

Curriculum Vitae

TATJANA THELEN

October, 2025

CURRENT POSITION

2012– Full Professor at the University of Vienna (Austria).

RESEARCH FOCI

Political Anthropology, Care, state, kinship, property, post-socialist societies, relational theory.

RESEARCH GROUPS, FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS

2025 Visiting Research Scholar at the New School (US)

2023 Austrian Chair in Stanford (US)
<https://anthropology.stanford.edu/people/tatjana-thelen>

2020–2021 Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) in Paris (FRA)
<https://www.paris-iea.fr/en/fellows/tatjana-thelen-2>

2016–2017 Head of Research Group: *Kinship and Politics: rethinking a conceptual split and its epistemic implications in the social sciences* and Fellow at the Center for interdisciplinary Research at Bielefeld (GER).
<https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/%28de%29/ZiF/FG/2016Kinship/index.html>

2016 Visiting Research Scholar at Rutgers University, Camden (US).
Visiting Research Scholar at Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle/Saale (GER).

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES (since 2012)

2024– Vice director, Doctoral Study Programme at the faculty of social sciences (also: **2012–2020**)

2020–2025 Vice Head, Research Platform: *Transformations and Eastern Europe*.

2021–2022 Head of Department, Social and Cultural Anthropology.

2020–2022 Member, of the steering committee of doctoral school: <https://vds-sosci.univie.ac.at/people/speaker-and-steering-committee/>

2014– Founder, *Vienna Ethnography Laboratories*
<https://ksa.univie.ac.at/en/departement/events/vienna-ethnography-laboratories/>

2012–2015 Vice head of Department, Centre of Methods, University of Vienna

2012–2015 Member, “Fakultätskonferenz,” Faculty of Social Sciences

SCIENTIFIC CAREER

- 2012** Habilitation at Martin-Luther University Halle/Wittenberg (GER).
- 2011** (interim) Professor Social Anthropology, University of Bayreuth (GER).
- 2010** Guest professor, University of Vienna, Institute for Social- and Cultural Anthropology (AT).
- 2008–2011** Senior Lecturer in Social Anthropology, University of Zurich (CH), and Head of Research project: *“Local state and social security in rural Hungary, Romania and Serbia”*, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation (GER).
- 2007–2008** Lecturer, Department of Anthropology at the Martin-Luther-University, Halle/Saale (GER).
- 2006–2007** Post-doc researcher, Humboldt Universität Berlin (Junior research group on “Post-socialist land relations” (GER).
- 2005** Lead researcher, social-anthropological team within KASS (EU-funded research project on kinship and social security, GER).
- 2002–2007** Post-doc researcher, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology (Project Group on Legal Pluralism), Project: *“Changing social security relations in eastern Germany”*, Halle/Saale (GER).
- 1998–2001** PhD-scholarship, Graduate school: *“Gesellschaftsvergleich in historischer, soziologischer und ethnologischer Perspektive”* (Comparison of societies in historical, sociological and anthropological perspective), funded by the German Research Society (DFG), Berlin, Germany.
- 1993–1998** Studies at University of Cologne (GER), Social Anthropology (major), Pedagogy (minor) and the Rheinischen-Friedrich-Wilhelm-Universität, Bonn (GER) Comparative Sciences of Religion (minor). Master’s degree. Title of thesis: *“Ethnic identity and social networks. A case study of Hungarian Germans in Pécs”*, (in German).
- 1991–1993** Studies at the Rheinische-Friedrich-Wilhelm-Universität, Bonn (GER), Social Anthropology (major), Comparative Sciences of Religion and Islamic studies (minors).

TEACHING (Summary)

Since my arrival in Vienna, my regular workload consists of teaching four courses per term, mainly on the state, care, and kinship, but also general introductions to social organisation and ethnographic methods. Although my position at the Max Planck Institute did not involve an obligation to teach, I regularly taught courses in Berlin and Halle. In sum, I have taught anthropology at six universities in four countries (US, Austria, Switzerland, Germany, Hungary) at all levels (BA, MA, Doctorate). I have also participated in various events organised to support our PhD students, including workshops on publication strategy, research ethics, and preparation for public presentations.

