



FAKULTY FOR THE STUDY OF CULTURE
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL AND CULTURAL
ANTHROPOLOGY



**From Stigma to Brand:
Commodifying and Aestheticizing Urban Poverty and Violence**

Ludwig-Maximilians University, Munich, February 16-18, 2017

Venue: Main university building, Senatssaal (first floor), Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1

Convenors

Prof. Dr. Eveline Dürr, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology,
Ludwig-Maximilians University, Germany

Prof. Dr. Rivke Jaffe, Centre for Urban Studies, University of Amsterdam, The
Netherlands

Prof. Dr. Gareth Jones, Department of Geography and Environment,
London School of Economics, UK

Thursday, 16th February

14:00-15:00 **Registration and Coffee**

15:00-15:15 **Conference Welcome**

15:15-15:45 **Introduction to the Conference**

Prof. Dr. Eveline Dürr, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology,
Ludwig-Maximilians University, Germany

Prof. Dr. Rivke Jaffe, Centre for Urban Studies, University of Amsterdam, The
Netherlands

Prof. Dr. Gareth Jones, Department of Geography and Environment,
London School of Economics, UK

**15:45-17:15 Panel 1 - From Stigma to Brand: Rio de Janeiro, Kingston and
Mexico City**

15:45-16:05 Dr. Alessandro Angelini, Department of Geography and Environment,
London School of Economics, UK

16:05-16:25 Alana Osbourne (PhD candidate), Centre for Urban Studies,
University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

16:25-16:45 Barbara Vodopivec (PhD candidate), Department of Social and Cultural
Anthropology, Ludwig-Maximilians University, Germany

16:45-17:15 Q&A

18:00 Reception and opening of the photo exhibition of Cordula de Bloeme at Subway Station U3/U6 in between the exit Akademiestraße and Veterinärstraße, Munich

Friday, 17th February

09:00-10:00 Keynote

Prof. Dr. Lisa Anne Richey, Roskilde University, Denmark
Commodifying Compassion: Some Reflections on the Implications of Turning People and Humanitarian Causes into Marketable Things

10:00-10:15 Coffee/Tea Break

10:15-11:30 Panel 2

10:15-10:35 Dr. Sarah Becklake, Department of Sociology, Lancaster University, UK
The Touristic Figure of the 'Third World Child': Investigating NGOs' Mobilisation of Children in the Touristic Branding of Guatemala

10:35-10:55 Prof. Dr. Jaime Hernández Garcia, School of Architecture and Design, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia
Informal Settlements, Beyond Poverty and Violence: The Barrios of Bogotá and Medellín

10:55-11:25 Discussant: Dr. Juliane Müller, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Ludwig-Maximilians University, Germany. Q & A

11:25-11:45 Coffee/Tea Break

11:45-12:55 Panel 3

11:45-12:05 Aleksandra Gutowska (PhD candidate), Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Warsaw University, Poland
Constructing Kibera: Slum Tours as Place-making Processes

12:05-12:25 Meghan Muldoon (PhD candidate), Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, University of Waterloo, Canada
From Stigma to Commodified Culture: Tourism in the Townships of Cape Town

12:25-12:55 Discussant: Dr. Malte Steinbrink, Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies, University of Osnabrück, Germany. Q&A

13:00-14:00 Lunch (for Speakers and Discussants)

14:00-15:10 Panel 4

14:00-14:20 Dr. Romola Sanyal, Department of Geography and Environment, London School of Economics, UK
Walking the Slum: Sensing Urban Poverty in Mumbai

14:20-14:40 Dr. Fabian Frenzel, School of Management, University of Leicester, UK
Tourist Agency as Valorisation

14:40-15:10 Discussant: Julia Burgold, Institute for Geography, Potsdam University, Germany. Q&A

15:10-15:30 **Coffee/Tea Break**

15:30-17:00 Panel 5

15:30-15:50 Dr. Sonjah Stanley Niaah, Cultural Studies, University of West Indies, Jamaica
Mapping Notoriety and Consumption from Stigma to Brand Jamaica

15:50-16:10 Dr. Natalie Göltenboth, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Ludwig-Maximilians University, Germany
Re-creating Havana. Muraleando: A Community Project between Art, Agency and Touristification

16:10-16:30 David Frohnappel (PhD candidate), Department of African Art History, Free University of Berlin, Germany
Narratives of Klas Friction: How 'White' Curators and Scholars Center Themselves as Naming Authorities in the Discourse about Contemporary Haitian Art

