

**Prof. Dr. Carola Lentz**

Senior Research Professor, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

**Curriculum Vitae** (last update June 2025)

Born 1954, in Braunschweig

**Professional activities**

- since 2019 Senior Research Professor at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz
- 2002-2019 Professor of Anthropology at the Department for Anthropology and African Studies, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz
- 1995-2002 Professor of Anthropology at the Department for Historical Ethnology at Goethe University Frankfurt
- 1992 lecturer at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Marseille, in the ERASMUS programme
- 1987-1992 lecturer at the Department for Anthropology, Free University Berlin
- 1979-1981 teacher for trade union courses at 'Arbeit und Leben' (German Trade Union Confederation) Göttingen and Braunschweig (part-time)
- 1973 editorial assistant, *Theater heute*, Hanover
- 1972-1973 dramaturgical assistant, Schauspielhaus Bochum

**Academic background**

- 1996 Habilitation, Venia legendi for Anthropology, Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences II, Free University Berlin
- 1992-1995 Habilitation fellowship from the German Research Foundation
- 1987 Doctorate in Sociology at Leibniz University Hanover
- 1985 Master of Science in Agricultural Sciences of the Tropics and Subtropics, Georg August University Göttingen
- 1983-1985 Doctoral research, Georg August University Göttingen and Leibniz University Hanover; research scholarship from the Friedrich Naumann Foundation
- 1982-1985 Postgraduate studies in Agricultural Sciences of the Tropics and Subtropics, Institute for Rural Development, Georg August University Göttingen
- 1982 Second state examination for the teaching profession at grammar schools, Hamburg
- 1981-1982 Trainee teacher for grammar schools, Hamburg
- 1979-1980 Further studies in sociology, Georg-August University Göttingen
- 1979 First state examination for teaching at grammar schools, Georg August University Göttingen
- 1972-1979 Studies of sociology, political science, German studies and education at Georg August-University Göttingen and Free University Berlin
- 1972 Abitur, Ricarda-Huch-Schule, Braunschweig
- 1960-1972 Primary school and grammar school, Braunschweig

### **Main areas of research** (cf. also list of publications)

politics of memory—in families, local communities, nation states, and transnational communities  
ethnicity and nationalism, nation building, cultural festivals  
elites and middle classes  
ethnography of the state  
land rights, land conflicts, settlement history (Northern Ghana/Burkina Faso)  
colonial history, decolonisation, history of party politics (Ghana)  
labour migration, migration and integration  
qualitative methods  
anthropological theories of culture

Regional focus: West Africa, in particular Ghana and Burkina Faso

For participation in collaborative research projects, management of doctoral student groups, etc. cf. <https://www.ifeas.uni-mainz.de/forschung/#abgeschlossene-forschungsprojekte>

### **Stays abroad, field research**

2024	research stay in Ghana for the project ‘Middle Class Biographies’ (one month)
2010-2017	field research stays as well as teaching research and doctoral supervision in Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Ghana for the project ‘African Independence Celebrations’ (five months in total)
2006-2009	field research stays as well as teaching research supervision, Doctoral schools and conferences for the joint project ‘States at Work’ in Ghana, Mali, Niger and Benin (seven months in total)
1997-2005	field research stays in Burkina Faso and border areas of Ghana as part of the special research centre ‘West African Savannah’ at the Goethe University Frankfurt; Coordination of the partnership with the University of Ouagadougou (twelve months in total)
12/1996	election observer in Ghana, on behalf of the German Federal Foreign Office
1987-1996	several research stays in Ghana (eighteen months in total)
1983-1985	research stay in Ecuador, doctoral research (twenty months in total)
1980	research and study visits to Bolivia, Mexico and Ecuador (with a ASA scholarship) (six months)
1969-1970	exchange student in the US (Zeeland, Michigan)
1967	exchange student in France (Nîmes) (two months)
1967	exchange student in Finland (Lahti) (one month)

### **Language skills**

fluent: English, French, Spanish  
basic knowledge: Dutch, Dagara (Northern Ghanaian language)

### **Fellowships and awards**

2025	fellow at the Einstein Center Chronoi, Free University Berlin
2023	award of the honorary membership of the German Association of Social and Cultural Anthropology
2020	admitted as a full member of the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina

- 2020 fellow at the Centre for Advanced Study in the Humanities ‘Work and Human Lifecycle in Global History’, Humboldt University, Berlin
- 2019 fellow at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study; South Africa; member of the group ‘The new middle class in Africa in comparative perspective’
- 2017-2018 fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin; head of the focus group ‘Family History and Social Change in West Africa’
- 2015 fellow at the Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg, Delmenhorst
- 2014 admitted as full member of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities
- 2014 Melville J. Herskovits Prize of the African Studies Association (US) for the book *Land, Mobility and Belonging in West Africa* (Indiana University Press, 2013)
- 2013 award of a chieftaincy title (Maalu Naa) in the Nandom Traditional Area, Upper West Region, Ghana
- 2012-2013 fellow at the Centre for Advanced Study in the Humanities ‘Work and Human Lifecycle in Global History’, Humboldt University, Berlin
- 2008-2009 fellow at the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research, Harvard University (Fulbright fellowship)
- 2003 fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle (Saale), Germany

