

CV of Mgr. Martin Lang, Ph.D.

martinlang@mail.muni.cz

www.martinlang.cz

Affiliations

LEVYNA

Laboratory for the Experimental Research of
Religion
Masaryk University
Arne Nováka 1
602 00 Brno
Czech Republic

Employment

01.01.2020 – current	Assistant Professor at LEVYNA, Masaryk Uni
01.01.2018 – 31.12.2019	Postdoctoral researcher at LEVYNA, Masaryk Uni
01.07.2018 – 30.06.2019	Associate at Human Evolutionary Biology, Harvard Uni
01.11.2016 – 30.06.2018	Postdoctoral researcher at Human Evolutionary Biology, Harvard Uni
30.08.2014 – 31.08.2016	Graduate researcher at Experimental Anthropology Lab, University of Connecticut
1.11.2011 – 31.08.2014	Doctoral researcher at LEVYNA, Masaryk University

Education and academic qualifications

25.01.2011 – 06.12.2016	Ph.D. in Religious Studies, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic. <i>“The Cognitive Science of Religion: Connecting the Humanities with the Sciences in the Study of Ritual Practice, Prosociality, and Anxiety”</i>
01.09.2008 – 25.01.2011	MA in Religious Studies, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic. <i>“Neurophysiological basis of religiosity”</i> (Dean’s Award for an outstanding MA thesis)
16.09.2005 – 01.09.2008	BA in Religious Studies; & Media Studies and Journalism, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic. <i>“Life in the Sahaja Yoga movement: A case of spiritual change or conversion?”</i>

Other training

2014	Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative
2012	Experimental Methods in the Study of Cognition and Culture summer school, Aarhus University, Denmark
2011	Exchange student, Religious Studies Department, University of Szeged, Hungary
2010	Exchange student, Religious Studies Department, University of Szeged, Hungary

Grants & Fellowships

01.01.2020	PI: SACRIFICE - <i>Scarring Rituals, Fierce Intergroup Conflict, and Extreme Rituals</i> . Operational Programme: Science, Research and Education, Czech Ministry of Education. \$168,000
01.07.2019	PI: <i>The Entropy-Reduction Model of Ritualized Behavior</i> . Grant Agency of Masaryk University. \$2,000
01.01.2018	PI: <i>The Evolution of Ritual Behavior as a Communication Technology</i> . Czech Science Foundation. \$62,600
01.01.2018	PI: <i>Ritual behavior as a means to anxiety alleviation</i> . Neuron Fund. \$10,750
01.01.2015	PI (with D. Xygalatas): <i>Effects of Ritualized Behavior on Anxiety</i> . Interacting Minds Center, Aarhus University. Seed Funding. \$7,000
01.09.2014	Investigator (PI: D. Xygalatas). <i>Exploring the effects of rituals on identity fusion: A cross-cultural study</i> , Oxford University sub-grant on Ritual's Impact on the Contemporary World. \$70,000
01.06.2012	PI: <i>Religion and cooperation: The intersection of neuroscientific and evolutionary perspectives</i> . Masaryk University Graduate Fund. \$1,000

Awards

03.09.2019	Early Career Award for junior researchers awarded by the International Association for the Psychology of Religion.
16.05.2019	Masaryk University Rector's Award for Outstanding Research Results Achieved by Young Scientists under 35.
22.08.2016	Best student abstract award at the International Association for the Cognitive Science of Religion Conference held in Vancouver, Canada.
01.02.2011	Dean's award for an outstanding MA thesis at Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic

Keynote & Invited Talks

- 20.07.2021 “The Role of Evolved Psychological Mechanisms in Religious Rituals,” *International Congress of Psychology, Prague, Czech Republic*
- 03.09.2019 “Religions as complex adaptive systems: The evolutionary paths of religious beliefs and behaviors”, *International Association for the Psychology of Religion Conference, Gdansk, Poland.*
- 06.10.2018 “Ritualized Behavior across Disciplines: From Ethology to Religious Studies”, *3rd Annual Religious Studies Conference, Olomouc, Czech Republic.*
- 28.05.2018 “Evolutionary and Cognitive Science of Religion”, *Conference on Cognition and Artificial Life, Brno, Czech Republic.*
- 14.12.2017 The Power of Sacred Rhythms: Effects on Collective Effervescence, Cooperation, and Morality”, *IAST-Foundation Royaumont Conference: The Origins of Music in Human Society, Abbaye de Royaumont, France.*
- 26.04.2017 “Ritual Behavior and Anxiety”, *Religion and Science Colloquium, IBCSR, Boston University, Boston, USA.*

Selected Conference Talks

- 09.06.2021 “Advertising cooperative phenotype through costly signals”, *Cultural Evolution Society Conference, Hokkaido, Japan*
- 24.04.2019 “Ritual Behavior, Religious Badges, and Within-Group Trust”, *14th Annual Conference of European Human Behavior and Evolution Association, Toulouse, France*
- 14.05.2018 “Punitive Gods, Morality, and Extended Prosociality”, *Future Directions on the Evolution of Rituals, Beliefs and Religious Minds, Erice, Italy*
- 24.05.2017 “Psychophysiological Effects of Ritualization: Evidence from the Lab and the Field”, *29th APS Annual Convention, Boston, USA*

