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Contents **Volume 4 (2)**

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Michaela Fenske

What carp make of Franconians*

Multispecies societies viewed through the lens of European Ethnology

Abstract: The carp was awarded the title 'Fish of the Century' in Germany as recently as 1999. Now, however, at the start of the 21st century, the popularity of this fish is generally declining behind others such as trout and salmon. Interestingly, this is not the case in Franconia, to some extent at least. Franconia (the northern part of Bavaria) is one of the key German regions for pond farming, a sector that is gaining in significance worldwide. The carp is part of a rural economy that, in some ways, could serve as an example in terms of helping to resolve the crises of our times. This article discusses the potential of a multispecies ethnography by focusing on the carp as a culturally significant creature in Franconia. Multispecies ethnography sees humans as part of a sociobiological context that shapes both the conditions for life in its range of influence and the living beings that interact within them. In this perspective, carp create space in the respective local society and add value to it: They are a source of food and income, maintain places of refuge for rare animals and plants, influence the social order of human societies and shape the future. The example of carp in Franconia opens up the perspective of an innovative field of research in European Ethnology, enabling the discipline to once again find answers to current societal challenges in the context of international anthropologies.

Keywords: multispecies ethnography, regional cultural analysis, rural economics domestication, fish farming

> Verily the carp is a pious and innocent fish which does no harm to any other. Neither teeth in its jaws nor spines on its back does it have, but a rounded indrawn mouth which does contain inward-facing teeth, but not sharp ones, rather broad and round teeth.

This is how the carp is introduced in the *Fischbüchlein* ('Little Book of Fish'), published anonymously in 1665 in Nuremberg and apparently an extract from Johann

* German version in *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 2019, 115 (2): 173–195. Translated by Kathleen Cross. This article is a slightly amended version of the inaugural lecture I gave at the University of Würzburg (JMU) on December 7, 2018. I am grateful to the editors of this issue of the *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*, Irene Götz and Friedemann Schmoll, for their constructively critical comments. I dedicate this article to my father, Hubert Fenske, who for very many years has dedicated his efforts in a voluntary capacity to pond farming in northern Germany and the multispecies society it sustains.

Coler's *Oeconomia ruralis* (Coler 1645).[1] Referring to the fish using a feminine gender ascription (rather than the grammatically correct masculine one in German), the anonymous author continues rather tenderly:

> It [originally 'She', Translator] also has its feathers and rudders so that it can swim where it will, and a tail, divided into two parts, which is not hard or harmful, so that it can govern its whole course. Thus, it has and also finds its food and drink in the pond, such that a master need not expend aught on its food and drink; indeed it pleases and amuses its master with its flesh, however this may be cooked, whether boiled or fried, in a dark or other kind of stock, in jelly or smoked. The ponds are built for the sake of these few carp alone. (Anonymous 1665: 101)
>
> *So hat sie auch ihre Federn und Rudern, damit sie dort schiffen kann wie sie will, und einen Schwantz, in zwei Theile getheilet, der auch nicht hart oder schädlich ist, damit sie ihren gantzen Lauff regieren kann. So hat und findet sie auch im Teich ihren Safft und Nahrung, daß ein Herr auf ihr Essen und Trinken nichts wenden darff, ja sie erfreut und belustiget ihren Herrn mit ihrem Fleisch wie sie auch zugerichtet ist, gesotten oder gebraten, im schwarzten oder anderen Soth, in einer Gallert oder geräuchert. Darum werden um der einigen Karpffen willen die Teiche allein gebaut*.

This paean to the carp, along with the fact that it was clearly quite natural in the context of rural economies to farm the fish, resonates with the writings of other authors from the 17th and 18th centuries.[2] Their 'economics guidebooks' contained advice for what they considered to be an ideal form of farm economy, whose many and varied mixed economies quite naturally included pond farming. Carp themselves, however, were far less popular at this time than they had been during the Middle Ages. As the population grew in the Early Modern period, so too did doubts about the profitability of this sector of the local economy: Where ponds had once been, now more lucrative grain crops swayed in the wind. It was only toward the end of the 19th century that the fortunes of pond farming began to improve again, though, due to competition from a newly industrializing ocean fisheries sector, it was never again to achieve a status comparable to the one it had previously enjoyed.[3] Nowadays, domestic fisheries (in which pond farming is generally included) lead a niche existence in many parts of Germany.

1 „*Es ist aber der Karpff ein frommer und unschuldiger Fisch der anderen keinen Schaden zufügt. Dann er keine Zähne im Maule dann Stacheln auf dem Rücken hat, sondern hat einen runden eingezogenen Mund, der zwar inwendig auch Zähne hat, aber nicht scharpfe, sondern breite und runde Zähne*." This passage is not contained in what was probably the first edition of *Oeconomia ruralis* in 1596. It does appear, however, in the 1645 edition, where the writer alters the gender of the fish; in the 1680 edition, the writer sticks to the masculine gender ascription. Hahn (2013).

2 E.g. Anonymous (1773); Böckler (1683); Fischer (1696); Knauer (1704).

3 A classic account can be found in Abel (1981); for regional literature, e.g. Geschichts- und Heimatverein (2013); Haas et al. (2016); Hofmann (1927); Paukner (2005).

In Bavaria, especially in some parts of Franconia and the Upper Palatinate, pond farming has, nonetheless, retained a certain value compared to its decline elsewhere. Some 6000 tons of carp are bred each year in Bavaria. This accounts for roughly 50 percent of all the carp currently produced in Germany; 50 percent of all the ponds farmed in Germany are in Bavaria and 70 percent of all German fisheries businesses are based there.[4]

Throughout history, countless stories have praised the carp for its outstanding positive characteristics: It is said to be kind toward other animals and humans, peaceable, undemanding and modest in its needs, resilient, robust, cordial, clever, strong and hardy (Anonymous 1665; Balon 2006). The fish's potential to reach an advanced age was clearly believed worthy of mention by the famous 16th century nature researcher, Conrad Gessner: According to him, the castle moat of Michelsfeld [in Swabia] contained a one-hundred-year-old carp, whose wily cunning had kept it from being devoured by pike, humans and other fish-eating creatures throughout its lifetime (Gessner 1598: 165). Even today, experts hold the carp in high regard as a farmed fish on account of its fertility, rapid growth and the quality of its flesh (Geldhauser and Gerstner 2011; Steffens 2008). As recently as 1999, the carp was named 'Fish of the Century' and was honored with a *laudatio* delivered by writer and onetime angler Siegfried Lenz (1999). In this same *laudatio*, incidentally, Lenz attributed his angling activities to an affection for carp that had evolved over the years (he had frequently fed them by hand in order to feel their soft mouths). Nowadays, the carp enjoys relatively little prestige as a fish to dine upon compared to trout or salmon (Geldhauser and Gerstner 2011; Haas et al. 2016).

To focus on the carp is to consider a creature that, in many respects, provides excellent subject matter for European Ethnology. Unlike wolves, whose effects on our society are also the subject of European Ethnology research,[5] but whose presence we (still) perceive to be out of the ordinary, the carp is an unquestioned part of our culture. The carp is very widespread, an indispensable inhabitant particularly of ponds but also of rivers and lakes; only in its 'wild' form is it considered to be in danger of extinction (Bayerisches Staatsministerium 2000: 72). There is barely a single cookbook of the 20th century in which poached carp or other dishes made from this popular fish do not make an appearance. In brief: Carp belongs to our everyday

4 E.g. Arge (2010); Bauerreiß (2011); Bayerische Landesanstalt (2006: 5); Geldhauser (2006, 2016: 403).

5 In addition to the Würzburg project funded by the German research council DFG and entitled "The Return of the Wolves. Cultural anthropological studies on the process of wolf management in Germany" (accessed February 22, 2019. Available at: http://www.volkskunde.uni-wuerzburg.de/forschung-projekte/), it is worth mentioning the slightly older Zurich SNF project headed by Bernhard Tschofen and entitled "Wolves: Knowledge and Practice. Ethnographies on the return of wolves in Switzerland" (accessed February 22, 2019. Available at: https://www.isek.uzh.ch/de/popul%C3%A4rekulturen/forschung/projekte/drittmittelprojekte/wolf.html).

life – or at least it did until very recently. At the moment, displaying an appetite for carp increasingly appears to indicate a rather conservative or regional culinary taste.[6] In view of the general transformation of our culinary culture, then, it seems appropriate from the perspective of a discipline concerned with the everyday in societies past and present to draw attention to this fish.

The carp is essential to life in the multispecies society in Franconia. It also facilitates a connection to the various crises of our time, such as growing water scarcity, climate change and the crisis of so-called rural areas (Demirović et al. 2011). In addition, however, we can use our observations regarding the carp to find ways of meeting some of the pressing challenges of our time, as I seek to show in the following. This is possible because the carp is a "global" fish found in almost every part of the world (Steffens 2008); it too is affected fundamentally by global trends. Studying the carp is a way of showing how the global and the regional are interrelated.

When European Ethnology examines the everyday lives of the many, this now increasingly often includes others in addition to human beings. Just as in international anthropologies more generally, in European Ethnology, the relationality of human life has become a key topic going into the future, as humans are studied in terms of their relationships to other living beings.

Spotlight on multispecies societies

The title of this article, "What carp make of Franconians," is intended as a reference to this relationality between human and animal life and seeks to suggest that it is not just humans that make things of carp but that, vice versa, carp also make things of (and for) human beings. As Belgian philosopher Vinciane Despret and several other prominent thinkers of our time have noted, animals can be regarded as living beings that co-create our world (Despret 2014).[7] Human being, human becoming is inconceivable without other beings – whether they be animals, plants or fungi. It is a short step, then, to placing this shared process of 'having become' and 'becoming' firmly at the center of our research on everyday culture. The strand of research established under the heading of 'Multispecies Ethnography'[8] addresses

6 Richard Wilk has written an impressive article on just such a striking transformation of culinary culture within a relatively short space of time, taking the eel as an example (2014).

7 Several of these theoretical accounts from international research have been summarized in German-language anthologies, e.g. Borgards (2016); Borgards, Köhring, and Kling (2015); Ferrari and Petrus (2015).

8 The perspectives applied here are now being pursued in various disciplines and thematic contexts. In the process, a whole variety of designations has become established in Cultural Studies and the Social Sciences; in international anthropologies, for example, the reference is to an "anthropology beyond the human" (Ingold 2013; Kohn 2013). The Multispecies Ethnography on which the present article is based shares key perspectives with Human-Animal Studies (the potential of

its questions at precisely this shared becoming. It is interested in the ways "human life, ways of living and responsibilities are connected to these non-human societies of living things" (van Dooren, Kirksey, and Münster 2016: 1) and how this is relevant to politics, economics and society, in brief, to human being and becoming with all its associated facets (Kirksey and Helmreich 2010: 545).