#### **Honorary positions and memberships (selection)**

- since 2024 member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Friedenstein Foundation Gotha
- since 2022 consultant of the exhibition project ‘Ghana 57: African Art after Independence’ of the University of Michigan and the National Museum of Ghana
- since 2023 member of the Board of Trustees of the Anne Frank Educational Centre
- since 2020 member of the Board of Trustees of the German Academy for Language and Poetry
- 2020-2024 President of the Goethe-Institut
- 2018-2020 Vice-President of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities
- 2016-2018 Secretary of the Social Sciences Class of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities
- 2011-2015 President of the German Association of Social and Cultural Anthropology
- 2011-2015 co-editor of the journal *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*
- 2010-2019 Member of the Editorial Advisory Board of *Africa*
- 2005-2015 co-editor of the series *African Social Studies*, Brill, Leiden
- 2003-2005 member of the Board of the Verein Kulturen Afrikas e.V. (Mainz)
- 2003-2008 member of the Editorial Board of *Afrika spectrum*
- 2002-2007 Member of the International Advisory Board of the Centre for the Anthropological Study of Knowledge and Ethics (CASKE), Department of Social Anthropology, University of St. Andrews, UK
- 2000-2002 Member of the Editorial Board of *African Affairs*
- 1997-2005 Member of the Editorial Board of *Ethnos*
- 1996-1999 Member of the Scientific Committee of the European Association of Social Anthropologists

1990-2000      Member of the Editorial Committee of *Food and Foodways* (Paris/New York)

## **Supervision of habilitations and doctorates**

### **Habilitations**

- Dr. Ute Röschenhaler (Mainz, 2008–09): *Purchasing Culture: The Dissemination of Associations in the Cross River Region of Cameroon and Nigeria*
- Dr. Katja Werthmann (Mainz, 2004): *Bitteres Gold. Historische, soziale und kulturelle Aspekte des nicht-industriellen Goldbergbaus in Westafrika*

### **Doctorates**

- Jan Beek: *Boundary Work: the police in Ghana* (Mainz, 2014)
- Jan Budniok: *The Politics of Integrity: Becoming and Being a Judge in Ghana* (Mainz, 2012)
- Andreas Dafinger: *Anthropologie des Raums. Zum Verhältnis sozialer und räumlicher Ordnung bei den Bisa in Burkina Faso* (Frankfurt a.M., 2000)
- Marie-Christin Gabriel: *The making of the nation/state: organising national-day celebrations in Burkina Faso* (Mainz, 2022)
- Mirco Göpfert: *Enforcing the law, restoring peace: an ethnography of the Nigeria gendarmerie* (Mainz, 2014)
- Cornelia Günauer: *Contingent democracy: election campaigning in India* (Mainz, 2021)
- Svenja Haberecht: *Vom Reichtum eines armen Landes. Nationalfeiern und Nationenbildung in Burkina Faso* (Mainz, 2015)
- Godwin Kornes: *Heroes, martyrs, comrades: the aesthetics and politics of liberation memory in Namibia* (Mainz, 2021)
- Gerhard Müller-Kosack: *Cived Zom: Studie zur Historizität der Mafa Nordkameruns* (Frankfurt a.M., 1997)
- Konstanze N'Guessan: *Histories of independence: an ethnography of the past in the present in Côte d'Ivoire* (Mainz, 2014)
- Andrea Noll: *Verwandtschaft und Mittelklasse. Bildung, soziale Differenzierung und Integration in südghanaischen Familien* (Hildesheim, 2016)
- Nina von Nolting: *Die eritreische Exilgemeinschaft in Deutschland* (Mainz, 2008)
- Michaela Oberhofer: *Ethnizität im bäuerlichen Alltag. Die Jaana und ihre Nachbarn in Burkina Faso* (Mainz, 2005)
- Afra Schmitz: *Between politicking and politricking: election communication in Northern Ghana* (Mainz, 2021)
- Mareike Späth: *Ein günstiger Augenblick. Das Jubiläum der Unabhängigkeit in Madagaskar* (Mainz, 2015)
- Kathrin Tiewa: *'The lion and his pride': the politics of commemoration in Cameroon* (Mainz, 2013/14)
- Yamara-Monika Wessling: *Frauen des Wandels. Die Aushandlung von Mittelklasse und Geschlecht in Ruanda* (Mainz, 2021)