Hamburg and explorative ethnographic research in Berlin-Neukölln, the questions to be discussed are: how are relations among different researcher person-

11 *Ton Otto; Rachel Charlotte Smith:* Design Anthropology: A Distinct Style of Knowing. In: Wendy Gunn, Ton Otto und Rachel Charlotte Smith (ed.): Design Anthropology. Theory and Practice: Bloomsbury, S. 1–32. London 2013; Mike Anusas/Rachel Harkness: Different Presents in the Making. In: Rachel Charlotte Smith et al., as in fn. 5, *Kasper Tang Vangkilde, Mette Gislev Kjaersgaard, Joachim Halse and Thomas Binder* (eds.): Design Anthropological Futures. Exploring Emergence, Intervention and Formation. London/New York 2016.

12 *Paul Rabinow/George E. Marcus/James D. Faubion/Tobias Rees:* Designs for an Anthropology of the Contemporary. Dialogue V: In Serach of (New) Norms and Forms. Durham 2008, p. 73–92, see p. 85.

13 *Jean Lave/Etienne Wenger:* Situated Learning. Legitimate Peripheral Participation. Cambridge 1991, see p. 49.

14 *Rabinow* et al., as in fn. 12, see p. 84.

15 Ibid., p. 75.

16 Cf. *Lave/Wenger*, as in fn. 13, see p. 56.

17 *Rabinow* et al., as in fn. 12, see p. 76.

18 See further the Zenodo repository of the transdisciplinary association 3rund e.V. at the Institute of Cultural Anthropology at University of Hamburg: URL: https://zenodo.org/communities/3rund/ (4.9.2019).

alities articulated in collaborative and experimental ethnographies? What defines these relations as collaborative? How is expertise redistributed? Who contributes with what kind of expertise in these relations? What are the contexts of these in spatial and temporal terms? Regarding the process of institutionalizing, how can such a perspective and claim to research practices be realised over a period of time and changing involvements especially in the context of university research and teaching? How can we put into practice the need to think about the conditions of collaborative knowledge production without a concrete field, but with an intergenerational, transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary exchange on emerging domains constructing a collaborative atmosphere of working and engaging?

Doing research in bigger scientific groups is not a very common practice in cultural anthropology today. However, this mode of collaboration with different researchers in one field of research respectively field of interest can be an efficient way to study highly complex societies, as several research personalities approach the field from different angles. We believe that each research personality – notwithstanding their academic credentials – holds a particular set of skills that enriches ethnographic research and contributes to grasping the complexity of the field. Therefore, training in anthropology should reconsider the role different generational academics play. As it has been pointed out, peers learn from each other and in »opportunities for engagement in practice«,[19] and participation itself is a way of learning in socio-cultural practices.

The following chapters introduce our thoughts on the principles such a training should follow, including a detailed examination and widening of collaborative research practice. We then continue to illustrate these aspects discussing the founding a number of research groups inspired by Marcus and Rabinow's design studio, a collaborative approach of ethnographic inquiry and anthropological knowledge production. We focus especially on our experiences of potentials and challenges in establishing such cross-generational research groups, using the collaborative research conducted in Berlin-Neukölln since 2012 as a concrete example.

Elements of doing anthropology together

Communities of Practice

The mode of collaboration pointed out already can be regarded as a mode of working together which the anthropologists Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger[20] call a *Community of Practice*. A community of practice is characterized as a mode of learning in a social context through participation in a community, which provides a social space for learning from shared practices. Here,

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19 *Lave/Wenger*, as in ft. 13, see p. 93.

20 *Lave/Wenger*, as in ft. 13.

collaboration is a *social form* and an *epistemic mode*, »specific ways of joint thinking and information sharing«.[21] This type of community shares knowledge in various ways and takes different forms and stages of collaboration as well as levels of expertise.

What links these perspectives is the so-called *domain*.[22] It provides a common ground in shape of a shared set of issues and problems that are explored by the participating researchers. As Wenger, McDermott and Snyder point out, a »shared domain creates a sense of accountability to a body of knowledge and therefore to the development of a practice«.[23] In contrast to a shared topic, the domain concept tries to integrate knowledge, engagement and identification with certain common problems or goals in a broader sense.