SUPERVISION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS AND POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

- Currently** I supervise six PhD and five master's students at the University of Vienna. I am also co-supervisor of a doctoral student in Klagenfurt und one in Cologne and serve as a habilitation mentor at the University of Bayreuth. In addition, I regularly host visiting PhD and post-doc researchers within my team. Recent guests were from the University of Notre Dame (US), Science Po (France), Central European University (CEU), University of Prague (CZ), and Aberystwyth University (UK). My former PhD students are employed at universities and scientific institutions in Riga, Bucharest, Budapest, Bielefeld, Klagenfurt, and Berne. Two post-doc guests have become full professors in Austria and Germany.
- 2012–2020** Since my arrival in Vienna, my PhD students have all received prestigious scholarships (FWF, ÖAW, Uni:docs/sowi:docs). One was awarded the *Promotio sub auspiciis Praesidentis rei publicae*, Austria's highest distinction for academic achievement through a doctoral degree. I have further supervised 10 master's students in anthropology and sociology.
- 2008–2015** Within my project on social security in rural Hungary, Romania and Serbia (LSSS), I supervised three dissertations. The students completed their PhDs at the university in Halle and the CEU in Budapest. I was also involved in the defence committee of the coordinator of the project, who defended her thesis at the university in Speyer.
- 2006–2007** My first experience co-supervising PhD projects (three students) was during my time at Humboldt University of Berlin within the research group "Post-socialist land relations."

GRANTS

- 2024–2028** Doctoral program *The Dynamics of Change and the Logics of Transformation: State, Society, and Economy at Critical Junctures*. (doc.funds funded by Austrian Science Fund (FWF), Funding supports 7 PhD candidates.
- 2020–2025** Research platform: *Transformations and Eastern Europe*. Funded by the University of Vienna, <https://transformations.univie.ac.at/en/>. Funding supports one post-doc coordinator and seed money to young scholars.
- 2015–2019** Doctoral program *Das österreichische Galizien und sein multikulturelles Erbe*. Austrian Science Fund (FWF), <https://dk-galizien.univie.ac.at/>. Funding supports one PhD candidate for each faculty member in the program.
- 2016–2017** Research group: *Kinship and Politics: Rethinking a Conceptual Split and Its Epistemic Implications in the Social Sciences*. Center for Interdisciplinary Research, Bielefeld (€500,000).
- 2017** Summer school: *Kinship and Politics: Undoing the Boundaries*. Volkswagen Foundation (€37,000).
- 2013** Conference: *Doing Politics – Making Kinship: Back Towards a Future Anthropology of Social Organisation and Belonging*. German Research Foundation (DFG) (€10,000).
- 2008–2012** Research project: *Social Security in Rural Hungary, Romania and Serbia* (LSSS). Volkswagen Foundation (€399,100).

MEMBERSHIP IN SCIENTIFIC NETWORKS AND SOCIETIES

- 2019–** Founder, CAST Research Network: <https://carestate.univie.ac.at/>

I am also a member of:

- GAA German Anthropological Association.
dgv German Association for Folklore.
GSA German Sociological Association.

SCIENTIFIC EDITING

- 2021–** *Sociologus*, member of the editorial board
https://www.duncker-humboldt.de/zeitschrift/sociologus-soc-13/?page_id=1
- 2020–** *Lidé města / Urban People*, member of the editorial board
<https://urbanpeople.cuni.cz/LMENG-5.html?news=11588&locale=en>
- 2014–** *Vienna Working Papers in Ethnography*,
<https://ksa.univie.ac.at/en/research/publications/vienna-working-papers-in-ethnography/>
- 2008–** *Annuaire Roumain d'Anthropologie*, member of the scientific advisory board

REVIEWING ACTIVITIES

Journals: Acta Ethnographica Hungarica, Acta Sociologica, American Anthropologist, American Ethnologist, Anthropological Theory, Anthropology & Medicine, Biosocieties, Comparative Southeast European Studies, Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, Cultural Anthropology, Ethnography, ETHNOS, Europe-Asia-Studies, Feminist Theory, Forum for Development Studies, HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory, History and Anthropology, JANA (Journal for the Anthropology of North America), Japanese Journal of Social Anthropology, Journal of Family Issues, Journal of Rural Studies, Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Medizinische Anthropologie, Men and Masculinities, PoLAR (Political and Legal Anthropology Review), Social Analysis, Sociológia - Slovak Sociological Review, Sociologus, Studia ethnologica Croatia, The Australian Journal of Anthropology.