Within this, we can make use of a further conceptual step offered by the 'new materialism,' including Karen Barad's take on agential realism (Barad 2015). This strand of theory draws attention once more to the potentiality of matter as an agent. It assumes that those who participate in the entities, assemblages, meshworks, networks and webs in question – or whatever concept is used in a given instance to express the notion of joint becoming and doing – have an impact not only in their specific connective context but in the form of interlinkages that arise based on this context. According to this view, they become by engendering one another, and they engender one another by becoming. As we shall see in the following, even the carp has certain impacts on and thanks to such interlinkages.[9]

In using the by now classic concept of society introduced by the sociologists of the 19th century, my intention is to (re)call to mind the matter that is of concern to me here, namely, to expand the social, which lies at the center of our research efforts, by adding other beings than just human beings (Wenk 2016). The term I use here, multispecies society, thus, starts out conceptually at a point in time when modernity has finally established itself as dominant with its perspectives and practices. The term is used here deliberately in order to illustrate that, for all its achievements, modernity has simultaneously entrusted to us a reduction that is not just perspectival. We have left behind the diversity that surrounds and helps to shape us human beings in favor of a seemingly unequivocal reduction; we have done so by concentrating in many areas on a few promising species, forms and practices, such as those species with which we live most immediately and our synergy with them (Fenske 2016). Today, this reduction – not least in the form of various symptoms

which for European Ethnology has most recently been addressed in depth by Lukasz Nieradzik 2018) and with Plant Studies but widens its scope to include the overall context of the different communities. The term *NaturenKulturen-Forschung* ('NaturesCultures Research,' Gesing et al. 2019) in German-language Social and Cultural Anthropology has emerged as a means of identifying a special conceptual space in the context of political ecology, one that is more heavily influenced by Science and Technology Studies.

9 These ideas also explain Tim Ingold's critique of the designation "Multispecies Ethnography." Ingold argues that the use of the term species in this designation conceptually subverts the process of joint becoming and transforming (Ingold 2013a). It is precisely in the course of interaction that the various species emerge in the first place, species that are, of course, in a state of continual change. The expression is used here regardless of this critique, in the knowledge that it entails a degree of conceptual blurring.

of crisis, from the accelerated extinction of species and climate change through to water scarcity – is getting us into increasing difficulties.

Multispecies Ethnography (and the new areas of research associated with it) does indeed represent nothing short of a paradigm change, a new field of work with an altered perspective. Anthropologist Tim Ingold also more or less formulated the task of a European Ethnology that seeks to extend its perspective beyond human actors as part of the broad family of anthropology when he noted that organisms are shaped within fields of relationships, held by the rivers, mélanges and transmutations of materials. Each 'being' is, thus, a 'becoming' in a line that stretches from the past into the future. Ingold's concern is with growing (Ingold 2013) and – as we must add from the title of another of his books – with making (Ingold and Hallam 2014). What we need to do is understand the constant growing and making in terms of its logics and possibilities. It is about considering how a society works that has expanded to include a concern with the changing interlinkages between different species.

Ingold's notion of continual doing and making is suited like no other to analyze rural economies in particular. And this, in turn, brings us to the highly connective nature of the research field: Multispecies Ethnography is potentially capable of connecting cultural studies and the social sciences with the biological sciences and applied environmental and agricultural sciences. It contributes richly to every area of work in European Ethnology, which I shall show briefly in the following by reference to several of these areas. The following are addressed as examples of the general argument: Cultural analysis of space, of the rural, of gender relations and the field of narrative culture, all of which are particularly rich in meanings when it comes to the shared becoming of carp and others in Franconia.

At the same time, I think it is sensible to consider expanding the field of research of the so-called "Blue Humanities" (Gillis 2013) which currently focus on the maritime context. While the Blue Humanities have so far focused essentially on the relationality between human life and the world's oceans, I am keen to extend this in the form of an anthropology of aqua-nature-cultures.[10] This extended and expanded field of research would be dedicated specifically to water as a contact zone between humans and other living creatures, whether in the form of lakes, ponds, rivers, streams or, indeed, the oceans.[11] In view of the recent EU announcement regarding the deteriorating quality of European water bodies (European Environment Agency

10 Taking up ideas from the NatureCultures lab in Bremen (Gesing et al. 2019).

11 As part of the Würzburg research symposium "Water, Air and Earth. Shared Becoming in Naturescultures 1" on November 12, 2018, European ethnologist Sven Bergmann gave a lecture entitled "Speculative Ecologies of the Plastisphere: Anthropological Problematizations on the Occurrence of Microplastic in the Sea," in which he pointed out that oceanic research conducted within cultural studies and social sciences generally looks at the sea from the standpoint of the land. The aim here is, in the medium term, to place water at the center as a zone of contact.

2018), such an expanded scope could serve to focus the minds of researchers and publics alike on these kinds of problems. One area that also needs to be considered more than it has been to date, not only in this respect but also regarding other issues mentioned in the following, is pond farming. Considered to be a so-called special culture due to its assumed marginality, it has been largely overlooked in the context of previous research programs, as, indeed, have fish and other inhabitants of water bodies, such as crustaceans and mollusks[12] (Boix 2012; Lasner 2018), whether in the agricultural sciences, the life sciences, the social sciences or cultural studies.

In the following, I will outline five provisional responses to the question hinted at in the title regarding what carp do to Franconians, each of which deserves a closer look as part of detailed research.[13] Due to the considerable significance of regional cultural analysis and regional ethnography, special attention will be paid here to the shared creation of space.

Carp make space

Franconia is a region that is continually being produced. This is by no means anything special – after all, every region is produced in some way or another; it is the result of everyday practices, to put it in terms of European Ethnology (Rolshoven 2003). In Würzburg, this awareness of the production of space was awakened early on by Wolfgang Brückner, who described our discipline at the time as a "social history of regional culture" (Brückner 1990). What is striking to strangers in Franconia is the amount of effort put here into producing the regional, effort also expressed in the frequency with which things are attributed to the region. Anyone traveling

12 In the context of human-animal studies, fish and other inhabitants of water bodies, such as crustaceans and mollusks, have received somewhat greater attention in the social sciences and cultural studies over the last few years. Research has also begun to focus, however, on fish in general (Balcombe 2018) and on specific species such as herring (Sonck-Rautio 2017; for a popular account, Teschke 2014), salmon (Autti 2017; Lien 2015) and horseshoe crabs (Moore 2017). In addition, studies have looked at specific practices, such as hunting and fishing, and at the view of animals underpinning these practices (Schmidt 2018).

13 This article draws on several months' of exploratory research between spring and fall 2018, conducted as a preliminary phase to further planned research. My special thanks go at this point to my student co-worker Pearl-Sue Carper, who supported me actively and highly effectively by doing all kinds of inquiry in this context. During this period, several excursions were undertaken to Franconian pond farms and relevant events, meetings were held with various experts, and a thematic collection of essays and objects was started. Unless stated otherwise, the information offered in this article is taken from this exploratory empirical work, noted down in, among other forms, field notes and notes taken during conversations. One interesting experience when it comes to planning further research was the response of an audience socialized in Franconia to the lecture given in Würzburg in early December: Some told stories about the pleasure of eating the fish, while others told of their resistance to consuming carp; there were anecdotes about carp in the family bathtub, about enjoying a swim in carp ponds and much more.

through Franconia soon notices that whether it is a real estate agency or apple cake, pipe installation, cabaret or cuisine, the Franconian aspect is always emphasized. It has to be Franconian and Franconian means 'good.' This special passion for all things regional and for 'our very own…' can be explained by looking back in history, for example, to the struggles for autonomy led by the merchant classes in the 19th century, a struggle which, especially in these parts, left many a need unfulfilled (Blessing 2006).

Multispecies Ethnography assumes that it is not just humans who create space but other living beings as well. The Franconian pond landscapes in the Aischgrund area, near the Steigerwald forest, and in the southern part of Lower Franconia are regarded as a matter of course as cultural landscapes shaped by human hand, and yet they are also the result of the activities of many living creatures and materialities and, hence, are 'cultural-natural landscapes' (*KulturenNaturenlandschaften*). Landscapes can also be described as historically evolved multispecies landscapes that have emerged out of various webs of life in which humans and other than humans interact and bring forth one another repeatedly (Tsing 2012: 144, 2015). This, incidentally, is also what constitutes their specific character, as the web of life in question is always woven a little differently depending on region and locality. Carp in Franconia play a key role in this respect – tireless workers toiling away underground, keeping the ponds in good condition and preventing the buildup of sedimentation. Through their constant ongoing work with the ponds, carp and humans alike create and maintain a habitat that sustains their own existence and that of many other species. Franconia is a particularly dry region; its ponds perform an especially important function as reservoirs and exert a positive influence on the microclimate.

Thus, in a shared process of making and growing, growing and making, a landscape emerges which can be experienced not just visually, as it goes through the changes of seasons, but also through its specific sounds, smells and tastes. As someone who moved to Franconia having been enculturated primarily in North Germany, the way ponds are dug into the middle of fields and meadows was just one of the things I found strange. Another was the special soundscapes that can be heard here. In springtime, the Aischgrund area, for example, is filled with the croaking of frogs and toads, the singing of numerous birds, the splashing of jumping fish, the humming of wild bees and honeybees – a quite specific sound that I had never heard quite in that way before. At the height of Summer, by contrast, thinly populated areas are uncannily quiet: The occasional splash of a jumping fish is accompanied at most by the humming of the generator attached to the ventilation systems that increase the flow of oxygen through the ponds. Wild plants and herbs growing by the wayside acquire an intensive aroma due to the aridity and heat – wild chamomile, for example, can be smelt even when one is just strolling through the

countryside. The hot sun makes the fruit that grow on the trees in the middle of the pond landscape – plums, for example – especially sweet. These impressions make it easy to comprehend how people who inhabit such spaces might develop a specific feeling of place based simply on these sense-based experiences, and that this awareness of place, incorporated early on in their life, might become a part of their identification with and locatedness within the landscape.[14] This is also essential to the construction of what we understand as 'rural': As such, it is highly relevant for the new commission for cultural analysis of the rural recently established within the discipline of European Ethnology.