Public Outreach

- 04.05.2021 [Humanities for the Future: a new European Agenda](#) – co-author on public agenda document created at *Youth Forum on the Future of the Humanities*
- 22.05.2018 “Anxiety, Rituals, and Religion” *Czech Science Café, Czech Centrum in Berlin, Germany*
- 07.12.2017 “Religion as a Complex Adaptive System: The Evolution of Coordination, Cooperation, and Morality”, *Biological Thursdays, Charles University, Czech Republic*
- 12.04.2012 “How can science help us understand religion?” *Science Café, Brno, Czech*

Republic

Links to media:

Coverage by [TIME](#)

Coverage by [VICE](#)

Coverage by [Discover Magazine](#)

Popular summary for [anxiety.org](#)

Coverage by [National Geographic](#)

Interview in [Lidové Noviny](#)

Scientific community

Reviewer for top journals in the field such as Nature Human Behavior, Psychological Science, Evolution and Human Behavior, Scientific Reports, or Current Anthropology

Member of the Psychological and pedagogical panel at the funding body of the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic and a reviewer for European national funding bodies

Teaching

- July 2016 *Interdisciplinary Ethnography Field School in Mauritius* organized by Aarhus University, Denmark
- 2012 - Classes at the Department for the Study of Religions, Masaryk University such as *Cognitive Science of Religion, Religion and the Social Brain, Contemporary Theories in Religious Studies, Myth and Ritual*
- 2017 - Tutoring 1 Ph.D., 1 Mgr., and 1 Bc. student

References

Dimitris Xygalatas
Department of Anthropology
University of Connecticut
354 Mansfield Road, Storrs, CT, 06226, USA
dimitris.xygalatas@uconn.edu

Joseph Henrich,
Department of Human Evolutionary Biology
Harvard University
11 Divinity Avenue, Cambridge, MA, 02138, USA
henrich@fas.harvard.edu

Journal Articles and Book Chapters:

Lang, M., Xygalatas, D., Kavanagh, C. M., Boccardi, N., Halberstadt, J., Jackson, C., Martínez, M., Reddish, P., Tong, E. M. W., Vázquez, A., Whitehouse, H., Yamamoto, M. E., Yuki, M., & Gomez, A. (2021). Outgroup threat and the emergence of cohesive groups : A cross-cultural examination. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302211016961>

Beheim, B., Atkinson, Q., Bulbulia, J., Gervais, W., Gray, R., Henrich, J., Lang, M., Monroe, M., Muthukrishna, M., Norenzayan, A., Purzycki, B., Shariff, A., Slingerland, E., Spicer, R., & Willard, A. (2021). Treatment of missing data determines conclusions regarding moralizing gods. *Nature*, 595(8), E29–E34. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-021-03655-4>

- Chvaja, R., Kundt, R., & Lang, M. (2020). The effects of synchrony on group moral hypocrisy. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 544589. doi: [10.3389/fpsyg.2020.544589](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.544589)
- Nichols, A. D., Lang, M., Kavanagh, C., Kundt, R., Yamada, J., Ariely, D., & Mitkidis, P. (2020). Replicating and extending the effects of auditory religious cues on dishonest behavior. *PLoS ONE*, 15(8), e0237007. doi: [10.1371/journal.pone.0237007](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0237007)
- Lang, M., Krátký, J., & Xygalatas, D. (2020). The role of ritual behavior in anxiety reduction: An investigation of Marathi religious practices in Mauritius. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B*, 375(1805), 20190431. doi: [10.1098/rstb.2019.0431](https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2019.0431)
- Lang, M., & Kundt, R. (2020). Evolutionary, cognitive, and contextual approaches to the study of religious systems: A proposition of synthesis. *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 32 (1), 1-46. doi: [10.1163/15700682-12341466](https://doi.org/10.1163/15700682-12341466)
- Lang, M. (2019). The evolutionary paths to collective rituals: An interdisciplinary perspective on the origins and functions of the basic social act. *Archive for the Psychology of Religion* 41 (3), 224-252. doi: [10.1177/0084672419894682](https://doi.org/10.1177/0084672419894682)
- Xygalatas, D., Khan, S., Lang, M., Krátký, J., Kundt, R., Kundtová Klocová, E., & Shaver, J. H. (2019). Effects of extreme ritual practices on psychophysiological well-being. *Current Anthropology* 60 (25), 699-707. doi: [10.1086/705665](https://doi.org/10.1086/705665)
- Lang, M., Purzycki, B.G., Apicella, C. L., Atkinson, Q. D., Bolyanatz, A., Cohen, E., Handley, C., Kundtová Klocová, E., Lesorogol, C., Mathew, S., McNamara, R. A., Moya, C., Placek, C. D., Soler, M., Vardy, T., Weigel, J. L., Willard, A. K., Xygalatas, D., Norenzayan, A., & Henrich, J. (2019). Moralizing Gods, Impartiality, and Religious Parochialism across 15 Societies. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 286 (1898), 1-10. doi: [10.1098/rspb.2019.0202](https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2019.0202)
- Purzycki, B. G., & Lang, M. 2019. Identity Fusion, Outgroup Relations, and Sacrifice: A Cross-Cultural Test. *Cognition* 186, 1-6. doi: [10.1016/j.cognition.2019.01.015](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2019.01.015)
- Lang, M., Krátký, J., Shaver, J. H., Jerotijević, D., and Xygalatas, D. (2019). Is Ritual Behavior a Response to Anxiety? In Slone, J., & McCorkle, W. (Eds.). *Empirical Studies in the Cognitive Science of Religion*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, pp. 181-191.
- Shaver, J. H., Lang, M., Krátký, J., Klocová Kundtová, E., Kundt, R., & Xygalatas, D. (2018). The boundaries of trust: Cross-religious and cross-ethnic field experiments in Mauritius. *Evolutionary Psychology*, 16(4), 1–15. Doi: [10.1177/1474704918817644](https://doi.org/10.1177/1474704918817644)
- Shaver, J. H., DiVietro, S., Lang, M., & Sosis, R. (2018). Costs Do Not Explain Variance in Trust Among Secular Groups. *Journal of Cognition and Culture*, 18 (1-2), 180-204. doi: [10.1163/15685373-12340025](https://doi.org/10.1163/15685373-12340025)
- Xygalatas, D., Kotherová, S., Maňo, P., Kundt, R., Cigán, J., Kundtová Klocová, E., & Lang, M. (2018). Big Gods in Small Places: The Random Allocation Game in Mauritius. *Religion, Brain and Behavior*, 8 (2), 243-261. doi: [10.1080/2153599X.2016.1267033](https://doi.org/10.1080/2153599X.2016.1267033)