Against this background, research is conducted without a fixed research question, but takes place in light of shared concepts like urbanity, cultural diversity, medialisation, digitization, heritageization or participation that serve as meta-concepts as well as common starting points into the field. Hence, collaborative research means acknowledging that research fields as well as domains tend to be open-ended in two respects: First, the intrinsic logics and complexities of the field, such as the constellations of stakeholders and their multiple degrees of engagement, can only gradually be revealed by ethnographic research. Furthermore, the dynamics and temporalities of the field itself reveal its open-ended character.[24]

With respect to unraveling a domain worth exploring with different generations, collaborative ethnography within the community of practice can be understood as an epistemic mode of design, it is a »way to develop alternative ideas about method in a more comprehensive way«,[25] in which a pedagogy of design practice is embedded. It covers the whole research process from exploring and cutting the field(s) to size, to discussing and reflecting specific methodological approaches and research questions as well as the process of co-conceptualization and theory building.[26]

Research personalities across generations

This leads us to our second point: There are a number of research personalities involved in the different stages of the collaborative ethnographic

21 *Adolfo Estalella/Tomás Sánchez Criado*: Ethnography as Collaboration/Experiment. CfP Invited Panel – EASA2014: Collaboration, Intimacy & Revolution. 2014. Retrieved from URL: http://network2matter.net/2014/02/20/cfp-easa-2014-ethnography-as-collaboration experiment/ (4.9.2017).

22 *Etienne Wenger/Richard McDermott/William M. Snyder:* Cultivating Communities of Practice. A Guide to Managing Knowledge. Boston 2002.

23 Ibid., p. 30.

24 *George E. Marcus:* Experimental Forms for the Expressions of Forms in the Ethnography of the Contemporary. In: HAU Journal of Ethnographic Theory (2013*),* 3 (2), 197–217.

25 *Rabinow* et al., as in fn. 12, see p. 84.

26 Cf. ibid.; Rappaport, as in ft. 2.

endeavor in order to explore the complex fields in a most comprehensive manner. In addition to the various interdisciplinary backgrounds becoming relevant to anthropological research (e.g. business administrations and economics, international relations, public relations, psychology, sociology, social work, media studies, cultural studies, etc.), it is the mix of different levels of expertise which contributes to a vibrant *community* which cannot be forced or ›invented‹ by a specific procedural program. In fact, it depends on the personal investment of the research personalities involved in their common domain. Furthermore, collaboration in the sense of a community of practice depends on »recognizing that careers are still individual«[27] and that everyone has a degree of autonomy and authority. Leadership is hence distributed in an »ecology of leadership«[28] and can be regarded as a characteristic of the whole community. As Lave and Wenger put it, newcomers are involved through practice and participation as ways of learning so that they become young masters with apprentices and achieve the status of old-timers at some point, as the group is changing over time. One or more »decentered masters« care for the »intricate structuring of a community's learning resources«.[29] Everyone – early academics and more experienced researchers alike – has the ability to contribute something specific to a larger project – the domain. This kind of research attitude which sees everybody on equal footing affects a circular process of transforming mutually.

In addition, this can be included in academic teaching. Moreover, the use of new media and communication technologies transforms conditions for academic settings and the production of anthropological knowledge. This potential of intergenerational collaboration, however, has not been taken into account by contemporary reflections about new forms of collaboration in anthropology so far, for instance with respect to the discourse about the conception of research labs and design studios as well as to doctoral training programs.[30]

Therefore, collaboration also means moving beyond the well-established ethnographic practice of a single researcher exploring the field in a single-person project – which leads us to our third point: the collaborative *practices*.[31]

Collaborative practices

Ethnographic research in vast and complex fields benefits, when it becomes more experimental in nature. In view of this, in the examples at hand individualised ethnographic work as well as knowledge production is opened

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27 *Rabinow* et al., as in fn. 12, see p. 85.

28 *Wenger* et al., as in fn. 22, see p. 63.

29 *Lave/Wenger*, as in fn. 13, see p. 94.

30 Cf. *Rabinow* et al., as in fn. 12.

31 Cf. *ibid.,* see p. 84.

and understood in some parts as a joint project. However, collaboration as understood here does not include research processes based on the division of labour and it goes beyond teamwork; the latter being common practice in the fields of natural and social science alike. Quite in contrast, as mentioned before, collaboration is understood as a social form *and* epistemic mode: This means that we need to commit ourselves to working in scientific teams; (1) which facilitate the development of common questions by several researchers who conduct research in the same regional or thematic areas, but have varying levels and domains of previous qualification; (2) where knowledge is intensively exchanged between the different research personalities and generations even before the actual fieldwork has started in order to construct the sites »in a deeply informed, even ethnographic way«;[32] (3) which communicate directly with researchers as »field experts«, who have already conducted their fieldwork or who have just been in the process of collecting their field data; (4) which closely accompany the individual ethnographic apprentice fieldwork step-by-step in interaction with more experienced and qualified research personalities either on a formal or on a thematic level; (5) which interact on a regular basis in order to create, expand and exchange knowledge as long as the domain is deemed relevant and as learning together as a way of practice is of interest and value for the community.[33]

Consequently, not only data collection as theoretical sampling and data analysis are to be seen as circular processes in the sense of Grounded Theory.[34] The development of research designs is also an iterative process constantly integrating new insights and knowledge. In view of this observation, Christopher Kelty refers to the research design and process as ›*composition*‹.[35] Composition allows for more flexibility and more creative, spontaneous and unplanned variations in the discovery procedure of the whole research process and especially at the dimension of material production and writing, e.g. rearranging of different types of material and practices of commentary.[36] Using this perspective, composition can be seen as part of a studio in the sense of an assemblage of different actors at the meta level of knowledge production.