Books: Anthem Press, Berghahn Books, Palgrave/MacMillan, Pluto Press.

Projects: Academy of Finland, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science, European Research Council (ERC), Estonian Research Council, Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia FCT (Portuguese Ministry for Science and Technology), German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), German Research Foundation (DFG), SNSF (Swiss National Science Foundation), National Science Center Poland, Thyssen Foundation.

Programs: Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia FCT (Portuguese Ministry for Science and Technology).

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED LECTURES (since 2012)

- 2025** *Political Atmospheres, Being Together, and Anthropology as an Academic Echo Chamber*. Keynote at: Co-Existing? The Art and Challenge of Being Together. At the Biennial Conference MEGA Seminar in Denmark (DK).
- 2025** *After Critique: Becoming the Authoritarian State*. Invited Lecture at The New School (US).
- 2024** *Political Atmospheres of Marginalisation: Understanding the Contingencies of State Transformation*. Invited Lecture at Research Seminar on Anthropological Theory, Department of Anthropology, London School of Economics and Political Science (UK).
- 2024** *Atmospheres of Marginalisation: Care and State transformation*. Keynote at: KVAS, Charles University Prague (CZ).

- 2024** *Archaeogenetics of Kinship: Challenges and prospects for a renewed conversation.* Invited Lecture, Institutul de Antropologie "Francisc I. Rainer", Academiei Române (RO).
- 2023** *Parcels to the East: Politically Important, Theoretically Overseen.* Invited Lecture, The Europe Center, Stanford University (US). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pLQtYtl2O8>
- 2023** *Care and state: A theoretical approach and an example from the Hungarian countryside.* Colloquium, Department of Anthropology, Stanford University (US).
- 2022** *Consanguinity: a social anthropological perspective on an European myth.* Invited Lecture: Conference "Kinship, Sex, and Biological Relatedness. The contribution of archaeogenetics to the understanding of social and biological relations", Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenber (GER).
- 2021** *Kinship – a useful concept? Narratives of modernity, care and politics.* Keynote at "Prospects in Anthropological Theory", University of Copenhagen (DK).
- 2021** *The Return of the Caring State? Responsibility, Difference and Critique after Socialism.* Invited Lecture: Seminar Series CEES/CRCEES (Center for Russian, Central and East European Studies), University of Glasgow (UK).
- 2020** *Care: reproducing inequalities and shaping political transformation.* Keynote at "Care and Volunteering in Transformation", Hannah-Arendt-Institute for research on totalitarianism, Dresden (GER).
- 2020** *"Other" Kinship: Belonging and Exclusion from a Social-Anthropological Perspective.* Invited Lecture (in German): Lecture Series on Kinship, University of Graz (AT).
- 2019** *Kinship, State and Care. An Anthropological Perspective.* Keynote at "State and Kinship." Baltic Anthropology Graduate School (BAGS) Riga Stradiņš University, Riga (LVA).
- 2019** *Stategraphy as epistemological tool: Approaching the public/private boundary through care* Keynote at International Ethnography Conference, Martin Luther University, Halle/Wittenberg (GER).
- 2019** *Care: State, Family and the Construction of Difference* (in German) Keynote at Conference Social Pedagogy and Early Childhood Pedagogy of the German Society for Educational Science, Lüneburg (GER).
- 2019** *State, kinship, care: Towards a relational approach* Invited Lecture at Gellner Seminar, CEFRES, Prague (CZ).
- 2018** *Gift, Inheritance, care: The Politics of family belonging* (in German) Invited Lecture at "State and Family: Law, Practice and Ideals in Comparison" (series), University of Lucerne (CH).
- 2018** *Culture: Some remarks on the (re)Production of Difference* (in German) Invited lecture "Terms as problem: Scientific and Public Usage" (series), Department of European Anthropology, University of Vienna (AT).
- 2017** *Care: Towards an integrated approach* Invited Lecture at Social Anthropological Colloquium, Freie Universität Berlin (GER)
- 2017** *More than Kinship: Political Belonging through Care* Keynote at Summerschool: *Kinship and Politics. Undoing the Boundaries*, ZiF, Bielefeld (GER).