Xygalatas, D., & Lang, M. (2017). Religion and prosociality. In N. Clements (Ed.), *Macmillan Interdisciplinary Handbooks. Religion: Mental Religion*. (pp. 119–133). Farmington Hills, MI: Macmillan Reference USA.

Lang, M., Bahna, V., Shaver, J.H., Reddish, P., & Xygalatas, D. (2017). Sync to Link: Endorphin-mediated Effects of Synchrony on Cooperation. *Biological Psychology*, 127, 191-197. doi: [10.1016/j.biopsycho.2017.06.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biopsycho.2017.06.001)

Pazhoohi, F., Lang, M., Xygalatas, D., & Grammer, K. (2016). Religious Veiling as a Mate-Guarding Strategy: Effects of Environmental Pressures on Cultural Practices. *Evolutionary Psychological Science*, 3 (2), 118-124. doi: [10.1007/s40806-016-0079-z](https://doi.org/10.1007/s40806-016-0079-z)

Krátký, J., Lang, M., Shaver, J. H., Jerotijević, D., and Xygalatas, D. (2016). Anxiety and Ritualization: Can Attention Discriminate Compulsion from Routine? *Communicative & Integrative Biology*, 9 (3), e1174799. doi: [10.1080/19420889.2016.1174799](https://doi.org/10.1080/19420889.2016.1174799).

Lang, M., Mitkidis, P., Kundt, R., Nichols, A., Krajčíková, L., & Xygalatas, D. (2016). Music as a Sacred Cue: Effects of Religious Music on Moral Behavior, *Frontiers in Psychology* 7 (814), 1-13. doi: [10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00814](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00814).

Lang, M., Shaw, D. J., Reddish, P., Wallot, S., Mitkidis, P., and Xygalatas, D. (2016). Lost in the Rhythm: Effects of Rhythm on Subsequent Interpersonal Coordination. *Cognitive Science*, 40 (7), 1797-1815. doi:[10.1111/cogs.12302](https://doi.org/10.1111/cogs.12302).

Lang, M., Krátký, J., Shaver, J. H., Jerotijević, D., and Xygalatas, D. (2015). Effects of Anxiety on Spontaneous Ritualized Behavior. *Current Biology* 25 (14), 1892–1897. doi:[10.1016/j.cub.2015.05.049](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cub.2015.05.049).

Commentaries:

Lang, M. 2020. Multifunctional Religious Systems and Perturbed Dynamics of Psychological Wellbeing. *Religion, Brain, & Behavior* 10 (2), 179-184. doi: [10.1080/2153599X.2018.1532454](https://doi.org/10.1080/2153599X.2018.1532454)

Lang, M., & Sosis, R. (2016). Uncertain Malinowski: The Importance of Preritual Stress Data. *Current Anthropology*, 52 (2). doi: [10.1086/691212](https://doi.org/10.1086/691212)

Lang, M., & Kundt, R. (2016). Can Predictive Coding Explain Past Experiences? *Religion, Brain, & Behavior*, 7 (1), pp. 71-73. doi: [10.1080/2153599X.2016.1150332](https://doi.org/10.1080/2153599X.2016.1150332).