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32 *Rabinow* et al., as in fn. 12, see p. 83.

33 Cf. *Wenger* et al., as in fn. 22.

34 Cf. *Antony Bryant/Kathy Charmaz* (eds.): The SAGE Handbook of Grounded Theory. Los Angeles 2007.

35 *Christopher M. Kelty:* Collaboration, Coordination and Composition: Fieldwork after the Internet. In: James Faubion & George E. Marcus (eds.): Fieldwork Isn't What It Used to Be. New York 2008, p. 184–206.

36 Idib., see p. 186.

Studios as formats of knowledge production in a community of practice[37]

The studio concept at the Institute is based on George Marcus and Paul Rabinow's Design Studio idea,[38] as pointed out above, and on Gertraud Koch's earlier cross-generational collaborative research experience in researching Berlin-Neukölln. We will refer to the latter in more detail below. In contrast to approaches of research labs that are well known from the natural sciences, the concept of design studios emphasizes the production of novel ethnographic data and knowledge through design-oriented and experimental forms of interaction. Besides the flexibility of formats, another fundamental feature is the close connection to research fields and its practitioners in favour of practical research rather than a ›closed‹ learning environment in labs.

Moreover, the design studio concept lets go of the individual structure of graduate training and research in favour of an emphasis on collective investment and knowledge production. In anthropology, most of the research conducted takes place in projects realized by single persons, exploring the field, talking to others either on an occasional or on a regular basis. Even though we do work in research groups and projects, a collaborative approach cannot be taken for granted. Working together takes time; and the amount of time that has to be invested in the collaboration increases, if different angles are included within the group. In academic teaching, one is often confronted with the fact that students focus on partial research questions, often conducted with little communication with other students, and that the outcomes remain invisible after the end of the research project. Seeing student research as a form of learning through legitimate peripheral participation[39] in the socio-cultural practices of the scientific community of practice bridges this gap. Different approaches try to solve this problem of unconnected and invisible student research with research-oriented courses,[40] but this form of building communities of practice mostly stays within the particular cohort of students and their academic teachers. Going beyond this generational approach, the studio format at the Institute rather focuses on domains of common interest for collaborative practices across generations and goes beyond the design studio approach of collaboration among students and their supervisors.

Research-based teaching thus becomes a possibility to involve students within the research being conducted in different contexts as well as bringing

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37 Even though the Hamburg studios started only after the research conducted in Berlin-Neukölln, we present the studios first. Because the Neukölln example shows the possibilities of a research based learning in a way the studios cannot show by now. They are still emerging fields of collaboration and evolving communities of practice.

38 Cf. *Rabinow* et al., as in fn. 12.

39 As pointed out by Lave/Wenger, as in ft. 13.

40 Cf. *Margrit E. Kaufmann:* Communities of Practice. Forschendes Lernen in Kulturwissenschaft und Ethnologie. In: Margrit E. Kaufmann, Ayla Satilmis und Harald A. Mieg (eds.): Forschendes Lernen in den Geisteswissenschaften. Konzepte, Praktiken und Perspektiven hermeneutischer Fächer. Wiesbaden 2019, p. 169–190.

funded research projects back to the students' curriculum: learning as participation in communities of practices opens up the possibility for all participants involved to benefit their individual academic studies and gives insights into a variety of possible modes of approaching a domain. Therefore, the involvement of practitioners becomes a crucial part of the concept which conveys grounded and applied research to students.

Moreover, by increasingly turning toward the study of the ›here and now‹, temporalizing becomes a key problem for ethnography.[41] The disparate paces of social dynamics in the field of ethnographic research complicate the spatial mapping of the field and the contextualization of the temporal frame. In the face of this complexity, it is necessary to consider the use of new approaches that place collaboration at their core. The diffusion of knowledge, different levels of expertise and research personalities in such a collaborative group enable individuals to get into research more quickly. A stabilisation of research interests in line with the dynamics in the field is only possible in collaborative work. This is due to the rhythm of the format of studios being strong enough to maintain communities of practice in a continuity of domains, rather than being structured by university semesters and academic teaching times. This provides the opportunity to carry on for longer than one or two semesters and to work on a domain accordingly.