16:30-17:00 Discussant: Prof. Dr. Christoph Brumann, Institute for Social Anthropology, Max Planck Institute, Germany. Q&A

19:00 **Conference Dinner (for Speakers and Discussants)**

Saturday, 18th February

09:00-10:00 **Keynote**

Prof. Dr. Kevin Fox Gotham, Department of Sociology, Tulane University, USA
Touristic Disaster: Spectacle and Recovery in Post-Katrina New Orleans

10:00-10:15 **Coffee/Tea Break**

10:15-11:25 Panel 6

10:15-10:35 Dr. Juan Miguel Kanai, Department of Geography, University of Sheffield, UK
Gay Tourism to 'Friendly' Buenos Aires: Selective Connections, Mismatched Imageries, Negotiated Brand Re-Appropriation

10:35-10:55 Dr. Stephan Lanz, Faculty of Social and Cultural Studies, European University Viadrina in Frankfurt/Oder, Germany
Between the Commodification of the Stigma and the Politization of the Brand: Contemporary Cultural Representations of the Favela in Rio de Janeiro

10:55-11:25 Discussant: Prof. Dr. Moritz Ege, Institute for Cultural Anthropology / European Ethnology, University of Göttingen, Germany. Q&A

11:30-11:45 **Coffee/Tea Break**

11:45-13:15 Panel 7

11:45-12:05 Eugen Pfister, Institute of Culture Studies and Theatre History, Austrian Academy of Science

Rudolf Inderst, Chief Editor Resort Games at Nahaufnahmen.ch

Arno Görgen, Department of the History, Philosophy and Ethics of Medicine, Heinrich-Heine-University, Dusseldorf

Violent Urbanscapes: Urban Poverty and Violence in Videogames as Functional Stereotypes

12:05-12:25 Dr. Stefan Höhne, Center for Metropolitan Studies, TU Berlin, Germany
Policing Stigma / Governing Brand: The Transformation of Kreuzberg SO 36 and the Making of Dangerous Places

12:25-12:45 Dr. Thomas Bürk, Department of Geography, Hamburg University, Germany
Hamburg-St.Pauli/Reeperbahn: Dialectics of Stigmatization and Branding in a Red-light District

12:45-13:15 Discussant: Dr. Astrid Wonneberger, Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Hamburg, Germany. Concluding comments.

13:15 **Lunch (for Speakers and Discussants)/Departure**



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■



Abstracts

Dr. Becklake, Sarah
Department of Sociology
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*The Touristic Figure of the 'Third World Child':
Investigating NGOs' Mobilisation of Children in the Touristic Branding of Guatemala*

Touristic figures help attract/detract tourists to and from the places in which they are associated and mark as different. In Guatemala, the attracting/detracting touristic figures of 'the Maya' and 'the delinquent' play informative roles in the Government and tourism industry's attempts to attract and satisfy tourists. However, non-profit development organisations (NGOs) mobilise a different figure in their engagements with tourists, that of 'the slum child'. While NGOs highlight the plight of poor Guatemalan children as a means of helping them, the figure of the slum child is doing more touristic work than is often acknowledged: it is both the ultimate innocent victim in need of help and an accessible, unthreatening, and welcoming 'Other'. This paper argues that the figure of the slum child helps to produce Guatemala and its impoverished neighbourhoods as desirable *and* safe places for tourists to enact moral identities, resulting in new (in)securities for Guatemalan children.

Dr. Bürk, Thomas
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*Hamburg-St.Pauli/Reeperbahn:
Dialectics of Stigmatization and Branding in a Red-light District.*

The Hamburg district of St. Pauli is known for the entertainment "red light district" called Reeperbahn. A Million of regional and international guests visit the "sinful mile" annually, consuming way more than only sexualized services. This highly commercialized and (hetero)sexualized local landscape is simultaneously stigmatized as a qualified "risk area" in a permanent state of emergency. While local business promoters are trying to reevaluate this equally stigmatized, romanticized, and exoticized district, it simultaneously accompanies an often hidden variety of heterogeneous lifestyles, highly informal and competitive employment forms, and hosts also as well many cooperative projects. At least since the late 1980s, St. Pauli symbolically and sometimes still practically stands for highly active and participating neighbourhood initiatives and campaigns against the "wholesale of the district". This complex situation of conflict and harmony, (militant) localism and Ghetto discourses seems unique, highlighting the actor based dialectical character of discourses on stigmatization and branding.