When it comes to defining this special sense of place more precisely, the carp proves to be helpful. The fact that people "in Lower Franconia prefer neither the rather thickset and highly arch-backed carp from the Nuremberg region nor the longer and less arched one from the Lusatian area, but rather the carp that is roughly in the middle between these two" (Deschner 1958: 130) is an observation just as likely to be found in the fisheries journals published here as a report on regional and local types of carp originating from particular family-run fish breeding farms. Once again, it is via food culture that region and local space are negotiated. The human inhabitants of the Upper Palatinate, for example, maintain that they only export their carp to the East, whereas people in Franconia eat them for themselves (Angerer 2017: 20). And although the official narrative proclaimed in the array of regional cookbooks and travel guides declares the carp to be a typical Franconian "national dish" alongside the *Schäufele* ('little shovel'), a crisp-fried flat shoulder of pork,[15] here too, creative ideas are needed to maintain the popularity of carp consumption. In October 2018, for example, a restaurant located in the late medieval church castle in the Lower Franconian town of Hüttenheim offered a "carp trilogy." The varied menu included not only "carp refined" but also fast food such as "crispy carp."

As the fisheries official of a Franconian district told me during a conversation, fishbones pose a problem when it comes to marketing carp, though there is, he said, a bone-removing machine available, imported from the East. An experiment conducted by the author showed that, indeed, eating a carp prepared whole is an acquired skill. Displaying know-how when eating carp is one way of becoming an integrated Franconian. Among other things, the bones mean that the eater has to eat more slowly, which recent incomers to the region might also view as the Franconian

14 I learned a lot about this special identification with rural landscapes in the SIEF panel "Moving from, moving to, moving in the countryside: Ethnographic perspectives on rural mobilities," organized by Lauri Turpeinen and other colleagues at the conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists in August 2018 in Stockholm (accessed February 22, 2019. Available at: https://nomadit.co.uk/easa/easa2018/conferencesuite.php/panels/6450). I would like to take this opportunity to thank these colleagues for inviting me to participate in their panel. German speakers are also now able to gain access to this work via Jones (2019).

15 E.g. Anonymous (2013); Bezirk Mittelfranken (2018); Dusik (2017); Fuchs (2017); Höllerl (2011).

Fig. 1.
Coaster Hofmann Brewery,
© Michaela Fenske

'art of living.' This special art of living could, in turn, be understood as "wisdom from the periphery" (Kockel and McFadyen, forthcoming).

Carp not only make the space in which they themselves grow; they also build the foundation for the diverse ways in which that space is accorded value. At a time when cultural heritage is increasingly being accorded monetary and other values, carp is labeled as an item of regional cultural heritage and is sold as "Franconian carp," "carp of the Francs" or "carp from Franconia," thanks to EU directives that permit the special designation of produce from specific regions (Oberle 2019). The carp itself is Franconian, and Franconian means 'good' – little wonder, then, that other Franconian delicacies such as (Central) Franconian beer and (Lower) Franconian wine are offered as a perfect accompaniment to carp. Beer mats in Central Franconia containing anecdotes about ponds associated with the beer one is drinking are enough to make a stranger think they has just about landed in paradise.[16]

Franconian gastronomy traditionally offers carp as a seasonal product, especially during the months containing an 'r' in their name, that is, primarily during the months of autumn and winter. Carp, thus, become tourism workers in the process of marketing a region whose rurality is at once created and attributed value in the

16 'Nice stories' (*Scheene Geschichtn*) beer mat from the Hofman Brewery in Pahres. Other breweries in Central Franconia also use images or references to the carp, including the Roppelt Brewery, which adorns its cellar beer with a carp logo (accessed February 22, 2019. Available at: http://www.brauerei-roppelt.de/brauerei/). Thanks to my colleague in Würzburg, Matthias Schulz, for drawing my attention to this brewery.

context of 'soft tourism.' A visit to "romantic Franconia – carp country" is marketed in coffee table books as a special kind of experience (Arge 2010). A carp museum, carp bicycle trails, carp events and carp art simultaneously generate and illustrate the significance of the fish. When carp become a symbol of popular culture as well and are used, for example, to advertise a student party in Würzburg, it is clear that the animal enjoys regional popularity across varied sections of society.[17] The carp has very much more to offer, however, as a source of food and income.

Carp feed people, among others

Carp feed people and other living beings with their meat. But they also feed others in a broader sense by developing the foundations of a touristic use of space. What is more, they are part of a remarkably resilient rural economy.

Carp pond farming in Franconia is mainly done as a sideline, on a small scale, as a polyculture, and extensively – in other words, in precisely the way that agriculture allegedly can no longer afford to do in the face of pressure from globalization. It is true that pond farming faces considerable problems.[18] These include the problem of encouraging younger people to become pond farmers. Hardly anyone from the younger generation wishes to enter the profession, which is not only associated with high risks, constant effort and considerable physical exertion, not only at harvest time, but also requires an enormous knowledge and a long period of training. Intensive farming on crop fields surrounding the ponds, climate change (which exerts a huge influence on the local interplay between growing and making), and the strong competition from Eastern European pond farming communities also make life difficult for Franconia's pond farmers. So far, Franconian producers have not benefited from the growing global spread of aquacultures, such as in the form of (urban) aquaponics,[19] as an especially effective means of producing animal protein for a growing world population.[20] When asked about this, agricultural experts explain it by reference to the business structure and orientation of Franconian pond farms and the marketing problems arising from taste preferences: These issues work against those who would work as full-time professionals in pond farming, which experts believe continues to be held up and cherished as a model in this sector.

17 Kellerperle advertisement in Würzburg, May 2018. Thanks to Irina Arnold and Marlis Heyer for drawing my attention to this advertisement.

18 Here as elsewhere my comments are also based on a cursory review of the journal *Fischer & Teichwirt* ('Fisherman and Pond Farmer') from Volume 24 (1973) onwards; Bätzing (2013); Hubert (1991); Krappmann (2000); Oberle (2017).

19 In this new form of agricultural business, vegetable growing is done in conjunction with the production of animal protein in the form of fish. Given a growing global population, aquaponics is considered to be a sustainable form of food production, especially in built-up urban areas (Frisch 2014).

20 E.g. Cooke et al. (2016); Fischgesundheit (2014); Steffens (2008); Straka (2017).

Having said this, however, one might well ask, considering fisheries expert Josef Paukner's ideas (1992: 51, 2005), whether the intrinsic logic of this economic sector – often viewed even by experts themselves as being 'backward' – might not, after all, harbor a certain potential that actually fits well currently with future scenarios: Minimizing risks by operating a mixed economy and polyculture, for example; building on sustainable niche economies with a seasonal and regional orientation; and using resources extensively and, thus, sparingly (Troell et al. 2014). These aspects are reflected in the quality of the products as well as in the impacts of their production on the environment. The kind of industrialized production of salmon where monoculture and, in some cases, the frequent use of antibiotics is commonplace, at any rate, is inconceivable in Franconian carp production (Fischermann et al. 2018). The latter also provides a range of services to wider society, such as water storage and the regulation of water run-off (identified by Deschner 1958), climate protection, the provision of land for sport, leisure and recreation, environmental education, and nature and species conservation. Here, too, pond farmers, carp and others are important service providers serving the interests of society. Whether or not these broader services to society might contribute directly to local business incomes alongside selling fish, offering gastronomic delicacies or leasing water bodies, currently still seems to be an open question for society and politicians alike.

Given the decline in shallow water zones throughout Germany, Franconian carp ponds assume a special role in nature and species conservation, not least regarding a number of conflicts recently associated with the return of certain species.

Carp support other animals and plants

The ponds cared for by carp and humans alike have become a place of refuge for rare animals and plants in a landscape otherwise dominated by agricultural monocultures and intensification. In addition to otters and cormorants, ospreys, red and black kites, kingfishers, dunlins and many species of insects and amphibians have been observed in and near the ponds (*Fischer und Teichwirt* 1973). These all play a part in growing and making, and all of them benefit from the work done by carp and humans, even as they themselves have their own impacts on the community around them.[21] The return of several previously thought to be extinct species or ones which had been driven out in the 19th and early 20th century, a process supported by species conservation, is currently leading to many a heated debate at the start of

21 In line with studies conducted by Vinciane Despret (2014) and others, making and growing in rural economies is seen here as a multiple process engaged in by various actors. In this new reading, animals, humans and plants are just as involved as bacteria, microbes and other materialities. In this connection, a new understanding of work is currently being debated. Anthropologists Sarah Besky and Alice Blanchette wonder, for example, what this means in times of precarious work and the growing redundancy of human workforces (2018).

the 21st century. Carp are, thus, in the focus of the current dispute over the 'right to return' of animal species that are legally protected in principle.

Some animal returnees, such as cormorants and otters, are not especially welcome among pond farmers, because their presence poses a competitive challenge to pond farming interests. They assume the role in carp ponds that wolves currently do in other landscapes. Once they acquire a taste for the fish, they can wreak considerable damage in a fish pond.[22] When this occurs, it is once again the very actors that are already struggling with economic difficulties and the problems of their work not being seen and appreciated who are shouldering the costs of supporting the return of endangered species, a support willed by the public and confirmed in policy. How best to deal with these returnees is a matter of contestation and dispute in every place it arises, and their integration is also the object of ongoing negotiation within Franconian multispecies societies. Here, too, the coexistence of species unfamiliar to one another is part of an open-ended learning process.

In terms of the people who work in farming, this process of negotiation and learning shows, like few other areas, that domestication has become inscribed not only in the meat and fibers of the animals and plants concerned but also in the bodies of the people involved (Lien 2015). The benevolent attention brought to bear at the start of any process of domestication and increasingly referred to in the context of human-animal and human-plant relationships, even in German-speaking countries, as "caring" has also come to shape the humans involved, precisely because of the diverse practices associated with it (Fenske 2019). One of the consequences of this is that all living beings belonging to a household are deemed worthy of protection because, among other things, the humans involved identify with them, as the shared pond (in the case of carp), the shared growing and becoming has generated incorporated bonds of the closest kind, often over generations. This is one of the reasons (the main one, in my view) why some human actors find it so very difficult to integrate the impacts associated with the return of otters, wolves and others into the respective multispecies society. It is also why financial compensation – even if it can be obtained in a relatively non-bureaucratic manner – may only partially serve to compensate for the losses suffered.

In addition to all this, though, carp also make a key contribution to the negotiation of social orders among humans.

22 According to the accounts of the humans involved in each case, otters and wolves behave in similar ways, to the extent that both species sometimes traumatize whole stocks of the animals they hunt in rural economies and severely injure many animals in the course of the hunt. Accounts of beavers illustrate that their building activities are regarded as problematical because the edifices they build can, for example, in some instances, constitute a massive intervention in the course of rivers.