In order to bring the temporalization into domains right from the beginning, it is crucial to involve non-academic partners from the fields even before the actual field exploration starts: by including them in the studios, they are part of the community of practice and contribute, through participation in the development of research questions, to the transdisciplinary mode and space of knowledge production. This possibility comes with the focus on broader domains rather than on specific fields of interest. Furthermore, the concept of studios is connecting a diverse range of research interests across research generations involved. In this dimension, it can be regarded as a multi-sited ethnography of second order, since its multi-temporality and multi-locality has increased within the community of practice itself.

Collaborative research is oriented towards emergent phenomenons and domains, therefore the studios are dynamic as well. The ones having recently started are continuing to further constitute forms of collaboration and emerging fields of common interest, as will be pointed out below, based on group discussions and a mutual resetting of goals and activities attached to these discussions.

The concrete aim of the studios at the Institute is to create open spaces based on the principles of communities of practices, research personalities and collaborative practices as explained above with a focus on the different research domains which exist at the Institute. To meet this aim, the studio members are free to decide which formats and content they will place at the

41 *Rabinow* et al., as in fn. 12.

centre of their collaboration any time the community finds it reasonable. This could translate into arrangements that include text discussions, methodological and data analysis issues, the conceptualisation of student-lead seminars (SPS), the discussion and review of research projects at all levels – from essays to theses –, all in the name of deepening the understanding of the shared thematic interest in question. All studio members create a community of practice and share their knowledge with the purpose of expanding it.

Under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Gertraud Koch, currently, three studios are being established. They are presented in the following. The description has to be seen as one in progress, since all studios are open for researchers from across the generations to become involved in and since the domains as well as the approaches applied are still in the process of emerging.

Young Heritage Studio

A shared thematic interest has formed around the ›Young Heritage Studio‹ that was initiated in 2017 by Samantha Lutz together with MA and BA students from the Institute on the occasion of the European Cultural Heritage Year 2018. Under the theme »Sharing heritage«, Europe celebrated cultural heritage and common traditions, underlining the role of cultural heritage for a sense of identity and continuity in times of rising social and political unrest across Europe. Professional institutions such as UNESCO and memory institutions, however, are facing difficulties in reaching young people with their initiatives as this age group seems to relate to cultural heritage in different ways. Connecting heritage that refers to the past with future-oriented perspectives that are of interest to coming generations as well as to memory institutions has become a shared domain and led to the foundation of the young heritage studio. Researchers from different generations followed on the extensive research in critical heritage studies at the Institute – conducted by students in their seminar papers, bachelor and master theses as well as by early-stage researchers in PhD projects and in the context of two European joint research projects.[42] They initiated various activities to explore in an experimental fashion what young people regard as meaningful and how to reconnect their perspectives in contemporary heritage making in Europe. In the spring semester of 2018, a student-lead seminar on the topic ›Making Connectivity Work: Young People and Culture‹ was initiated by a group of students and accompanied by Gertraud Koch and Samantha Lutz. In their explorative research, students focused on the changing entertainment threshold among young people that has emerged with networked media infrastructures and their extensive uses in mediatized, globally connected so-

42 At the institute, Gertraud Koch coordinates two European joint research projects, i.e. the H2020 innovative training network on »Participatory Memory Practices. Concepts, strategies and media infrastructures for envisioning socially inclusive potential futures of European Societies through culture (POEM)« (2018–2022) and the Interreg project ›Valorization of Intangible Cultural Heritage Assets for local sustainable development in Central European Regions (ARTISTIC)‹ (2017–2020).

cieties and how these in turn inform heritage making, its management, and practices of past presenting: Sarah Junker focused on digitisation projects in memory institutions like museums that put enormous efforts in integrating digital technologies such as virtual reality into their exhibitions and to what extent these developments can help open up the collections to new audiences and uses. Julia Rausch and Ragna Quellmann concentrated on practices of augmentation and participation in the case of the app efoto Hamburg. Through social media, amateurs such as young people are able to produce interesting and creative contributions themselves. Saskia Crivellaro therefore explored how the #speicherstadt is being visually represented on Instagram and what young people regarded as meaningful in this context. Anna Waldhauser critically reflected practices of past presenting such as selfies by young people visiting the Holocaust memorial in Berlin. By analysing the hashtag #yolocaust she discussed the ethical negotiations about the ›right‹ way of remembering difficult and dissonant heritage. Helena Sack analysed how young people relate to folk music by looking at a festival for alternative folk music called *Antistadl* in Bavaria. By observing that discussions of large-scale digitization projects often focus on collections of art museums and their digitization efforts of cultural heritage materials and objects, Larissa Borck examined the role of digitization in ethnographic museums such as open-air museums and how this affects the safeguarding of everyday cultural expressions and traditions.