Dr. Frenzel, Fabian
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Tourist Agency as Valorisation

How can we conceptualize the process of transformation in which urban areas usually considered undesirable, downtrodden or dangerous transform to become attractive and valuable? And which role do tourists play in this process? In urban studies this process is normally described as gentrification and a tourist dimension to this phenomenon is well established. Tourists constitute a way of realising economic gains from gentrification processes, for example when they purchase hospitality services, thus enabling owners of real estate to generate increased revenue via higher rents. Tourists however often also play a more active role in gentrification processes, for example when they reconfigure the value of a neighbourhood in symbolic processes such as online rating, described sometimes as the tourist co-creation of destination value. In this paper I will critically examine different conceptualizations of tourist's agency in which such processes are discussed.

Frohnappel, David
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*Narratives of Klas Friction:
How 'White' Curators and Scholars Center Themselves as Naming Authorities in the
Discourse about Contemporary Haitian Art*

My paper retraces how discussions about social marginality in the art world can become a mechanism to produce representational legitimization and 'epistemic marginalization' (Miranda Fricker), and thereby centre and authenticate the work of white curators and scholars in the discourse about Contemporary Art from Haiti. I encountered in my fieldwork in Haiti a certain paradox: while Haitian art professionals working with a group of 'subaltern' artists called *Atis Rezistans* seem to get eyed with suspicion for their supposedly privileged position in Haitian society, equally privileged 'Western' curators and scholars, on the other hand, can stage themselves as generous helpers of the urban poor for a similar task and furthermore gain symbolic capital. Despite inter-*klas* collaborations and artistic exchanges, the relationship between *Atis Rezistans* and the wider established contemporary art network in Port au Prince is commonly narrated by 'Western' curators and scholars in terms of friction, isolation, and rejection. I seek to show how travelling art actors produce narratives of *klas* friction, which claim that the local art scene in Haiti actively disapproves of the artworks by *Atis Rezistans*, and thereby try to fill in this supposedly lacking local position of support.

Dr. Göltenboth, Natalie
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*Re-creating Havana. Muraleando:
A Community Project between Art, Agency and Touristification*

In my paper I will try to retrace the entanglements of imaginaries involved in the commodification of Muraleando - an artistic community project in an old Havana neighbourhood: artists from abroad, the Cuban state, tourists and tourist agencies – each creating their own codes of significance around the project. As this process correlates with the ongoing Cuban transformation and the series of new agreements between Cuba and the US, a special focus will be put on the American imaginaries of Cuba, which during the last years had a stimulating effect on the perception of Muraleando as a creative social space created due to material poverty induced among other reasons, by the US embargo. Local artists and the inhabitants of the quarter for whom the project had been initiated, benefit from Cuba as a socialist brand in order to commercialize their artistic products and keep things ticking over.

Prof. Dr. Gotham, Kevin Fox
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*Touristic Disaster:
Spectacle and Recovery in Post-Katrina New Orleans*

This paper develops a critical theory of disaster tourism that distinguishes between progressive and critical features and oppressive and negative attributes. Disaster tourism refers to the transformation of disaster-impacted neighbourhoods into tourist attractions. Using empirical examples from New Orleans, I examine (1) intertwining of volunteer activities and tourism (voluntourism) to expedite post-Katrina rebuilding; (2) promotional campaigns to urge residents to acquire the consumption practices and visual orientation characteristic of tourists; and (3) the spread of celebrity activism to the field of disaster recovery and rebuilding via actor Brad Pitt's Make It Right (MIR) Foundation. The presentation conceptualizes disaster tourism as sites and arenas of contestation in which opposing groups and interests battle to control the production, consumption, and representation of cultural imagery linked to poverty and race. The paper illustrates the conflictual and contradictory nature of disaster tourism and offers a sophisticated and empirically promising theory of disaster tourism as a field of domination and resistance.

Gutowska, Aleksandra
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*Constructing Kibera:
Slum Tours as Place-making Processes*

Kibera is considered the biggest slum area of the capital city of Kenya, Nairobi. My presentation will analyze slum tours organized by Kibera inhabitants. I will argue that Kibera tours are the area of place-making processes which are constructing imaginaries

and socio-economic relations in Kibera. Firstly, through life story method, I will analyze economic activities of Kibera residents and how these caused their involvement in showing Kibera to visitors. Secondly, I will interpret the narratives of slum tour guides in order to present the images of Kibera and its inhabitants which are (re)constructed in the frame of the tours. Thirdly, I will highlight the ways in which this activity affects social relations and builds local economy. My presentation is based on the empirical material I collected in the frame of ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Kibera in Kenya. The project's website: <http://imagesofkibera.com/>.