Carp make men

Gender is not a straightforward category in Late Modernity either. Just how problematic the image of what it means to be a man has clearly become, in Germany too, in the age of the #MeToo debate can be seen from the fact that a recent edition of the German *Spiegel* magazine was dedicated to the issue under the heading "When is a man a man?". In an almost worried tone, the magazine discusses, among other things, therapeutic treatments for those disconcerted by their masculinity (Gutsch 2018). Certain practices have proven to be especially helpful when it comes to rehearsing and confirming roles deemed to be masculine. One of these is hunting, which – rather like keeping and caring for bees prior to the boom in urban beekeeping – up until recently, was practiced primarily by men in Central Europe. Against the background of the current uncertainty, it is not surprising that hunting animals is enjoying growing popularity among the members of mainstream society.[23]

Outwitting, overpowering and killing a chosen animal, while, at the same time, testing and overcoming one's own limitations enables the persons concerned to experience themselves in a way that, thanks to the corresponding role attribution, reinforces a masculine gender identification. However, Tim Ingold has pointed out that hunting simultaneously forges a connection with the hunted, making hunters and prey, in a way, a single entity (Ingold 1994). And this is what is especially interesting when it comes to the creation of gender: In the well-known English-style angling sport known as 'catch and release,' the carp is highly popular as an adversary on account of its fighting capacity, strength, cunning and endurance. 'Catch and release,' also practiced in Franconia especially by young men, involves the anglers hunting preferably large, old carp that are famous for their strength, so-called 'character fish,' as they are known in these circles. The photographic documentation of trophy fish is just as important here as the detailed description of how the hunt was brought to a successful conclusion.[24] This practice, however, violates existing animal rights laws and is prohibited in this country. Rostock rapper Marteria, who engaged in 'catch and release' in Würzburg, is probably not the only person to have been handed down a hefty fine for openly boasting about his catch in a YouTube video (Marteria 2017; Rapper 2018: 9).

23 This is reflected, for example, in the growing acquisition of hunting licenses in Germany. For hunting in Europe generally, Outfox World (accessed February 23, 2019. Available at: https://www.outfox-world.de/news/wo-die-jagd-in-europa-am-populaersten-ist.html).

24 From the comparatively large number of digital accounts from anglers themselves, for example, the online magazine carp.de (available at: https://www.carp.de/), which has since been updated and no longer contains the older reports found when accessed on October 30, 2018; also carp connect (accessed January 10, 2020; available at: https://www.carp-connect.com/), blinker (accessed January 10, 2020; available at: https://www.blinker.de/karpfenangeln/), Fisch & Fang (accessed January 10, 2020; available at: https://fischundfang.de/).

Once again, then, the production of gender – as has repeatedly been shown in European ethnological gender research – is brought about via sport as a key bodily practice (Kestler-Joosten 2015; Kienitz 2016), in this case, with an animal partner (linguistically gendered masculine in German) that is firmly anchored in the relevant cultural context. Or should we also, like the author of the Fischbüchlein ('Little Book of Fish') in the 17th century mentioned at the beginning of this piece, switch gender attributions and speak instead of the carp as a partner (gendered feminine)? As the (male) angler fights the carp to reel it in, the fish mutates, as it were, into a female adversary that must be subdued.[25] Barely anything illustrates this as vividly as the erotic carp calendar published in the Oldenburg Münsterland region of Lower Saxony, which, year on year, shows sexually attractive women with carp – a page a month containing two objectified materializations of male desire.[26] It is not as if there is any lack of sophisticated aids, either: When subduing carp, anglers make use of a wide range of the most ingenious techniques and technologies, while all kinds of bait and hooks are kept at the ready in addition to various sporting equipment. One is led to conjecture that these technologies also assist anglers in creating and maintaining the difference between themselves and the fish, a difference needed to fight it, thereby making the practice of angling (common in Germany) possible in the first place (Schmidt 2018).

Masculinity is not the property of just one gender, however. Current research in rural lifeworlds suggests, for example, that there is such a thing as female masculinity (Oltmanns 2015). More and more women currently engaging in hunting and making use of similar techniques and trappings as men[27] serve to underscore the hypothesis. Such observations, of course, call into question the clear-cut nature of gender relationships desired by some actors. Once again, gender proves to be, among other things, a matter of practices. Not least, it is the practice of narrating, a subject of European Ethnology research from its very beginnings, that assumes huge importance here, as it does more generally in the process of conceiving new worlds. The Franconian carp plays a part in this too.

25 Karl Braun analyzed a comparable situation in the context of Spanish bullfighting (1991, 1997). On the particular brand of rural masculinity both displayed and produced in angling: Bull (2009).

26 On the 2018 edition of the calendar: Pöhler (2018); on its popularity: e.g. Berkholz (2017).

27 For a general consideration of the issue with Austria as an example: Wührer (2017); looking at angling in particular, the now no longer accessible webpage of carp.de contained numerous reports about successful female anglers, e.g. about Lizette Bünder's "exciting" fight with a carp called "Shoulders," with which she set a new women's world record in 2012 (accessed October 30, 2018. Available at: https://www.carp.de/news/allgemeine-news/1233-neuer-frauen-weltrekord.html).

Carp take part in the conception of new worlds

In an age of the narrative turn, people in Franconia also know the power of a good story, not least when it is a matter of enabling identifications and forging connections. Nowadays especially, running a successful business in multispecies societies is as much a matter of a good story as of having a good sense of story placement – one capable, for example, of making a carp dinner a tempting prospect. Given a broad-based understanding of narrative culture, this includes everyday storytelling from face to face as much as stories portrayed in films, books, exhibitions and other public forms of representation (Marzolph and Bendix 2014). With such a broad concept of narrative culture, stories about Franconian carp can be discovered in many places.

Various media present a narrative of the quality and goodness of carp; they include hunting narratives, which, for the most part, can perhaps be best understood as traditional adventure stories, and touristic narratives. The many fisheries and angling associations with their specialist publications constitute an environment especially rich in carp lore. Popular art,[28] pictures, fountain sculptures, statues and monuments tell of the splendor, strength and beauty of the carp, emphasizing time and again the close connection between carp and humans; they tell of not only the finest hours of that connection but also the perils of coexistence between human and animal (Klupp, Schäfer, and Schütze 2016; Mück 1990). Countless film documentaries on Bavarian television similarly celebrate the diversity of life in the ponds, as do information boards set up at their edges. Lores and legends recall historically significant events. In children's books such as *The Carp with the Golden Scales*, teachers such as Maria Hirsch introduce children to the trials of human life, such as the experience of inequality, in this case, in the form of the heart-rending, unfulfilled love of a carp for the moon (Hirsch 2002). Exhibits in museum display cabinets tell us who belongs to the local multispecies society: Storks, carp, herons, cockles, frogs and ducks. They also tell us who does not belong: Otters and beavers, for example. And this is what it is all about initially: About repeatedly redefining and reproducing the order of things in the fishpond, about belonging, inclusion and, indirectly, exclusion. Franconia is narrated using carp as well.

More than all this, the harmless and sometimes amusing stories of carp and humans tell of life itself: They negotiate past, present and future. Research on narrative culture, Literary Animal Studies (Borgards and Pethes 2013) and ecocriticism (Zapf 2016) make us aware once more of the world-shaping power of narratives, and carp in Franconia participate powerfully in this.

The question of what carp make of Franconians could be rendered fruitful in many other areas of European Ethnology. Research on food culture has already

28 These include, for example, the cartoons and drawings of Franz Swatosch (Aischgrund Carp Museum 2010).

Fig. 2.
Franconian multispecies society, interpreted by the museum in Schlüsselfeld, © Michaela Fenske

been touched on as part of the production of space; changes in culinary tastes and stubbornly resistant stereotypes, such as the 'mustiness' of carp meat would be an interesting topic in this context. Carp could be a topic in research on Europeanization, just as it could in an anthropology of the political – all it would take is a brief conversation with pond farmers to register the power of policies on the everyday processes of making and becoming in the ponds.

Thus, the globally present carp is an ideal research partner in European Ethnology because it renders comprehensible the interwovenness of human becoming in many different ways.

A fitting fish for European Ethnology

In the course of a shared becoming and making, carp spawn Franconians and Franconians spawn carp. Their rapid growth in the warm Franconian sun, the constant care, cooperation and competition that goes on – all these facilitate life in the multispecies societies described here. Looking at the carp, then, invites us to think fundamentally about the interplay between multispecies societies and about how their positive effects, for example, in view of a desire for social and biological diversity, might be reinforced: How food security can be achieved in times of a growing world population, how best to deal with climate change, what ways there might be of producing food in a sustainable way, and how peripheral areas are attributed (also monetary) value. If rural societies and economies are acquiring special relevance

again in the face of the challenges of our time (Göttsch 2018), then carp pond farming is a part of this – in Franconia as much as in North Germany, in Lusatia, in the Czech Republic and elsewhere.

Research on these and other multispecies societies with their different logics and opportunities has become part of the work addressed by European Ethnology. Whether it be in Franconia, Lower Saxony, Lusatia, on the Czech border or in Podgorica in Montenegro,[29] whether it be in the present or the past, time and again the key issue is that of the specifics of the multispecies societies we study, which both appropriate spaces for themselves and are the prime movers in producing such spaces. Multispecies Ethnography and new fields of research associated with it in the international anthropologies make it possible once again for European Ethnology to fulfil its aims in a rapidly changing world. In the field presented here, as indeed elsewhere, it is capable (to mention again a key aim of the discipline) of engaging in broad interdisciplinary collaboration as a means of helping to gain an understanding of the potential contained in societies and to contribute towards solving urgent problems of the present day.

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29 These are places and regions where team members of the Department of European Ethnology in Würzburg are currently working in Multispecies Studies: Irina Arnold is conducting research in the context of a DFG project on the return of wolves, taking the example of animal-human relations in Lower Saxony; Daniel Best is studying Franconian winegrowing as a field of both cultural analysis of the rural and of a Multispecies Ethnography; Marlis Heyer is looking at narratives about the return of wolves in Lusatia, also as part of a DFG project; Arnika Peselmann is combining Border Studies and Multispecies Ethnography in her research on black grouse on the Czech border, research she is conducting in collaboration with Jiří Woitsch (Czech Acadamy of Science) and Karolína Pauknerová and Roman Figura (both from Charles University in Prague); Elisabeth Luggauer is working, among other things, on relations between humans and stray dogs in Podgorica.

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Dealing with the 'digital' and 'virtual' in Ethnography*

Observations from the methodological discourse in Anthropology

Abstract: This paper presents a synopsis of key methodological strands, focal points and positions in scholarly discussions on digital anthropology, virtual ethnography or internet ethnography, as they have been used since the 1990s in the international field of cultural anthropology and a little later also in the German-language field of *Kulturanthropologie/Europaeische Ethnologie/Volkskunde*. It examines which tasks, expectations, insights and goals in the extended discipline were connected with the turn to the internet and digital technologies and how precisely the *digital* and the *virtual* were negotiated on the methodical and theoretical level. The focus is on the questions: Which particularities and innovations did these methodological discussions about the internet and the digital bring along, and what does the *digital* render possible for ethnography and the discipline?