As social media has become an important discourse arena for galleries, libraries, archives, and museums, the young heritage studio experimented with new forms of scientific communication on social media. In the form of a collaborative, cross-generational research diary on twitter, members of the young heritage studio reflected and commented on cultural-political developments and statements from the perspectives of critical heritage studies and made new research approaches visible in this context of the domain of Young Heritage – which is also a possible future professional field for the students. Through exchanges with other students from related fields of study, members of the young heritage studio engaged in activities of the newly founded *European Student Association of Cultural Heritage (ESACH)* such as network meetings and the publication of a joint statement, ›Message from the young generation‹,[43] at the *European Cultural Heritage Summit* in Berlin in 2018. By attending international conferences and social events related to the European Year of Cultural Heritage, in addition, members of the young heritage studio were able to address their concerns and scientific perspectives with leading policymakers and heritage professionals. At the end of the

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43 The European Heritage Summit on the theme ›Sharing Heritage – Sharing Values‹ took place in Berlin in June 2018 and was co-hosted by Europa Nostra, the German Cultural Heritage Committee (DNK) and the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation (SPK), see URL: https://www.esach.eu/past-events/message-from-the-young-generation/ (4.9.2019).

EYCH, the young heritage studio continued its activities under the broader domain of ›cultural heritage‹.

Studio on Digitisation and Mediality

Since Digitisation and Mediality has long been a research focus of the Institute, it stood to reason to assume that within the format of the studios, a reflection of this domain promises to bring different researchers together and find collaborative formats to engage with the overarching topic. The involvements and research opportunities range from methodological and ethical questions to central concepts. The evolvement of a common ground made it clear that there is an ongoing need to discuss methodological consequences of the digital formation of everyday life, which has to be taken into account when conducting fieldwork as well as discourse ethnography.

At the moment, four PhD -students and one post-doctoral researcher are active here. Their specific interests range from digital heritage to digital humanities as well as the consequences of posthumanism within digital life. One PhD project, conducted by Samantha Lutz, examines the role of the digital/doing digital culture in the context of safeguarding cultural heritage. By asking what is regarded as ›sustainable‹ in digitization projects of galleries, libraries, archives, and museums (GLAMs), the project analyses practices of the creative reuse of cultural heritage materials using the approach of discourse ethnography. A second research project, conducted by Angeliki Tzouganatou, looks at how the conditions of openness of cultural data affect the participation and social inclusion of the public in accessing knowledge. Also, it contemplates the formulation of new business and social models for the dissemination, engagement and interpretation of open cultural knowledge that could be open compatible and community owned by shifting it from being individual property to collective property and to the commons. Based on the concept of posthumanism and the concept of the cyborg, a third PhD project conducted by Ann Christin Bakhos focusses on how the daily life of people wearing a hearing implant unfolds. This is carried out by comparing a group of people that use the implants in a medical way with a group of people that is interested in biohacking. The fourth PhD project, conducted by Anna Oechslen, focuses on global work relations mediated by digital platforms. Changing work practices are investigated with regard to negotiations of the value of labour and concepts of space. A postdoctoral research project, conducted by Lina Franken, is looking at the change of scientific work in qualitative research through digital methods, the argumentations and meaning making processes within the adaption to digital humanities within qualitative working disciplines and vice versa.

All of these research projects deal with questions regarding methods to be adapted within digital ethnographies and ethnographies of infrastructures or discourse ethnographies respectively. Synergies lie in the combination of different expertise and experiences in these areas that form the basis of viv-

id discussions. The group can also rely on further work being done regarding tools and principles of digital humanities in other contexts.[44] Moreover, the broader concepts of the domain are being evaluated while keeping true to the analytical perspectives of coding culture through the digital, the practices of doing digital culture, the approaches and perceptions of the world enabled by technology and the revisiting of established and relevant theories (as pointed out in Koch 2017: 4). The discussions on these projects as well as potential remodeling in ongoing studies are highly productive for all involved. It is to be expected that these discussions, too, will be a source of new insights for all currently involved.

Since seminars on a variety of topics regarding digitization have taken place in the spring semester of 2019, in the future, there will be more BA- and MA students actively working on related topics that will be included in the evolving community of practice.

Studio on Diversity

Social inequality and diversity have always been prominent perspectives in cultural anthropology as a discipline focussing on social practices of different groups and must be seen as a domain in the elaborated context rather than as a disciplinary topic.

Especially with regard to the increasing social cleavage in current societies, the discipline has a responsibility to become involved in discussions and start a process of reflection and understanding of social categories and structures. Using this perspective, this studio wants to create a community of practice by involving actors from civil society.

Therefore, several projects related to these topics are currently being conducted at the Institute. They create a requirement for an overarching connection and discussion of broader theories and methodological approaches, but also of individual difficulties in dealing with a research field like this.

