



Indo-Swiss Joint Research Programme in the Social Sciences - Seed Money Grants (SMG)

Dynamics of Well-Being

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Objectives

General: Strengthen existing academic collaborations, intensifying collaboration between JNU and UZH

- 1) Study “Well-Being” through four case studies about different therapeutic systems in India and Switzerland
 - Sandra Bärnreuther
 - Johannes Quack
 - Burton Cleetus
 - Harish Naraindas

- 2) Explore a collaborative methodological approach: “Tandem Research”



Objective 1) Case Studies

- Sandra Bärnreuther: “Transnational Aspects of Well-Being”
- Johannes Quack: “Multiple Well-Beings”
- Burton Cleetus: “Baseler Mission, Indigenous Medical Traditions and Well-Being in South India”
- Harish Naraindas: “Transcending the Disease-Illness Dichotomy through Well-Being”



Sandra Bärnreuther: Transnational Aspects of Well-Being

- Transnational relations in the field of reproductive medicine
- Case study: urine collection for hCG (human chorionic gonadotropin) production



Johannes Quack: Multiple Well-Beings

Psychiatric Beds and Professionals in mental health

per 10,000 population	World	S-E Asia	India	Uttarkhand	Switzerland
Total Psychiatric Beds	1.69	0.33	0.25	Nil	13.2
Psychiatric beds in mental hospitals	0.33	0.03	0.05	Nil	13.2
per 100,000 population	World	S-E Asia	India	Uttarkhand	Switzerland
Number of psychiatrists	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.08	23
Number of neurosurgeons	0.2	0.03	0.06	Nil	0.8
Number of psychiatric nurses	2.0	0.1	0.05	Nil	46
Number of neurologists	0.3	0.05	0.05	Nil	3.4
Number of psychologists	0.6	0.03	0.03	0.01	40.8
Number of social workers	0.4	0.04	0.03	Nil	106



Johannes Quack: Multiple Well-Beings

- Based on previous work on different therapeutic approaches (between 2006 and 2010)
- Initial focus was on different perspectives on different therapeutic approaches
- The data-set will be (re-)analysed with the aim to address the multiple aspects of well-being observed and articulated



Burton Cleetus: Baseler Mission, Indigenous Medical Traditions and Well-Being in South India

- Engage with Basel mission archives in India (Mangalore archives of the Basel Evangelical Mission) and at Basel in Switzerland
- Explore the manner in which indigenous medical practices figured in missionary files to examine how the notions of health and well-being get negotiated through Christian beliefs and practices
- Case study: Engagement of the Basel Mission with the local healing traditions among different caste and social groups of Kerala



Naraindas: Transcending the Disease-Illness Dichotomy through Well-Being

- One of the central conundrums in the study of health has been the dualism between disease and illness
- Disease is seen as a fact pronounced by doctors and medicine, while illness is seen as the subjective experience of the patient that may or may not coincide with the disease declared by the doctor
- This has led to the claim that in modern biomedicine one could have 'disease without a patient and a patient without a disease' (Naraindas 2011a)



Naraindas: Transcending the Disease-Illness Dichotomy through Well-Being

- This paradox is based on a mind-body dualism
- This has resulted in patients turning to 'alternative medicine', whose epistemologies either do not operate with such a mind-body dichotomy, or whose fault lines are differently drawn (Naraindas 2006, 2011a, 2011b, 2014a, 2014b)
- It appears that in these alternative settings/fringe of orthodox biomedicine (eg. Kurort) reaching a state of well-being as determined subjectively by the patient is often the ideal goal
- In the light of this, we will examine the Swiss Kurort and the Ayurveda Kur (Ayurveda treatment plan), to see what role well-being plays in the conceptualisation and treatment of disease, and whether well-being, as understood within these sites and practices does indeed breach the moat of medical orthodoxy and offer the possibility of conceiving life, disease and death, differently



Objective 2) Tandem Research

Existing Tandem Research:

University of Freiburg and Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta (UGM)

- Started in 2004
- Became so successful that it began to include further universities in Indonesia as well as other disciplines
- From Tandem to Teamwork: A Training Model for Field Research Across Cultural and Disciplinary Boundaries

→ Objective: Pilot study for future collaboration between JNU and UZH



Proposed Tandem Research

Swiss scholar researching in India cooperates with an India colleague and vice versa in order to

- extend already existing academic ties between the participants
- facilitate closer collaboration between the institutions
- qualitatively improve the research outcomes of the participants' projects
- conduct “reverse anthropology” - gain an independent perspective on the Global North from the viewpoint of the Global South

→ Previous Experiences, Problems and Asymmetries



Suturing of Epistemic & Financial Asymmetries

The tandem research that this project envisages seems difficult because:

- No provision in the call for such a possibility
- No budgetary provision for research expenses of Indian partners to collaborate with Swiss scholars in India and vice versa
- Further disparity in the form of allowing Swiss scholars to hire research assistants in India but to disallow Indian researchers to hire Swiss research assistants in Switzerland.
- Finally, Swiss scholars get a separate allowance for accommodation and living expenses (2000 per day extendable up to 5000 a day) while Indian scholars get only living expenses 120/160 francs per day and with a ceiling of 2500/3200 for an entire month



Addressing this Asymmetry

- This leads to an overall disparity where the ICSSR budget to the Swiss scholars is about 8 months of a Indian Professorial salary in India and the Swiss budget to Indian Scholars is about two months of a Swiss Professor's salary (Ratio of Indian Budget: Swiss Budget :: 4:1)
- The financial asymmetry is a symptom of epistemic and cognitive asymmetry, and they make it difficult to work towards parity let alone reversal
- The flagging of this asymmetry is not meant to be a criticism. It is meant to make explicit tacit frames of reference and discuss these frames in a clear and dispassionate manner
- We hope that given the possible novelty of what we are suggesting, namely fieldwork in Switzerland, this Indo-Swiss partnership will use our presentation to rethink the terms of the call and address the issue