Keywords: digital anthropology, ethnography, internet, digital media, methodology, mediatized sociality, learning processes

The internet – and subsequent digital technologies – have played a continually increasing role as a research field and subject in the discipline of cultural anthropology/ethnology in the US-American and German-speaking areas since the early 1990s.[1] This is manifested in research papers and projects,[2] institutional specializations,[3]

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1 Even though the term *digital* has played an increasingly central role in the methodological discussions of the past few years, the *internet* functions in this article as a terminological and analytical starting point. Cf. Anette Markham's thoughts (2016: 3): "The 'internet' accurately focuses on the means by which digital technologies have become a central feature of 21st Century social life. […] Without the internet, digital forms would not have such spread and impact."

2 Cf. *Why we post*: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/why-we-post.

3 To give a couple of examples: The master's program (MSc) in *Digital Anthropology* at University College London (n.d.) or the *Center for Digital Ethnography* at RMIT University in Melbourne.

working committees[4] and multimedia platforms,[5] and has also been precipitated into distinct terminologies: *Digital anthropology*, *digital ethnography* or *virtual ethnography*.[6] There is almost no area of the internet which has not been ethnographically illuminated: The ethnographic studies in this field range from *mediated breakups* (Gershon 2010), *Facebook practices* (Frischling 2014), a*ugmented realities* (Koch 2017b), and *first-person-shooter cultures* (Bareither 2012) to the history of the *free software movement* (Kelty 2008) and *Anonymous* (Coleman 2015).[7] A range of works also discusses transformations in methodology, particularly the ethnographic approach (Boellstorff et al. 2012; boyd 2009, 2015; Horst and Miller 2012; Pink et al. 2016).

This article undertakes a synopsis of central strands and key positions from the methodology literature around *digital anthropology*, *virtual ethnography* and *internet ethnography*, and how they have developed since the 1990s in the international professional discourse of cultural anthropology and, a little later, in German-language cultural anthropology/European ethnology/folklore (*Volkskunde*). It traces which tasks, anticipations, opportunities and goals in this subject and in the broader discipline are bound up with the turn toward the internet, and how the digital and the virtual are discussed on the methodological and theoretical level.

The question of which particular insights have been brought along with this methodological discussion regarding the internet is in focus here. It is also about the question of what the internet has made possible for ethnography and anthropology. A differentiated, field-related consideration has become urgent against the background of numerous other disciplines which, similarly, research ethnographically on the Internet (Fleischhack 2016; Miller 2016). My article draws largely on works from Anglo-Saxon cultural anthropology, represented especially by Tom Boellstorff, Daniel Miller or danah boyd, which are also adopted by German-language professional discourse.[8]

4 An international example is the Committee for the Anthropology of Science, Technology & Computing (castac.org) of the General Anthropology Division of the American Anthropology Association, or, in the German areas, the Commission for Digitalization in Everyday Life of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Volkskunde (www.goingdigital.de).

5 A number of relevant platforms and blogs have arisen in recent years: e.g. http://culturedigitally.org, http://culanth.org, http://savageminds.org, http://limn.it, ethnographymatters.net.

6 A few examples are the following method books on *Digital Anthropology* (Horst and Miller 2012; Boellstorff 2012), *Virtual Ethnography* (Boellstorff et al. 2012; Hine 2005) and *Digital Ethnography* (Pink et al. 2016).

7 An overview of ethnographic studies on digital media can be found in Coleman (2010).

8 I focus here, first and foremost, on Anglo-Saxon cultural and social anthropological disciplinary discourse, as the disciplinary horizon in German-language folklore and cultural studies is too narrow in this topic.

Not just a subfield

The terms *digital anthropology* and *digital ethnography* show that the discipline wanted to consider the societal transformations of the digital world. However, completely different concerns, tasks and goals have been followed with the concepts named here: To start with, it was more than just a formation of a *subdiscipline* (Miller and Horst 2012: 3) with which new areas of research subjects and perspectives were to be expressed. Heather Horst and Daniel Miller, for example, consider the digital "as a highly effective means for reflecting what it means to be human", which they define as the ultimate task of anthropology (Miller and Horst 2012: 3). Yet, they promote the continuation of a (well-)known anthropological mission as a "key to digital anthropology" that entails the study of "how things become rapidly mundane" (Miller and Horst 2012: 29).

Other works, such as Boellstorff's, promote an intensive methodological and theoretical engagement with the *digital* in the discipline. He argues that the discipline has repeatedly been the subject of criticism, such as postcolonial, reflexive and poststructural, but that a theoretical debate on the concept of the digital has not yet happened in cultural anthropology. Boellstorff is addressing an analytical imbalance in the disciplinary discourse and, simultaneously, emphasizing the importance of this discussion, as it significantly co-determines research agendas and theoretical paradigms: "If digital is nothing more than a synonym for Internet-mediated, then all anthropology is now digital anthropology in some way, shape or form" (Boellstorff 2012: 39). Here, the digital is taken up as a cause for questioning key disciplinary tasks, approaches and paradigms in equal measure. The formation of a digital anthropology can also – as Utz Jeggle formulated it elsewhere and in another context – be read as an "expression of new desires for insight" (Jeggle 1984: 12).

This has shown itself impressively in the discussion on *Digital* and *Virtual Ethnography* (Boellstorff et al. 2012; boyd 2009; Pink et al. 2016), in which the ethnographic approach moves into focus. The discussion points out different methodological emphases and objectives. One comprehensive agenda, with examples from empirical research, is summed up by the members of the Australian *Digital Ethnography Research Center* at RMIT University with their volume *Digital Ethnography – Principles and Practices* (Pink et al. 2016). In it, they follow two concerns above all. Firstly, their focus is on researching how digital environments affect and redefine the practices of ethnography. Secondly, they want to find out how "doing research with, through, and in an environment partially constituted by digital media" allows new and innovative methods to come into being, and which stimuli for ethnographic research practice come from this. In this context, the question of how common conceptual and analytical categories which conventionally determine the analytical conventions of ethnography are challenged received considerate attention (Pink et al. 2016: 1). A further strand of the debate, which revolved around the methodologi-

cal peculiarities of ethnographic research in virtual worlds, was significantly shaped by Boellstorff (Boellstorff et al. 2012).

In the works summarized briefly here, two general directions regarding the anthropological tasks are discernible: Exemplarily, acute calls for methodological innovations appear, for instance, with Pink and colleagues, but there are also – similar to Miller and Horst (2012) – calls to hold onto *old* tasks of anthropology.

The disciplinary discourse of German-speaking folklore (*Volkskunde*)/cultural anthropology has also, since the beginning of the 2000s, addressed increasing methodological questions regarding the internet.[9] From the beginning, this discussion was dominated by a general difference between *researching about the internet* and *researching in/with the internet* (Koch 2014: 368; Schmidt-Lauber 2011: 5), where, on the one hand, it was about ascertaining potential research agendas and, on the other hand, about explicit methodological issues. While an early overview of "Folklore research in, with and about the internet" by Thomas Hengartner (2007; translated by the author) was still more concerned with basic investigation possibilities and research practice consequences for the discipline, the "question of if and how the practice of ethnography on the internet can function" (Koch 2014: 368; translated by the author) became more relevant in more recent years. However, overall, the German-language works (with a focus on methods) have been concentrated primarily on questions of feasibility and implementation (Hegner and Hemme 2011; Koch 2011).

These positions and works exemplify a methodological discussion which has been established, since the middle of the 1990s, in the broader ethnological and cultural anthropological discipline, especially in the Anglo-American regions, and which, only a little later, increasingly engaged the German disciplinary context. It was not only about the formation of a subfield that defines new areas and topics of research, but the digital was taken more as a cause to question the discipline extensively as to its analytical categories and approaches, and methodological ways of doing research, particularly ethnographic practice.[10] I will demonstrate that with some key examples in the following chapters.

9 Methodological considerations can be found, among others, in the following works: Amelang (2001); Bachmann and Wittel (2011); Bareither (2013, 2016); Blask (2013); Frischling (2014); Hamm (2011); Koch (2011, 2014, 2015); Schönberger (2003); Wittel (2000).

10 Even though the methodological debate in the cultural anthropological/ethnological discipline is in focus here, important input also comes from other disciplines, such as sociology, internet studies or science and technology studies, which were engaged at the same time with the question of how the "ethnographic study of the 'digital'" (Markham 2016: 1) can be defined.

Digital culture(s) – a further arena of cultural analysis

How the digital should be grasped at all has been a major issue in the methodology literature regarding 'Digital Anthropology'. It has been in no way free of controversies. Miller and Horst plead for looking at the digital[11] as something which intensifies the dialectic nature of culture (Miller and Horst 2012: 3). With that, they mean that the digital reinforces the universal and particular of culture. This is one of the premises which they – in addition to five further aspects[12] – formulate as a project of digital anthropology. To this belongs, for them, the viewing of the digital as a new historical phase, which they compare to the introduction of *modern money* and its influence on humanity. However, they understand *mediatization* as such as nothing new but rather that this takes on another form only with the digital. They base this on the new possibilities of convergence between formerly disparate technologies and contents which arise through the digital (Horst and Miller 2012: 5). In their agenda, they also criticize approaches which fetishize the *pre-digital culture* as a place of *secured authenticity* (Miller and Horst 2012: 13).[13]

While Miller and Horst use the digital as a cause for considering the differences and similarities between digital and pre-digital everyday culture, Boellstorff directs his attention to the relationship between the *virtual (being online)* and the *actual (the physical and being offline)* (Boellstorff 2012: 39). He ascribes a fundamental importance for the project and field of a digital anthropology to this relationship. It has, for him, foundational ontological, epistemological and political consequences, as it becomes clear how the virtual is to be understood, to which knowledge about the virtual it should lead and how to do justice to it. With this in mind, it can be seen why he – as presented above – considers a theoretical engagement with the digital to be so central. The virtual, following him, may not be seen simply as a *derivative of the offline* (Boellstorff 2012: 39–40). His attention is directed to the

11 They define the term 'digital' as all that which can ultimately be reduced to binary code but which also produces a spreading of distinctiveness and difference: "The dialectic refers to the relationship between this growth in universality and particularity and the intrinsic connections between their positive and negative effects." (cf. Horst and Miller 2012: 3.)

12 Miller and Horst formulate six principles of digital anthropology, e.g. the commitment to holism as the basis of the anthropological perspective. One further principle has to do with the importance of cultural relativism despite the global nature of our encounters with the digital. To them, it denies assumptions that the digital society is homogenizing. A further principle regards the fundamental ambiguity of digital culture regarding its openness and closedness (Miller and Horst 2012: 3f.).

