

Dr. Konstanze N'Guessan

About

I am a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Social Anthropology and African Studies at Mainz University. My research interests cover a wide array of topics from nationalism, bureaucracy and state ritual, historiography and remembering, to parenting, performativity, play, humor, racism and the far right online. I have done extensive field research in West Africa (Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire) and Germany. I am also a board-game geek, theatre enthusiast, handpuppet-player and mother of three children (*2009, *2014, *2019). More recently I am trying to bring my interest in play and playing into anthropological teaching and the transfer of academic knowledge.

Academic trajectory

2003 – 2008	B.A. and M.A. studies in theatre studies and social anthropology, Johannes-Gutenberg University of Mainz
2009 – 2014	Phd thesis „Histories of Independence: An Ethnography of the Past in the Present in Côte d'Ivoire" (magna cum laude).
2013 - 2016	research fellow in the DFG Research group 1939 „Un/doing Differences. Practices of human differentiation" in the subproject „Performing the nation: Marking ethnic and national differences in African national-day celebrations."
2016 – 2021	senior lecturer, Department of Social Anthropology and African Studies, JGU Mainz.
03/2019	Erasmus staff exchange School of Anthropology and Conservation, University of Kent, Canterbury, UK
04/2019-09/2019	visiting professor (Vertretungsprofessur) for Social Anthropology (chair Hahn), Department for Social Anthropology at the Goethe-University Frankfurt
2021 - 2024	research fellow at the BMBF-funded joint research project MISRIK (Memes, Ideas, Strategies of far right digital communication)
09/2024 – 03/2025	Visiting professor (Vertretungsprofessur) for Social and Cultural Anthropology (chair Drotbohm), JGU Mainz.
04/2025 –	senior lecturer, Department of Social Anthropology and African Studies, JGU, Mainz

Fieldwork

2006 (3 months)	supervised fieldwork on Ghanaian state cultural institutions under Prof. Dr. Carola Lentz as part of the research project „States at work: African bureaucracies."
2010 (9 months)	Phd research on memory and national day celebrations in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
2013 (3 months)	post-doctoral research as part of the DFG Research group Un/doing differences. (DFG For 1939) in Bongouanou (Côte d'Ivoire).
2017 (3 weeks)	research in Accra (Ghana) and Bongouanou (Côte d'Ivoire) as part of the part of the DFG Research group Un/doing differences. (DFG For 1939).

2017 (4 weeks)	supervision of student fieldwork on national day celebrations in Bongouanou (Côte d'Ivoire)
2017 (1 month)	exploratory research on parenting in Abidjan and Bongouanou (Côte d'Ivoire)
2018 (5 months)	fieldwork in Abidjan, Bongouanou and Bouaké on „Parenting as Performance“
2022 (3 months)	exploratory research on free-learners and un-schoolers, digital and offline in Germany
2022-2023 (10 months)	digital and digital-related ethnographic research on far right metapolitical activism, memes and humor.

Other

2015 – 2019	managing editor of the working papers series of the Department of Social Anthropology and African Studies.
2017 - 2020	equal opportunity commissioner Faculty of History and Cultural Studies, JGU Mainz.
Since 2021	member of the editorial board of the ZfE-JSCA, journal of the German Association of Social and Cultural Anthropology (DGSKA).