

Summer Semester 2022

## SDAC Guest Lecture Series

Gender Politics and the Role of Beauty in the  
“New Turkey”: An Ethnographic ApproachClaudia Liebelt  
Free University of BerlinMonday  
11.07.22  
18-20:00 c.t.  
Via Zoom

Claudia Liebelt is Professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the Free University of Berlin. Her research foci are in the Anthropology of the Body and the Senses, Gender and Sexualities, Political Anthropology and Religion in the Middle East and Turkey. She has authored *Istanbul Appearances: Beauty and the Making of Middle-Class Femininities in Urban Turkey* (Syracuse UP, forthcoming) and *Caring for the 'Holy Land': Filipina domestic workers in Israel* (Berghahn, 2011) and has edited a number of special issues and volumes.

In Turkey's largest city Istanbul, the past two decades saw the emergence of an enormous beauty service sector, with private beauty clinics and salons, fitness centres, nail spas and waxing studios opening up all over the city. Drawing on ethnographic research in these salons and clinics, this lecture will analyse the effect of this urban “beauty boom” for gendered body images, subjectivities and norms of femininity in the “New Turkey” proclaimed by its government. In contrast to the common understanding of embodied beauty as somewhat ephemeral, superfluous and politically irrelevant, Professor Liebelt argues that its study offers unique insights into the negotiation of gender dynamics and the politics of social and political reproduction. Amidst the conservative-authoritarian turn in Turkey matters of feminine appearance, sexuality and morality have all become hotly debated public issues. In spite of attempts for beauty nationalism “from above,” the lecture will show that desires for beauty transcend the lines of social and political polarization.

This event will be held online via zoom. Please contact Prof. Dr. Viola Thimm to register (viola.thimm@fau.de).

ELITE MASTER'S PROGRAM  
Standards of Decision-Making Across Cultures