13 Among others, they criticize the book *Alone Together* by Sherry Turkle (2011), of which they accuse a nostalgic lamenting about supposed lost sociality and humanity (cf. Miller and Horst 2012: 12). Out of this problematic situation, they also develop a call for the discipline which pursues the question of how it came to be that some forms of media are seen as more mediatizing than others, and how the emergence of digital technologies produces the illusion that this is the case (Miller and Horst 2012: 14).

question of how *online sociality* can reference the physical world and how the physical world interacts with online sociality (Boellstorff 2012: 52).

Boellstorff and Miller and Slater discuss a number of epistemic difficulties and problematic assumptions. The latter authors criticize the artificial separation and disconnection of real life from virtual space which is propagated in certain works (Miller and Slater 2000: 5). Boellstorff, however, also sees a contrary problem appearing in some works, in which the virtual and physical are no longer treated as separate or distinct from one another (Boellstorff 2012: 40).[14] In turn, he accuses – similarly to Miller and Slater – other works of not only making false oppositions between the digital (or virtual) and the real, but also of identifying the physical as the *real*, thereby misperceiving, he argues, that the virtual is just as profane as the physical (Boellstorff 2012: 41–42, 2016: 387).

Boellstorff sees the digital (or particularly the virtual that forms his own focus) as a further space for social and cultural expressions and practices – a space which can create *additional realities* (Boellstorff 2016: 395). Miller (2016) refers to this and argues that "we need to treat Internet media as continuous with and embedded in other social spaces, that they happen within mundane social structures and relations" (Miller and Slater 2000: 5). While their approaches emphasize the reciprocal interlacing of digital culture with everyday culture, other works point out the general difficulty of avoiding prevailing ideological associations in this field of investigation. Graham Jones refers, in a rejoinder, to Boellstorff's reasoning:

> For my part, I wonder whether the real/virtual binary will not always somehow be with us, insinuating itself as implicit rationale for anthropological research seeking either to reveal that 'online' sociality is really real or that naturalized, normative forms of 'offline' sociality are deeply artificial – even if the valences are ultimately reversed. (Jones 2016: 399)

Underlying his argumentation, Jones offers Dominic Boyers' "call to reflect upon anthropology's own 'informatic unconscious' as the ethnography of digital culture comes into its own" (Jones 2016: 399). In the same context, the reference by Stefan Helmreich to the historical situatedness of that which is marked as *digital* or as *real* is just as important: "The 'digital real' is a shifting, historically situated social phenomenon". Helmreich points out that, in earlier times, the digital was ideologically totally separated from the *social*, even though in today's times of social media this may be difficult to imagine (Helmreich 2016: 398).[15]

14 Boellstorff criticizes this perspective as a language of intermixture which undermines the project of digital anthropology. In his ethnographic research, these differences are very real and, therefore, an ideal object of investigation.

15 A critical discussion about terminologies takes place especially in Markham: She talks about the temporality of the term *online* in the methodological literature. This was, she argues, absolutely central in the context of digital media during the 1990s and early 2000s, and yet, through the

Other social premises: Mediatized sociality and multiple fields of reference

One similarly intense debate started with the question of which new demands does research in and with digital environments place on ethnographic research. A majority of the method literature is about the particularities of ethnographic research in the internet. Which new insights and experiences during ethnographic research in and with the internet were addressed and problematized? What became visible?

Boellstorff and boyd have addressed the changes for ethnographic research which result from research in and with virtual environments and digital media in multiple methodological contributions and are among the first in Anglo-Saxon anthropology to do so (Boellstorff 2008; Boellstorff et al. 2012; boyd 2009, 2015). In order to clarify the new methodological situation for ethnographic research, boyd points toward earlier disciplinary debates on multi-sited ethnography. She argues that the *mobility* of the society had already changed the terms of ethnographic research, however, she sees the rules changing completely through the mediatized technologies (boyd 2009: 27). She identifies certain basic idiosyncrasies in the investigation of digital cultures. One of these, she says, is that the internet, and she is supported in this by Sarah Pink, is a rapidly changing research environment (boyd 2009: 31; Pink et al. 2016: 1), and the architecture of digital research environments can have a substantial effect on research practice (boyd 2009: 30). Both are, for her, significant features which influence the new research context.

She sees one further distinctive feature of fieldwork regarding the question of the constitution of the field: "Networked technologies," or so boyd describes the new situation, "have completely disrupted any simple construction of a field site" (boyd 2009: 27). That is for her, however, a newer development. According to boyd, in early internet studies, the architectural qualities of chat rooms and MUDs/MOOs,[16] out of which the social internet architecture was composed, still had meaningful field boundaries, as the internet culture of the time was still strongly concentrated on the coming together of social groups around a topic or activity. With the emergence of technologies such as blogs and social networks, boyd considers it much more difficult to find general norms or practices in these structures (boyd 2009: 27).[17]

strong embedding of digital media and the internet, the term, according to her, appeared ever more infrequently. She herself speaks of "ethnography in the digital era" (Markham 2016: 5) in order to avoid false binarities, which, according to her, provoke concepts such as online (offline), virtual (real) or digital (analog) (cf. Markham 2016: 3.).

16 The acronym "MUD" stands for *multi-user dungeon* and "MOO" stands for *MUD, object-oriented*; they relate to text-based virtual (game) surroundings.

17 For the sociologist Christine Hine, the *field* is devised from the following connections through "tracing networks of connection through online and offline space" (Hine 2016: 25). In her choice of words, Hine's thoughts are reminiscent of Marcus's approach of *multi-sited research*, in which he "recognized the 'tracing and tracking' of supralocal connections and geographically widespread

While the characteristics mentioned here tend to describe the research context more generally, it is exactly those new kinds of premises and conditions, under which fieldwork in digital environments happened, which themselves became an object of methodological observation. Boellstorff sees one of the more far-reaching changes for ethnographic research in that the spatially and temporally specific *social realities* are no longer restricted to the physical world (Boellstorff 2012: 52). This new situation has, according to Boellstorff, decisive theoretical and methodological consequences for the analysis of social practices and their meanings. Now, with the possibility of being online, the *social* has – and most of all through the emergence of virtual or digital worlds – many fields of reference. He cites the example of *multiple embodiments* as a new characteristic with which, by way of the different digital and virtual environments, one is currently confronted in research. By that, he means that a person presents themselves differently, depending on the particular environments, and this can also be in behavior. However, according to him, the social practices observed in virtual or other digital environments have *multiple fields of reference*. As an example, he names *making friendships*, which can vary depending on the surrounding – whether it is friendship on Facebook or in Second Life. In this way, a friendship can arise on both platforms without the necessity of having met a person in the physical world (Boellstorff 2012: 52). He pulls the following theoretically and methodologically relevant finding from his own research context in virtual worlds: Some social interactions and the creation of meaning occur only in digital or virtual environments or between these. His observations and thoughts touch, above all, on his fieldwork in the virtual world Second Life. The distinctiveness of his study lies specifically in that he conducted his fieldwork – participant observation supplemented by interviews and surveys – exclusively in this virtual world.[18]

The changes in social conditions and preconditions, especially in their consequences, also take center stage for boyd. She speaks about a "mediated sociality" (boyd 2009: 30) which, in the examination of digital environment, in comparison to unmediated contexts, would need to be considered and which is mainly distinguished by four key properties. She describes these as "persistence, searchability, replicability and invisible audiences" (boyd 2009: 30). For her, this includes the continued existence of online utterances, the quick retrieval of texts, media, and people, and the difficulty of differentiating duplicates from originals. Not least,

networks as a decisive requirement for a research not bound to one single place" (cf. Welz 2009: 198, translated by the author).

18 He grounds his methodological actions as follows: According to him, to require that ethnographic research always includes searching out the inhabitants of virtual worlds means not recognizing virtual worlds themselves as context; it also ethnographically contradicts the fact that most inhabitants of virtual worlds do not meet those known to them in this world offline. Yet, according to him, "studying a virtual world in its own terms" does not mean that one can ignore the different ways in which the actual world influences the virtual (Boellstorff 2008: 61–64).

this also includes the state of not knowing who sees, hears or reads one online. According to her, these properties allow social contexts to collapse and change the rules by which people can behave (boyd 2009: 30*)*.[19] Recognizing and dealing with the attributes outlined here is a central starting point for boyd's research, as these can change the context in which research happens. It is very important to her that researchers learn how to handle these special features (boyd 2009: 31).

Here, boyd and Boellstorff unfold a series of specifics regarding internet environments which change social contexts, and with them, the rules by which people act or interact with others. Consequently, these also have important effects on the research situation, especially on the analysis and interpretation of the ethnographic material, and lastly, on the interaction and relationship between researcher and those researched.

Pink and colleagues see these particularities, first and foremost, in mediatized forms of presence and interaction in the field: "In digital ethnography we are often in mediated contact with participants rather than in direct presence" (Pink et al. 2016: 3). For Annette Markham, new communications technologies privilege and emphasize certain features of an interaction, while simultaneously minimizing or obscuring others; this can irritate conventional methods of doing research and analysis (Markham 2005: 796). Precisely through this heterogeneity of internet environments (Hine 2016: 26; Markham 2005: 796), the British sociologist Hine points to the importance of carefully reflecting on how an interaction happens and under which conditions they happen (Hine 2016: 26).[20]

The observations summed up here concern the process of fieldwork and, overall, ethnographic engagement at its core, as this "is based on the active, observational participation in the everyday life of those researched, with the goal of the meaningful witnessing and reproduction of reality contexts" (Schmidt-Lauber 2007: 219; translated by the author).

How are these observations related or different to earlier methodological debates on ethnography? Based on Marcus's thoughts on multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1995), Welz has suggested a fundamental revision of the understanding of what the 'field' of fieldwork is, what is observable and where it can be observable (Welz 2009: 201; translated by the author). In the methodological works mentioned above, it is, by contrast, less about a fundamental revision of the understanding of the field and much more about a revision of social contexts in the field. This is related to the *multiple embodiments* and the fields of reference which do not arise

19 Boyd also refers to these characteristics as *affordances*. These are "not in and of themselves new, their relation to one another because of networked publics creates new opportunities and challenges" (cf. boyd 2014: 11).

20 Even though digital media makes new ways of interaction available, most of the surroundings investigated in ethnographic studies are text-based (cf. Markham 2004: 131, 2005: 796).

exclusively from the *physical world* but rather overall from the conditions of social interaction in the field that were highlighted by boyd and what she calls "mediated sociality."

