



ACT!V!SM

in memory and digital ethnography

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1-2. September 2023, Graz

Symposium and Workshops for Marion Hamm

In light of multiple crises and increasing societal insecurity and uncertainty, anti-democratic and populist movements are on the rise. At the same time, civil society protesters raise their voices ever louder, on a local as much as global scale. Whilst activism and protest are directed towards the future, collective images of the past still play important roles; as imaginations of (lost) resources of place and belonging they guide actions or provide ideological-argumentative blueprints for populist resentments, identity politics and war.

These ambivalent melanges of (un)democratisation and conflict are shaped, multiplied and expedited in social media bubbles and virtual realities, in emancipatory activism or infectious fear narratives and hate. In so doing, they challenge the expertise of Empirical Cultural Analysis, Cultural Anthropology and European Ethnology in new ways.

This interdisciplinary symposium, held on September 1st and 2nd, 2023 not only enquires the "What" but also the "How" of research and societal impact. How can ethnographic methodology embrace these rapidly changing modes of perception and articulation? And how can we trace the tracks of social experience and cultural memory in conflicting discourses and find our way to dialogue and a new form of societal understanding?

Organisation:

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Barbara Reichsöllner-Frischling, Janine Schemmer, Hanna Wäger

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WORKSHOPS

1) Memoriscapes-

The street as projection and in-between space.

Petra Kohlenprath und Janine Schemmer

Stories and memories materialise and overlap in urban space. Taking a sensory walk, we will explore Lagergasse, where the Volkshaus Graz is located, and its surrounding neighbourhood. The decelerated, embodied and sensual approach allows for a dialogue with public space. Which signs and objects stimulate memory processes (Assmann 1999) and function as links without us being conscious of them right away? How is collective memory formed in the synopsis of individual memories? How do we deal with lines of rupture and connection? What becomes manifest on/along them? How can we recontextualise and redefine them in order to imagine the future? As such, the workshop aims to sound out the "in-between spaces of the encounters of art, academia and our own or the others' everyday life" (Greverus 2005: 6).

2) The Technosocial is like Banana Milk.

Entanglements of Digitality and Materiality in Everyday Life

Ruth Dorothea Eggel, Barbara Reichsöllner-Frischling und Victoria Huszka

To separate the digital and the material is like not being able to have banana milk, but only either bananas or milk, Marion once pointed out in a lecture. The term technosocial tries to overcome this dichotomy - like banana milk. It focuses on technologies as derivatives of the social and the co-constitution of actors and technology in social interactions (Raffl et al., 2008). Between actor agency and technical agency (Beck 1997), the term remains conceptually (still) open. The workshop invites to explore the technosocial in excursions and combines digital and analog methods to reflect on the ambivalences and entanglements of digitalities in practice.

3) Activism and protest in ethnographic and artistic research

Between tradition and innovation.

Alenka Pirman und Marion Hamm

In order to convey the message and attract the media activists need to rely on a repertoire of already established tactical practices. According to Charles Tilly, this repertoire is limited but modified by improvisation and innovation. Its direct broadcast and distribution, however, have become standardised by a variety of mainstream online tools. In today's illiberal times, backed-up by the ever-changing algorithms of social media, the research of activism is facing a challenge – how to discern a protest from a "protest!", what research methods to use and how to distribute and mediatise its own findings?



PROGRAM

Friday, September 1, 2023

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- 14:00** **Arrival and Welcome**
- 14:30** **Workshop: Memoryscapes**
The street as projection and in-between space.
(Petra Kohlenprath, Graz, Janine Schemmer, Klagenfurt)
- 17:00** **Break**
- 18:00** **Lecture: Vorläufer:innen einer Avantgardistin.** Transnationale Strömungen in der österreichischen und deutschen Volkskunde.
(Bernd Jürgen Warneken, Tübingen)
- Laudatio und Performances**
(Almut Sülzle, Berlin, Katharina Eisch-Angus, Graz, Markus Baumgart, Tübingen)
- 20:00** **Reception**

Saturday, September 2, 2023

Location

Volkshaus
Lagergasse 98a
8020 Graz,
Austria

Contact, Info & Registration:

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Registration fee: € 30,-

- 09:00** **Arrival**
- 09:30** **Workshop: The Technosocial is like Banana Milk.** Entanglements of Digitality and Materiality in Everyday Life
(Ruth Eggel, Bonn, Barbara Reichsöllner-Frischling, Graz, Victoria Huszka, Bonn)
- 12:00** **Lunch Break**
- 13:30** **Workshop: Activism and protest in ethnographic and artistic research –** between tradition and innovation
(Alenka Pirman, Ljubljana, Marion Hamm, Graz)
- 16:00** **Guided tour to Graz industrial suburbs:** „De-centering heritage and memory”