At the first open meeting, BA and MA students as well as PhD fellows have articulated the desire to participate in a close exchange on these elements and connect with actors from the field of practice to conduct research on an applied dimension. However, at this point mainly four PhD-students contribute to the studio. Experience has shown us that the inclusion of different generations in addition to their regular course load is difficult to achieve.

Regarding the collaborative work, the studio itself starts with the open question of how it should be organized by sharing responsibilities and what kinds of formats are fruitful for everybody. First, there are discussions about central

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44 E.g. the collaborative research project ›Automated modelling of hermeneutic processes (hermA)‹, investigating fundamental epistemological and methodological questions in the era of digital humanities. See https://www.herma.uni-hamburg.de/en.html. Furthermore, the Social Media studio is wrapped up and widened in this context, see URL: http://digilab-culture.de/studios/social-media-studio/ (4.9.2019).

concepts like (social) inequality itself, intersectionality, belonging etc., where everybody can contribute and reflect his or her perspective and focal points. On this level, a central element is the step from a theoretical discussion to the concrete application and, especially, to the connection to every single project. Hence, this individual transfer into specific contexts has become an inherent part of every meeting. Furthermore, there is agreement about involving more group building elements, for example taking part in cultural activities regarding the topic of diversity/social inequality to open up new perspectives and getting into the process of building up a community of practice.

Regarding the contents, Alejandra Tijerina Garcia connects the discussions with her project about researching contemporary migration patterns and the role of the digital as a key component both for the creation and further observation of migrant networks and for the researcher to keep in touch with said community over time and space. In her project ›Modalities of personal memory work‹ and in context of the overlapping issue of the digital, Jennifer Krückeberg explores how young people aged 15–25 integrate digital technologies into their personal memory work. Quoc-Tan Tran studies the nature and quality of digital memory modalities of the memory institutions in the European context. As a highly materialized field of social inequality e.g. categories of status are crucial and thus citizenship is another topic in the studio. Lara Hansen works on the concept of ›Solidarity Cities‹ especially regarding the mechanism of Urban Citizenship. By focusing on the question of how solidarity is negotiated on a number of scales (supranational, civil society, local communities) and how it is connected with concrete acts of citizenship in everyday lives, it connects theories and practices related to social inequality.

The studio members are, currently, in the process of defining the domain and specifying working modes. However, the aim is to go beyond applied anthropology and, true to the concept of studio design, to take part in the design of society.

Collaborative research in Berlin-Neukölln

The district of Berlin-Neukölln sets a precedent of urban social problems in Germany.[45] With regard to its negative image, the district continuously draws the attention of researchers, local and regional German media and at times has caused an international media echo. Simultaneously, Neukölln's image has changed in recent years, increasingly attracting students, creatives and members of the middle class. In certain areas, processes of gentrification have emerged, pushing previous inhabitants into less attractive parts of the district and thereby reinforcing the district's socio-spatial imbalance.

Starting in August 2011, several research projects were conducted in Berlin-Neukölln. Those were divided into different field phases and involving

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45 *Peter Wensierski:* Endstation Neukölln: In: Der Spiegel, 43/1997, p. 58–63, see URL: http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-8805068.html (4.9.2019).

several research generations of researchers from different academic status groups without external funding. The research team[46] was composed, on the one hand, of three cohorts of BA and MA students from the Zeppelin University Friedrichshafen (Germany), who prepared term papers as well as theses on a wide variety of subjects. On the other hand, it also included doctoral and post-doctoral researchers from the department of Communication and Culture Studies at Zeppelin University who conducted their own research as well as supervised the different projects in Neukölln. Moreover, on the basis of this project, two former MA students involved in the project are presently continuing with their PhD projects at the University of Hamburg.[47]

From the Neukölln project, we took away valuable lessons about organisation, motivation and pedagogies of cross-generational collaborative research. The following sections explain the structure of the Neukölln project and how it was embedded into a community of practice evolving through teaching.

Opening the field[48]

In the first phase, three successive BA theses were conducted in the context of the events of the *Rütli* school and the emerging *Campus Rütli*, which caused an international media echo. In a public letter in February 2006, the teachers of the secondary school declared social bankruptcy due to violence and lack of interest by the pupils, as well as a lack of structural support by the local government. This led to an extensive transformation process in which the school was significantly redesigned in terms of its structure, program, the role and composition of its staff and other stakeholders.

