

## **Engaged Anthropology Collective**

What is known as *Anthropology* in the English-speaking world refers to two equivalent, yet distinct designations of the discipline in Germany. First, the more prevalent term *Ethnologie*, and second the more recent term *Sozial- und Kulturanthropologie*. These two designations of the discipline imply different histories, concerns and politics. The Engaged Anthropology Collective prefers to mobilize the term ‘*anthropology*’ as it refers to the *anthropos* (the human/*der Mensch*) as its central concern and not *Ethnologie*, which refers to *ethnos* (ethnic group/*Volk*) and has other kinds of analytical, (post-)colonial and political connotations.

As social and cultural anthropologists we are trained to do research about people’s everyday lives and practices in the context of wider historical, political and socio-economic frameworks. We also teach and train undergraduate and graduate students who then work as anthropologists in academic settings and/or outside academia in diverse fields of action (for example, NGOs, education, pedagogy, media, counseling etc.). As anthropologists we do fieldwork, which entails spending extended periods of time with the people we study to achieve in-depth and holistic understandings of their everyday life worlds. Our institute, for instance, focuses on different themes and concerns such as the Body, Disaster, Education, Emotions, Healing, Health, Medicine, Media, Migration, Politics and Law, Refugee Work, Religious Diversity and Secularism. The scholars of our institute cover a wide range of geographical and cultural regions where they conduct research and teach, which include, but are not limited to: Bangladesh, Egypt, Germany, Indonesia, Iran, the larger Middle East, the Netherlands, Pakistan, South Africa, Tanzania, Timor Leste, Turkey, Uganda, the USA, etc. With deep concern, we are watching our ‘common world’ atomizing on global, regional and national scales. Crisis seems to be the new everyday (*Alltag*). We advocate that the university is not an ivory tower. Academic disciplines cannot stay immune to everyday events and the profound crises that affect us in different ways and degrees. We, anthropologists like other social scientists, are more than researchers or academics. We are human and social beings in direct contact with grassroots problems and social, political and economic inequalities and injustices. Doing Anthropology is deeply entangled with its own époque with regards to the contemporary world’s challenges, catastrophes, anxieties and hopes. Therefore, the question of engagement (*Engagement*) is incumbent upon us.

From our diverse experiences, that originate from our immediate encounters with different kinds of people, languages and practices in our research sites and beyond, we believe that anthropology has something to offer in our crisis-ridden times. We engage with current political and social events and challenges on a national and local level, in Germany and Berlin, as well as in the (other) places where we study, teach, research, work and live. Since we live in a medially, technologically and otherwise interconnected world, we further participate in global solidarity actions with the fraternity/sorority of anthropologists worldwide.

In current times, we look forward towards creating a common future in which our discipline can play its part. Not only in doing research *about the other* and educating students, but in concrete engagements with both imminent and long term challenges that require not only urgent attention but also intervention. As ‘private’ and ‘public-political’ individuals our roles may vary. But as anthropologists we can contribute to the issues that confront us with various skills. The emerging ‘Engaged Anthropology’ (*Engagierte Sozial- und Kulturanthropologie*) collective provides a hub for writing groups and engaged research and art collaborations.

**For further inquiries please contact:**

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### **Who can join?**

Students and staff at the Institute are welcome to join any of the action teams as well as engaged students, scholars and artists from outside.

### **Open meeting dates**

The first meeting of the summer term will be held in the last week of April 2017!