Prof. Dr. Hernández-García, Jaime
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*Informal Settlements, Beyond Poverty and Violence:
The Barrios of Bogotá and Medellín*

Informal settlements are majority areas in Latin America which exhibit distinctive urban and social dynamics. It can be argued that they are already part of the identity of Latin American cities, in social and spatial terms. Although these areas are commonly seen as nothing more than poverty and violence, evidence from Bogotá and Medellín shows that they are much more than this, and crime might be higher in other parts of the city. Most of the residents of these places are good people wishing genuinely to overcome difficulties and find a place in the city. In this sense, is it worth/fair to hide them from the eyes of cities' residents and visitors? Based on a constant exposure and empirical research of nearly 20 years in *barrios* of Bogotá and Medellín, this presentation argues that informal settlements are consistent parts of the urban areas, and like any other one, they can be subject of exploring and visiting. It will be argued as well, that it is not about commodifying and aestheticizing urban poverty -this is not only what you may find in these places-; it is about to give people and places an opportunity to show other realities, expectations and dreams against stigma and exclusion.

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*Policing Stigma / Governing Brand:
The Transformation of Kreuzberg SO 36 and the Making of Dangerous Places*

Drug hell and luxury quarter, danger zone and tourist trap – the quarters of North-Kreuzberg in Berlin (better known as Kreuzberg South East 36 after its former postal code) seems to be all these things at once. How can such a stigmatized area in the same time be a dream destination for tourists, migrants, and "global creatives" alike? To untangle this dynamics, my presentation will trace the governmental strategies, discourses and interventions mobilized by a variety of actors. Drawing on interviews, media analysis and archival material, I will argue that not only urban branding, but also its stigmatizations must be addressed in context of the global political economy of tourism and migration well as governmental strategies of localism and policing space.

Dr. Kanai, Juan Miguel
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*Gay tourism to 'friendly' Buenos Aires:
Selective Connections, Mismatched Imageries, Negotiated Brand Re-appropriation*

LGTBQ tourism has flourished in the Buenos Aires of the twenty-first century, with a particularly noticeable participation of gay men visiting the city from abroad. This presentation will review the public and private interventions that have sought to sustain this in-flow and capitalize on the city's reputed tolerance towards sexual diversity. This has been internationally recognized since the landmark sexual-equality and gender-identity pieces of national legislation that Argentina passed in the early 2010s, and it has been used to brand the city as 'friendly,' thereby contributing to re-map a long-standing geography of resistance, dissidence and visibility struggles into one of sophisticated consumption. The presentation will discuss the selectivity that such tourist-oriented circuits and policies evince vis-à-vis the broader queer landscapes and ongoing sexual politics of the city and country. Furthermore, content analysis of international touristic city reviews will be used to argue that a mismatch exists between how the city is promoted through a 'friendly,' creative, investment-ready brand of aspirational global(-North) belonging and gay visitors' perceptions and expectations of exoticism and flavour, particularly those among seasoned English-speaking travellers who belong to the hyperkinetic global elite. Finally, detailed fieldwork on the queer tango scene will be presented in order to explore the possibilities of re-appropriation that international gay tourism creates for local cultural promoters and the need to understand trans-territorial cultural articulation beyond the prism of tourism.

Dr. Lanz, Stephan
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*Between the Commodification of the Stigma and the Politization of the Brand:
Contemporary Cultural Representations of the Favela in Rio de Janeiro*

In the course of the 2000s, the cultural industry increasingly discovered possibilities to convert the decades-long discourse that stigmatized the favela as the irregular and criminal other of urban society into cultural commodities. On the one hand it realized the commercial potential of favela generated subcultures. On the other hand it recognized the growing demand for supposedly authentic stories about urban poverty and violence. However, the commercial exploitation of the favela stigma also generated new options for a political and cultural self-representation of the inhabitants. With the aid of two examples, the international blockbuster favela movie 'City of God' and the subculture of 'Baile Funk', I will discuss the complex interaction between stigmatizing representations of the favela, their conversion into cultural commodities, and the ongoing fight of the inhabitants for a recognition of their living spaces and their everyday practices.