In a broad sense, the three BA theses in this context focused on the success factors of education employed in a deprived urban area. Christine Wagner examined inter-organizational aspects by posing the central question: how can trust between the various stakeholders in the educational institution grow? The principles of inclusion of at-risk students were explored by Mahyar Nicoubin, who asked why some students still drop out at the very well-run and very inclusive school and why students still slide off in alternative measures. Her research focused on the interface between school and social environment. As a third BA thesis, some months later, Anna Henke concen-

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46 Participating researchers: Gertraud Koch, Stefanie Everke Buchanan, Samantha Lutz, Teresa Stumpf, Alejandra Tijerina García, Christine Wagner, Mahyar Nicoubin and Anna Henke. Further research was conducted in the research-based master course ›Culture, Identity, Language – Management of Diversity‹ (autumn semester 2012) and the bachelor seminar ›Discourse ethnography‹ (spring semester 2013) taught by Gertraud Koch at the Zeppelin University.

47 Dissertationen am Institut für Volkskunde/Kulturanthropologie Hamburg. URL: https://www.kultur.uni-hamburg.de/vk/forschung/promotion.html (4.9.2019).

48 Our understanding of ›the field‹ follows *Gisela Welz:* Siting Ethnography. Some Observations on a Cypriot Highland Village. In: Ina-Maria Greverus, Sharon Macdonald, Regina Römhild, Gisela Welz & Helena Wulff (eds.): Shifting Grounds. Experiments in Doing Ethnography. Anthropological Journal on European Cultures (2002), Vol. 11, p. 137–158.

trated on the networking and integration efforts of the school into the social space of the district of Berlin-Neukölln. She focused on how important these networks are for the positive development and turn-around from a problem school to a model school.

During their research and field phases, all three students were living in Neukölln and collected data on the general development of the Reuter district, the redevelopment and regeneration processes of the district[49] where the school is located, as well as statistical material and further data. The development of the three theses was accompanied by an intense exchange between the students and their supervisors, taking place both face-to-face as well as in weekly Skype-meetings. The temporal sequence of the BA students' field phases allowed for reciprocal learning benefits, and a back-and-forth immersion into the field. The supervisors thus closely stayed in touch with the field even in periods when they could not be there in person, emphasising that presence and discussion are important parts of the collaboration.

Moving further into the field and keeping it in sight

Parallel to the last of the three BA theses, a research seminar took place with fifteen Master students who, as a ›second student cohort‹, devoted their work to the redevelopment processes of Neukölln with very different research perspectives. Departing from the obvious in this urban district, the socio-cultural heterogeneity and the emerging gentrification, the individual projects focussed on problems related to crime, discrimination, the role of internet cafés as information hubs, artists and hipsters coming to Neukölln, social life in public places, local markets as well as local, regional and international news coverage and reports about the district. In mixed methods approaches, these questions were explored ethnographically and in a media analytical approach. The field phase of the master seminar was prepared on the basis of the knowledge that was gained in the previous ethnographic work. It started with a city tour guided by Christine Wagner, who at that time had finished her thesis and passed on her field knowledge. Reflective meetings took place at the end of each research day, stimulating a vivid exchange between the BA researchers who took part in the meetings, the Master students and the supervising professor. The sessions were documented in the form of field notes, serving as a valuable resource of information at later stages of the individual projects as well as the overall project. The preparation of discussions for the research tasks of the following day concluded these meetings.

Media played a crucial role in keeping the field in sight. First, communicational media provided the means for dense communication between field researchers and supervisors. Moreover, a methodology seminar led by a professor and a graduate student involved in the project focused on discourse analytical questions, phenomenological structures and the constitution of

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49 The Reuter district is an area in North Neukölln where gentrification is particularly strong (cf. Topos, 2011).

discourse of the *Rütli* school topic. The students went on analysing, evaluating and deepening the project's data and gained new insights. Central subjects included violence, migration, education and future developments.[50]

Deepening and widening of the field

The previously described stages of research (BA theses and MA seminar) show a variety of aspects that are relevant for the topoi, which characterize daily life in Neukölln. Central aspects identified in the research projects were social deprivation and their reproduction in educational contexts, dynamics of cultural diversity and heterogeneity as well as gentrification and displacement. This wide range of topics served as a starting point for new projects to develop, both individually and collaboratively. On the individual level, three master theses were developed. The first one by Alejandra Tijerina García focused on current migration flows from Spain caused by the financial crisis and the migrants' pathways and their trials of gaining ground in Neukölln. Teresa Stumpf focused on the district's capacities of resilience in the course of urbanization, migration and gentrification as well as the social networking structures of the inhabitants in times of social change. The third thesis by Samantha Lutz included an analysis of diversity discourses focusing on the question of how the concept of diversity and the exposure to diversity were related to the district of Neukölln.

The development of these individual Master theses was deeply affected by an accompanying research colloquium as well as an intense exchange between the three students who supported each other daily and openly shared their ideas and insights.

To conclude the research process, a collaborative project in the form of a co-authored paper[51] gathered the different aspects of the empirical results from the MA research seminar and re-evaluated the material using a new perspective. This project focused on examining how individuals experience gentrification, their strategies and socio-spatial mobility patterns in the face of this process in their local context of Neukölln. The interviews conducted for individual research were then analysed using this particular focus. Even though the co-authored paper concluded our two-year project, new perspectives opened up, requiring further research and triggering two PhD theses to broaden and deepen research in the field of Neukölln again.