The methodological discussion on "the shifting of the relation of space, social connections and communication options to which the new methodological approaches such as those of 'global ethnography' or 'multi-sited research' from Marcus react" (Welz 2009: 200; translated by the author) finds a continuation here, in the sense that the works presented in this article follow and consider further changes and challenges for ethnography through the multiple (new) modes of ethnographic engagement under mediatized conditions that are now possible with the internet and other digital communication technologies and can have – following Boellstorff's and boyd's argumentation – significant effects on the social contexts of and in research.[21]

New dimensions of anthropological learning

The fear of *watering down* ethnographic principles – as was generally present in the criticism of multi-sited ethnography (Welz 2009: 199) – has also played a role, in a different form, in the methodological discussion at hand (Miller 2016). It was expressed in the skepticism regarding the changed modes of 'being' in the field when physical sensory interaction and experience is missing.[22] In this new situation, an insecurity is possibly reflected in how the differences, or rather, the (unfamiliar) conditions of the internet (when interaction is not face-to-face) should be handled methodologically. Numerous empirical works and method articles on ethnographic research practice in recent years have stated how they handle the methodological challenges problematized here. They show, to name only a few examples such as in virtual, avatar-based surroundings, how the non-physical presence of the researcher and the body are newly negotiated as an analytical instrument (Boellstorff 2008); how, especially in sensitive research surroundings such as an online breast cancer forum, trust is built up between forum users and researchers (Orgad 2005); how emotions or socioeconomic characteristics of people in text-based internet surroundings with missing visual information can be read over these (Markham 2005: 799, 803);

21 These methodological issues currently concern nearly all ethnographic studies, not just the ones with a focus on digital culture, because an increasing number of our research participants use social media (Sinanan and McDonald 2018: 181).

22 For Schmidt-Lauber, an "analogy between physical fieldwork, or rather, participant observation, and 'participant observation *on the internet*' […] not yet possible, and talking about fieldwork on the internet should only be undertaken with care" (Schmidt-Lauber 2011: 9; translated by the author).

or how the practice of participant observation is generally newly negotiated in differing internet environments (Rutter and Smith 2005).[23]

Boyd understands ethnographic research in and with digital environments, first and foremost, as a process of acquisition and learning. This primarily contains the acquisition of knowledge about new kinds of conditionalities, under and in which technical, virtual, digital and medial environments are researched, and how these have an impact on ethnographic research practice (boyd 2009: 31). However, the handling of the accessibility[24] and visibility of the culture of the everyday through the emergence of the internet plays a central role.[25] In this context, boyd and Miller see the danger that researchers of the internet tend to partially idealize the possibilities of the internet rather than recognizing the actualities of practice and working with them (boyd 2009: 31; Miller 2016). Social media certainly make it much easier, according to boyd, to obtain insights into the social life of individuals, but it is still easier to interpret these *online traces* wrongly.[26] In order to avoid this danger of misinterpreting the social practices online, boyd points to the importance of understanding the context in which people act (boyd 2015: 83). She sees it as her task to throw light upon relationships and upon possible contradictions between online profile and offline context. In her own research, she is interested in those online spaces which teenagers consider to be important for themselves, in which they come together with friends and peers (boyd 2009: 31). Accordingly, boyd spends many hours visiting the social media pages of youth, reading their comments and tweets, and following their other online traces. Yet, for her, it is just as important to meet the youth face-to-face. In these personal meetings and conversations, the young people offer deeper insights into the contexts of meaning around their media practices and give information about whether boyd's first impression was inaccurate or even wrong. That is why she consciously collects data online as well as offline. The *unmediated interactions*, i.e. those interactions which do not take place over digital media and surroundings are for her as important as the immersion in the pop culture of teenagers in social networks (boyd 2015: 84–86). Although, for her,

23 These works also demonstrate the possibilities of researching life and work worlds which were, for all intents and purposes, inaccessible (cf. Sanders 2005); this is shown, for example, by studies on disease forums and sex work on the internet.

24 Hine sees the special quality of the internet above all in that "the Internet makes everyday public existence searchable in a way that public existence was never searchable before" (BBC Radio 4 2015).

25 These new possibilities of collecting digital *subjective testimonials* in the form of private photos or blog entries have posed a number of new ethical questions. See Boellstorff et al. (2012), Markham and Buchanan (2012) or Zimmer and Kinder-Kurlanda (2017).

26 She justifies her observation with an example from her field of study, showing just how quickly a person's online profile can be misinterpreted when the person themselves is not asked about the profile's meaning and arrangement (boyd 2015: 82–83).

this approach is central, boyd, using Boellstorf's study on Second Life in which he conducted his field research exclusively in the virtual world, refers to the different positions in the methodological disciplinary discourse (boyd 2015: 83), which are, however, especially indebted to their different research concerns and questions.

Here, it should be considered which aspects and approaches of ethnography came into focus and increased in meaning through the *digital*. For Welz, the debates on the methodological approaches of *global anthropology* from Burawoy and *multi-sited research* had the important effect that these make "doxic presumptions of ethnographic field research explicitly addressable and questionable" (Welz 2009: 201; translated by the author). In the course of this, it becomes clear that anthropological research has always privileged settled social relationships over forms of mobility and travel (Welz 2009: 201). What becomes visible in the debate on digital and virtual ethnography?

The approaches described most notably negotiate new requirements for the presence, participation and interaction in the field which are no longer (exclusively) oriented toward purely physical criteria. They question a methodological approach, the central research strategy of which is set almost exclusively on physical-sensory co-presence and experience in the field. Forms of 'mediated contact' and media (e.g. doing interviews via phone) have played a role in fieldwork before, however, the 'mediated options' and forms of 'mediated contact' were far less present and significantly explored in earlier methodological debates on ethnography. In that way, it is a relatively new phase for the history of ethnography, because the concept of (physical co-) being in the field gets a new component with the many mediated modes of interaction and 'being' in the field that are now possible with the internet and its various digital and virtual spaces. That this, at the same time, means a significant methodological (re)learning, or rather, adaptation process, which is still in the process, has been made clear by the works discussed here.[27]

Ethnographic (future) visions: The example of "Writing Culture Critique, Digitally"

The methodological exploration process has, for some anthropologists, not yet been finished. The transformation of ethnographic practice through research in digital movements is rather an inevitable process for Gabriella Coleman, who in her study of *Anonymous* dedicated herself to an extremely challenging movement from a methodological standpoint (Coleman 2015): "[T]he study of digital media transforms the possibilities and contours of fieldwork" (Coleman 2010: 494). However, she also

27 Here, the adaptive element of ethnography, meaning the adaptation of ethnographic research practice to the particular research surrounding in which one currently works, is not meant so much but concerns anthropological and ethnographic practice more generally.

considers further methodological engagement to be important, and her attention also applies to the handling of digital data material:

> Ethnographers will increasingly have to address how to collect and represent forms of digital data whose social and material life are often infused with elements of anonymity, modalities of hypermobility, ephemerality, and mutability and thus pose new challenges to empirical, let alone ethnographic, analysis.[28] (Coleman 2010: 494)

For George Marcus, and Kim and Mike Fortun, the methodological debates on *Computers In/And Anthropology* must still, all in all, be pursued further, though they acknowledge that the field of digital anthropology has, in fact, experienced important steps and developments. They promote a new phase of experimentation with digital form, especially by means of a digital platform, in order to newly sound out not only the possibilities of ethnography and the ethnographic archive, but also the forms of collaboration between researchers (not only from anthropology) (Fortun, Fortun, and Marcus 2017: 13).[29] They base their sketch in the history of the discipline. On the one hand, the three authors reference earlier anthropological experiments with computers from the 1960s. On the other hand, they see their intent as being the possibility to be able to again take up those arguments and proposals about the implications and boundaries of the form which originated in the middle of the 1980s in the Writing Culture critique. At the time, the arguments would have addressed, above all, the singularity and authority of the ethnographic voice in writing about other people, the monograph as an *end of analysis*, and the problem of the extent and range of the investigation (Fortun, Fortun, and Marcus 2017: 13). They assign the task of continuing this tradition of experimenting with ethnographic form to digital anthropology, as it emerged then in the debate, and to make a "more collaborative and open-ended ethnographic work/writing – across time, space, generations, and 'cultures'" possible (Fortun, Fortun, and Marcus 2017: 13). They refer, above all, to their own project, the *Platform for Experimental Collaborative Ethnography (PECE)*, for the implementation of their thoughts.[30] For them, this presents an approach which partially supports and allows new collaborative forms of examination, data production and data sharing (Fortun, Fortun, and Marcus 2017: 14). However, alongside it, they define these as a central target of the platform, to create and sustain an "explanatory pluralism" in ethnographic representation and analysis (e.g. through different levels of interpretations from different researchers, data materials

28 Here, she mentions internet memes, chat logs, viral videos or comments which – she refers to the ethnographic works of Jones and Schiefflin (2009) – play a central role in the study of digital media.

29 According to them, the politic of the *digital form* must be read against the grain in order to do justice to the anthropological understanding of language, meaning and culture (Fortun, Fortun, and Marcus 2017: 14.)

30 Platform for Experimental Collaborative Ethnography (n.d.).

or explanatory paradigms), which they consider an anthropological necessity in the face of the scientific, technical and cultural complexity of present problems.[31] Digital anthropology needs, according to Fortun and his co-authors, an infrastructure which can take up, allow and embody poststructural theories of language, and postcolonial and feminist understandings of the politics of language. In this way, an ideal form of their system can create an even *thicker* ethnographic knowledge (Fortun, Fortun, and Marcus 2017: 17–18).

Their contribution, "Writing Culture Critique, Digitally" (Fortun, Fortun, and Marcus 2017: 13), takes up Marcus's earlier thoughts on "The End(s) of Ethnography" (Marcus 2008). His criticism in that is (as Welz interprets him) that the central anthropological undertaking currently lacks a conception of "how one could, collectively and systematically, bring the many individual ethnographic findings into relationship with one another, so that knowledge about human experience and human agency can be enlarged through this" (Welz 2009: 207; translated by the author).

Marcus and the Fortuns initiate (here) the call to actively pursue the question of methodological innovation in ethnographic approaches: They see the forms and possibilities of data production and the presentation and representation potential of digital ethnography and anthropology as not yet exhausted.

Conclusion

The primary aim of this article was to give insights into the methodological discussions around digital anthropology and digital ethnography. To conclude, I want to draw on a methodological observation by the Swedish anthropologist Ulf Hannerz from the early 2000s.