- 2017** *Kinship and Politics: Rethinking a conceptual split and its epistemic implications in the social sciences*
Invited Lecture at Department of History, University of Bielefeld (GER).
- 2017** *Thinking about care as social organization*
Keynote at Workshop at the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka (JP).
- 2016** *More than kinship: Political belonging through parenting and elder care*
Keynote at the Conference of International Association for Southeast European Anthropology (InASEA), Sofia (BG).
- 2016** *Becoming and Staying a Roma Mother: Constructing and Reproducing Difference Through Care.* Invited lecture at Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle/Saale (GER).
- 2016** *Law and Mutual Assistance in Families: A Comparison of Socialist Legacies in Hungary and Eastern Germany.* Invited lecture at Rutgers University, Camden (US).
- 2015** *State Kinning- Kinning the State: boundary Work in Serbia.*
Invited lecture at the Department of Social Anthropology, University of Edinburgh (GB).
- 2014** *Becoming and staying a Roma mother: Diversity and inequality over the life-course*
Invited lecture at The Research Center for Eastern and Southeastern Europe (WiOS), Regensburg (GER).
- 2012** *Kinning the State. Practices and Imaginations of State and Family in Serbia*
(in German) at Department of Anthropology, University of Bayreuth (GER).

SCIENCE TRANSFER AND ROUNDTABLES (since 2012)

- 2023** *We should get married!* (in German) Podcast episode „Studio Komplex“, hr.
<https://www.ardaudiothek.de/episode/studio-komplex/lasst-uns-heiraten/hr/12674649/>
- 2022** *Kinned by choice and family law: What makes us care for each other?* (in German)
Radio interview “Sein und Streit”, Deutschlandfunk Kultur.
<https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/verwandtschaft-familie-verantwortungsgemeinschaft-100.html>
- 2020** *Shifting horizons: Anthropology and STS in the 21st century* (Roundtable)
Biennial Conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA).
- 2019** *Post-Socialism, Post-Communist Transition, Global East? – Conceptualizing Legacies of Change since 1989* (Roundtable)
Conference: *30 Years after 1989: Legacies of Post-Socialism*, Centre for East European and International Studies (ZOIS), Berlin (GER).
- 2017** *After the elections. Reflexions on Racism, Masculinity and Democracy* (in German)
(Roundtable) Department of Political Science, University of Vienna (AT).
- 2017** *Exploring Kinship and Politics from an Interdisciplinary Perspective* (Roundtable)
Conference: *Navigating the Boundaries of Kinship and Politics*, ZiF, Bielefeld (GER).
- 2015** *Kinship and Gender. Perspectives, Themes, Problems of Social and Cultural Anthropological Research* (Public Science Lecture) VHS, Wiener Urania, Vienna (AT).

- 2013** *"How revolutionary were the changes since the 1980s? The transformation of eastern Europe in historical perspective* (Roundtable)
45th Annual Convention der Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies, Boston (US).
- 2013** *"Generations in Crisis? Resources, Reciprocity and Exchange"*
Roundtable at the 20th International Conference of Europeanists, Amsterdam (NL).

ORGANISATION OF CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS UND PANELS (since 2012)