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50 The insights of the different courses also influenced the conceptualization for further ones: A seminar lead by a doctoral student and a post-doc researcher addressed the topic of urban research by using the example of Berlin-Neukölln. The seminar included a field trip into the district and was accompanied by two of the student researchers who had been involved in the previous overall project.

51 *Gertraud Koch/Samantha Lutz/Teresa Stumpf/Alejandra Tijerina García:* Living Gentrification. Rethinking Displacement in Urban Redevelopment Processes from the Perspective of Berlin-Neukölln. (29.7.2019). Zenodo. URL: http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3355825 (4.9.2019).

Conclusion: challenges and possible outcomes of joint knowledge production

When involving in a community of practice, the format of studios we presented can be seen as a promising way to establish collaborative knowledge production. The reflection of domains enables innovations that support and go beyond personal research projects, independent of the level of expertise or formal qualification. While the Neukölln research project had the starting point in a teaching context that developed over time and with the involvement of different students, the studios are driven by a common interest within an emerging domain that serves as a connecting link.

Especially, in the light of the dilemma of temporality in ethnographic research, the attitude and application of research in the sense of a community of practice allows the cultivation of slowness and enables an inherent density, consolidation and amplification of research processes. Instead of one researcher going into the field for a long period of time, the idea of different researchers stepping in at different points in time, coming back and sharing their experiences and results facilitates the gathering of a broad set of data with a comparatively low effort for the individual. Consequently, different sets of data can be interpreted based on a broad basis of research approaches, perspectives, and insights from the field. Diverse interpretations can be discussed and tested, as shown on the example of the Neukölln project.

When thinking of domains, collaborative knowledge production gives way to new modes of interaction as shown by the different studios set up with the intention of gaining an overarching view and connecting ongoing research. However, when working and thinking together in a working practice as described above, difficulties can arise in different areas which require the development of coping strategies in order to continue developing the format.

The most important challenge is, actually, the definition of the domain to work with and the goals the community wants to reach – especially if there is temporality to be taken into account. Therefore, it is important to open up the process of identifying these domains and goals – for all participants. In the context of institutions, this process has to take the relevant authorities into consideration. Thus, the challenges lie within the different hierarchies involved as well as in undefined responsibilities and the need to find ways to keep discussions going with changing participants. The connection with a university also sets up a special mode of communication. Aside from a specific form of communication, the pinpointing of synergies, rather than the research taking on the form of ›another job to finish‹, needs to be highlighted continuously – otherwise, the voluntary participation in such communities of practices become problematic, because there will be no commitment to the broader project. Furthermore, BA, MA and PhD theses come with their own temporalities that need to be taken into account. A possible solution is the ongoing connection with academic teaching. Experiences gained and knowledge developed within the studios is therefore taken into account in seminars as well as in PhD colloquia at the institute.

Additionally, an internal structure of collaborative practices has to be established. This is due to the fact that basic rules and responsibilities need to be clarified in order to get a group working. It can be problematic to communicate across hierarchies: the responsibilities of internal a well as external communication can be challenging. Therefore, a code of conduct regarding the intellectual property, emerging within joint knowledge production might be needed at some point. The modes developed and adopted within the Neukölln project such as reports and guided tours by previously involved researchers as well as joint papers such as this one can help to keep knowledge fluid, but safeguarded, and, therefore, offers one strategy of dealing with this problem. The benefits for all involved parties lie in the whole process and the resources the group is sharing. Finding common ground beyond a particular topic in the domain (›how to work together‹), establishing research practices that speak to most, being open to change and to suggestions from within the group makes one's own project and perspective part of an open ended process.

Certainly, the presented mode of cross-generational collaboration enriches common research practices in ethnography, anthropology and social sciences in general. It calls for a rethinking of academic hierarchies without aiming to abolish them. With respect to current research practices, limited semester times, restricted research funds and the rapidness of everyday occurrences, we believe that this form of doing research can serve as one – but not the only – forward-looking model and strategy which asks for more researchers to join.

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Lina Franken
Lara Hansen
Samantha Lutz
Teresa Stumpf
Alejandra Tijerina García
Gertraud Koch
c/o Institut für Volkskunde/Kulturanthropologie
Universität Hamburg
Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1 (West)
lina.franken@uni-hamburg.de
lara.hansen@uni-hamburg.de
samantha.lutz@uni-hamburg.de
teresa.stumpf@uni-hamburg.de
alejandra.tijerina.garcia@uni-hamburg.de
gertraud.koch@uni-hamburg.de