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*From Stigma to Commodified Culture:
Tourism in the Townships of Cape Town*

Having undertaken my dissertation research in three Cape Town area townships for several months over the course of 2016, my presentation will explore constructions of township tourism as explained to me by residents of the townships. I will speak to how residents understand their communities as having been transformed from stigmatized spaces of segregation to spaces of commodified cultural value. Township residents have shared their impressions of how they are perceived and essentialized by the producers of tourism knowledge. This presentation will also consider how the increasingly mainstream practice of township tourism in South Africa leads to benefits for some, including financial, educational, and relational benefits, but there are also negative impacts and questions raised as to how these benefits are allocated within the communities in question.

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*Violent Urbanscapes:
Urban Poverty and Violence in Videogames as Functional Stereotypes*

"Cities" in digital games are more often than not communal structures in aesthetic, socio-political and/or moral decay, designed with the singular aim to confront the player with violence and poverty, not only as an aesthetic or narrative device, but also to implement a game mechanic for conflict. A negative imagery of the city is used to create an immersive moment. The stigma of an impoverished violent 'urbanscape' is semantically refigured and functionalized in terms of creating the illusion of authenticity for the player. After a theoretical introduction to 'urbanscapes' in games, their functions and forms, we will present two specific examples of imaginations of violence, poverty and decay in two different game genres: While Beat'em Ups instrumentalize comparable subcultural aesthetics and imaginative perceptions to action movies of the 1970s,, RPGs and action-adventures often implement imaginations of poverty which build on dominant historical class stereotypes of urban poverty and violence.

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*Commodifying Compassion:
Some Reflections on the Implications of Turning People and Humanitarian Causes
into Marketable Things*

Today's marketplace is inundated with products supporting humanitarian causes that promise to give aid to beneficiaries, provide 'good feelings' to consumers and promote the brands of corporations and humanitarian NGOs. Consumers sipping an Ethos bottle of water thus simultaneously support sanitation in Tanzania and ethical shoppers buying a pair of TOMS shoes automatically donate a pair of shoes to 'a child in need' through 'Buy One Give One' purchasing schemes. This marketplace signals the deepening engagement of new actors (corporations, celebrities, and Western consumers) in humanitarian financing, which we have termed 'brand aid' (Richey and Ponte 2011). Traditionally, humanitarianism operates through public and private sector interactions between international organizations, NGOs and states. However, as corporations and the popular culture industry become attractive partners in promoting international causes, new alliances are formed and new forms of institutional embedding take place. The commodification of humanitarianism (turning people and causes into marketable things) is thus linked to the privatization of help (replacing public donors with private philanthropy) with significant and as of yet poorly understood consequences.

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*Walking the Slum:
Sensing Urban Poverty in Mumbai*

In this paper we pay close attention to the 'sensory turn' in social sciences and interrogate the experience of walking the slum. In doing so, we examine the socio-sensory processes through which the slum is produced. We pay less emphasis to the visual or gaze, to draw from writings on walking the city. These have highlighted walking as emblematic of modernity, notably through Benjamin, the potential to create new cartographies, from Debord, and productive of phenomenological experience in everyday life, via Pink. Drawing these together, we consider how footing about the slum, even though choreographed by guides and observing strict itineraries, produce particular ideas of place and identity that are intertwined with questions of class, culture, social histories and cosmopolitanism. We argue that the act of 'walking' provides the tour with opportunities to sense poverty that draw in touch, noise and smell that have the potential to reify rather than disrupt ideas of urban poverty.

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Mapping Notoriety and Consumption from Stigma to Brand Jamaica

Liminal by virtue of its contradictory location between postcolonial, anti-imperial, modern, yet peripheral, at the intersection of a heritage of piracy, musical fortitude, tourism, and crime, Jamaica occupies a central place in the global imaginary. Central to this intersection is the way Jamaica operates as a 'character' carefully navigating stigma to notoriety. Key to this equation is the way spaces such as Port Royal and Trench Town have become central pillars in both a notorious past and prestigious present as the nation grapples with branding and sustainable development hinged on creative industries around music, film and sport. Using Port Royal and Trench as spaces in conversation with each other this paper expands work being done on a larger project around 'country as character' as it explores the way in which stigmas turn to schemas in the complex landscape of branding cities and ultimately nations. Such stigmas operate as in the case of Jamaica as alternative platforms to create 'wealth' through the mobilisation and reclamation of heritage. Ultimately, these spaces function as heritage in transition, spaces of practice and becoming.