- 2019** *"Measuring kinship: The end of negotiating relatedness?"* (Panel)
together with Christof Lammer and Staffan Müller-Wille, Conference of the German Anthropological Association (GAA), Konstanz (GER).
- 2018** *"Care encounters: Creating knowledge and boundaries"* (Panel)
together with Akiko Mori, 18th International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) World Congress, University of Santa Catarina, Florianópolis (BR).
- 2018** *"The Politics of Making Kinship. Historical and Anthropological Perspectives"*
Final conference of the interdisciplinary research group *Kinship and Politics*. Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF), Bielefeld (GER).
- 2017** *"State and kinship entwined: Creating political belonging through children"* (Panel)
together with Cati Coe and Erdmute Alber, Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), Washington (US).
- 2017** *"Political Belonging through kinship"* (Panel)
together with Erdmute Alber, Conference of the German Anthropological Association (GAA), Berlin (GER).
- 2016** *"Kinship and the Epistemology of Politics in the West and the Rest"*
Opening conference of the interdisciplinary research group *Kinship and Politics*. Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF), Bielefeld (GER).
- 2016** *"Migration, diversity, care: does culture play a role?"* (Panel)
together with Christoph Reinprecht, 4th Annual Meeting of the Commission on Migration and Integration Research (ÖAW), Vienna (AT).
- 2015** *"Imaginaries of Migration: Identity and belonging"* (Panel) with Tine Damsholt,
Conference of the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF), Zagreb (HR).
- 2015** *"Bringing Culture to Care? Caring for the elderly in Vienna and London"* (Workshop)
together with Rosie Read, Vienna (AT).
- 2014** *"Kinship in, of, and against state institutions: Conflictive intersections and boundary work"* (Panel) with Daniel Smith and Erdmute Alber, Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), Washington (US).
- 2014** *"Kinning the state – state kinning: Reconnecting the anthropology of kinship and political anthropology"* (Panel) with Erdmute Alber, Biennial Conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA), Tallin (EE).
- 2014** *"Doing politics – making kinship. Back Towards a Future Anthropology of Social Organisation and Belonging"* (Panel) with Erdmute Alber, Humboldt University Berlin, IGK Work and Human Life Cycle in Global History (re:work), Berlin (GER).
- 2013** *"Borders and border crossings"* (Panel) together with Stéphane Voell and Jutta Lauth Bacas, Conference of the German Anthropological Association (GAA), Mainz (GER).

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (since 2012)

- 2025** Book Panel on Inna Lykin's book *Caring Like a State: The Politics of Russia's Demographic Crisis*. 57th Annual Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, & Eurasian Studies (ASEEES), Washington D.C. (US).
- 2025** *After Critique: Becoming the Authoritarian State*. Panel "On the Ruins of Liberalism: Ethnographies of Far-Right Regime Building". Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), New Orleans (US).
- 2025** *After Critique: becoming the Authoritarian State* at Conference of German Association of Social and Cultural Anthropology (DGSKA), Cologne (GER)
- 2021** "Care and State: Negotiating Responsibilities in Social Work". University of Strasbourg (F).
- 2020** "Care, Classification and the Reproduction of Marginalisation". Biennial Conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA).
- 2019** "Measuring kinship: An Introduction" Conference of the German Anthropological Association (GAA), together with Christof Lammer, Konstanz (D).
- 2018** *Creating knowledge and difference through Care*. 18th International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) World Congress, Universität Santa Catarina, Florianópolis (BRA).
- 2017** "Ethnic Belonging through state welfare: Becoming and staying a Roma mother in rural Hungary", Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), Washington (US).
- 2017** "Political Affiliation through Kinship: An Introduction", Conference of the German Anthropological Association (GAA), together with Erdmute Alber Berlin (GER).
- 2016** "Cultural Care | Cultures of Care: Institutional Offers for Senior Citizens in Vienna and Berlin" (in German), Annual Conference on Migration and Integration Research in Austria, Together with Astrid Baerwolf, Vienna (AT).
- 2016** "(Post) Socialism: Historical paths, socialism after socialism and future anthropology", Biennial Conference European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA), Milan (IT).
- 2015** "Care of the Elderly, Migration, Community: Explorations from Rural Romania", Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), Washington (US).
- 2015** "Care migration and community: (re)imagining the East-West divide in rural Romania" Panel International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF), Zagreb (HR).
- 2014** "Kinning the State – escaping kin politics: Elder Care in Serbia", Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), Washington (US).
- 2014** "You become kin with these people: State Kinning and Kinning the State in Serbian Elder Care Programs", Biennial Conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA), Tallin (EE).
- 2014** "Reconceptualising Care", Conference: *Beyond the Global Care Chain: Boundaries, Institutions and Ethics of Care*, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle/Saale (GER).
- 2014** "Research Ethics in Anthropology: Problems of informed consent", Conference: *Research Ethics and Integrity*, University of Vienna (AT).

- 2014** *“Performances of Redistribution: Work Ethics, Citizenship Rights and Exclusion (Hungary, Romania)”*, Conference: *Autocracy and Market Economy. The transformation in Eastern Europe and east Asia in Comparison*, University of Vienna (AT).
- 2012** *“Care migration and reframing the “other”: explorations from rural Romania.* Conference: *Rethinking Care: Anthropological Perspectives on Life Courses” Kin-Work and their trans-local Entanglements*, IGK Work and Curriculum Vitae from a Global Historical Perspective (re:work), Humboldt University of Berlin (GER).