Ulf Hannerz has already dealt with the question of *polymorphous engagements* and the increasing importance of media, especially in multilocally-aligned ethnographic research in his 2003 essay *Being there …and there…and there!: Reflections on Multi-Site Ethnography*. According to Hannerz, research relationships have, for quite a while and to a surprisingly large extent, not all been face-to-face. He summarizes: "Media, personal or impersonal, seem to leave their mark on most multi-site studies" (Hannerz 2003: 212). Still more important for one's own context seems to me, however, to be his reference to the limited amount of observation and participant observation in some multi-sited ethnographies, to which he ascribes the "modern settings" in which these arise: "There are surely a great many activities where it is worthwhile to be immediately present, even actively engaged, but also others which may be monotonous, isolated, and difficult to access" (Hannerz 2003: 211). As an

31 This is to be done through "different artifacts and data, different annotations from different researchers, different explanatory paradigms – into insight, through a variety of display mechanisms" (cf. Fortun, Fortun and Marcus 2017: 17).

example, he refers to his own ethnographic research with foreign correspondents, commenting on them as follows: "What do you do when 'your people' spend hours alone at a desk, perhaps concentrating on a computer screen?" (Hannerz 2003: 211).

These considerations, proposed at the beginning of the 2000s, address changes in research relationships through media and what Hannerz calls "the celebrated and mystified notion of 'being there'" (Hannerz 2003: 202). The debate around multi-sited ethnography offers, for all intents and purposes, its own possibilities for connecting with the positions on digital anthropology and digital ethnography addressed here. While these considerations by Hannerz were not really followed up in the debates on multi-sited ethnography, the biggest accomplishment of the approaches outlined in this article are that they take up the task to comprehensively reflect the role of 'mediated environments' and media technologies in ethnographic research settings. What has been previously appearing on the margins of methodological debates has now entered its effects for ethnographic research and analysis into center stage within the last decade.

The debate also makes it clear that yet another fundamental discussion on questions of ethnographic representation, in the sense of Marcus and the Fortun's *explanatory pluralism*, is needed. This touches especially on the question of how digital culture and digital material can be adequately represented ethnographically, and according to which other rules this can succeed.[32] Finally, the debate shows that digital anthropology, and with it the further cultural anthropological/ethnological professional discipline, is just starting out here. Regarding that, Horst and Miller say: "The lesson of the digital for anthropology is that, far from making us obsolete, the story that is anthropology has barely begun" (Miller and Horst 2012: 30).

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32 In addition to Coleman, Boellstorff also takes up this question in his monograph on Second Life (Boellstorff 2008).

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Timo Heimerdinger, Anne Koch

It looks and blinks*

The mail-order catalog *Die moderne Hausfrau* as a promise of problem-solving and *Joie de Vivre*

Abstract: The article deals with a specific material-cultural segment of household and home furnishings as part of everyday experience and interpretation practice. It develops the thesis that these objects and their text-image marketing serve as an externalization and hiding of basic human problem potentials which are of a social, practical, emotional and spiritual-religious nature. The focus is not on problems but on solutions. This strategy is analyzed as functional regarding the regulation of vital issues and, thus, interpreted as part of a popular emancipatory everyday strategy: Always look on the bright side of life! Due to the breadth of needs mentioned above, cultural studies approaches which are influenced by folklore and religious studies cooperate and identify the popular everyday aesthetics style using the example of the mail-order catalog *Die moderne Hausfrau* ('The Modern Housewife'), which has existed since 1967. You will find everyday household helpers, such as decorative items around the kitchen, home, garden and cemetery, in this low-price range of goods. The products are promoted in a mix of information, visualization and entertaining narrative framing, which is typical of this market segment and which we conceptualize as enchantment and a promise of problem solving. The essay includes, as a contribution to research into material culture, references to living space, wall decoration and popular culture research, as well as religious economics and aesthetics.

Keywords: everyday aesthetics, home decor, popular religion, material culture, mass taste, mail-order catalog

1. Everyday aesthetics and material culture

With what sorts of objects do people surround themselves in their homes? What things do they select as being suitable, useful or beautiful? These seemingly harmless questions concern everyday material culture which we deal with in the household furnishing sector that does not explicitly promote itself as high-quality or focusing on design or quality, but as cheap mass merchandise that finds its way to the customer via marketing routes such as teleshopping, 1€ shops, street trading or mail order. Our aim is to contribute to the cultural analysis of the everyday aesthet-

* German version in *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 2019, 115 (2): 216–237. Translated by George Low.

ics of use among wide sections of the population (König 2003; König and Papierz 2013). We hope to advance analytically into an area beyond the eloquent bourgeois practices of articulation and autothematization by examining the nature and commercial exploitation of this material-cultural segment.[1] It is relatively difficult for phenomena far below the threshold of bourgeois perception to becomes a topic of investigation even in the German academic discipline *Volkskunde* (European Ethnology), with all its frequently discussed terminological variations, in the sense of the dgv (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Volkskunde* – 'German Association of Ethnology') and/or *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*, referred to in the following as 'the discipline.' This is particularly true when we are dealing with nonmigrant environments far below the average economic level which cannot be subsumed under the heading of youth culture (Warneken 2019). It is true that the subject can look back on a long history of investigations into mass cultural, lower-class phenomena and boast relevant studies in the recent past (Ege 2013; Wellgraf 2012) and even in the most recent past (Götz 2019). Nevertheless, gaps remain, possibly related to the socio-cultural position of the discipline itself – once referred to by Bausinger (1994: 4) under the heading "We petty bourgeois" – together with all the related efforts to distinguish and promote itself.

We will, therefore, focus by way of example on the range of products (or rather on selected items from the years 2012 to 2018) in the popular mail-order catalog *Die moderne Hausfrau* ('The Modern Housewife'; hereafter: DmH) from the catalog company Walz GmbH (hereafter: Walz), which we consider to be both informative and typical of a particular style of mass culture because it has existed and been successful for years.

Based on this empirical example, we will develop hypotheses for the everyday cultural significance of this style. In this context, it is important to avoid two reductions: The functionalist one and the aesthetically disparaging one. Therefore, we will not adopt any functionalist view of human behavior which would rashly interpret the use of the object as exclusively compensatory, for example, to overcome uncertainty and contingency; rather we see the social practice in its diverse situative embeddedness as entertainment, enjoyment, pleasure, play and much more. In addition, it would be tempting, against the background of the description and presentation of the products offered in DmH, to discredit or mock the range of items to be examined from an aesthetic or practical point of view. Most of the goods on offer are cheap, often manufactured from synthetic materials and intended for a relatively short life-span. In view of the motifs, colors and shapes, everyday classifications, such as kitsch, junk and schlock, immediately suggest themselves. We will, however, avoid these judgmental terms derived from the distinctive point of view of the intel-

1 This text is the result of a lengthy discussion process; we are grateful to Konrad Kuhn for instructive tips.

lectual middle classes and will, instead, examine DmH as a significant example of a widespread present-day consumer and material culture. We will offer interpretations concerning the significance of the practices connected with these objects using a combination of ethnological and religion-based approaches. The connection of these scientific approaches is a reaction to the observation that practical everyday solutions and decorative and, in the widest sense, spiritual and religious motifs (e.g. motifs of dwarfs, the Virgin Mary, angels or Buddha) are interwoven.

We will focus on an interpretation and experience horizon that is, above all, implicit. The problems addressed in the range of products are extremely diversified, ranging from tight trouser waistbands to the loss of loved people. What is striking is that the presentation of the goods does not express difficulties but presents solutions – we refer to this style as dethematization. That it operates so ordinarily, casually, subtly and, to a great extent, unthematically represents a challenge for this investigation. At the same time, it is precisely this factor that makes it interesting, because it sheds light on a real living environment that is generally not specifically considered and, simultaneously, this dethematization of the problems that occur in everyday life represents one of its strategies. Since only rough user data are available at present, we would like to reconstruct from an analysis of the product range and their commercial exploitation in the combination of text and images in the catalog, a related style of everyday aesthetics and its state of mind from implicit indications. Our approach, therefore, bases itself on the seller's side not on the buyer's, which would have required the methodologies of the fields of marketing, social background or reception.[2] This results in an important reservation: Whether the use of the products and the way the catalogs are read really lead to the effects mentioned by the seller (with how many buyers and to what extent) remains hypothetical here.

We will focus on the presentation of the product range in the media and on the individual characteristics of the items on offer. The advertising strategies of the seller, the linguistic form, linguistic pragmatics, the image program and the practice of 'reading' the catalog are important and accessible points of reference. We assume that it is not just the purchase and use of the products offered that are effective practices in everyday culture but – even before that – leafing through the catalog, looking at it and reading it, and the style of everyday aesthetic that is to be identified here is established both in the actual and the imagined use of the items. We presume that the product range on offer can be marketed successfully precisely because it meets the demands of popular practical, social and emotional situations accurately. We develop the hypothesis that the mail-order catalog DmH can be seen as a promise of holistic problem-solving and as a regulator of specific feelings and,

2 The few empirical studies available reveal discrepancies – sometimes considerable ones – between the range of products offered and the actual furnishings of living rooms (cf. Schilling 2003: 148).

therefore, finds a grateful reading public in a world full of demands for action that can easily be perceived as excessive.

The subject to be discussed here continues thematically a whole series of ethnological and religious discourses for which some relevant literature is cited. The investigation into material culture (König 2003) examines things as a perspectivization of human action; such a program was also the focus of research into wall decoration, which has now almost completely gone out of fashion (Brückner 1973; Schilling 1971, 2003; Tübinger Wandschmuckforschung ('Tübingen Research into Wall Decoration') 1970). Questions of the representation and presentation of privacy and status are investigated by home research (Katschnig-Fasch 1998); research into popular piety (Knoblauch 1991, 2009), into religious material culture (McDannell 1995; Morrow Long 2001) and cultural economy (Koch 2014). All these approaches aim – on different levels – to establish the meaning and the personal modulation of the related questions of life, values, social relationships and cosmologies, as depicted by Miller (2010) using material cultural case vignettes. Our approach is also related to the examination of popular everyday aesthetics (Gyr 2012; Maase 2010; Morgan 2012) with their questions concerning pleasure, decor and consumption. The wide range of items presented in DmH results in a wide range of scientific connectivity options. In this essay, we will concentrate on the connections to research into piety, popular everyday culture, and consumption and material culture.

We will proceed as follows. Firstly, we will consider the catalog as a genre, position it in contrast to other publications, such as *Manufactum* and *Grüne Erde* ('Green Earth'), and present it both as a source and a medial everyday form of practice (chap. 2). We will then develop hypotheses from models from our discipline concerning the function and usage of such a catalog, focusing on consumption identity, everyday competence experience, privacy, contemporary spirituality and material culture (chap. 3). We will define these theses more precisely based on examples from DmH and using them, we will explain the practical, social and emotional neediness already mentioned (chap. 4). From this, we will draw consequences for the creation of a specific everyday aesthetic style of problem solving (chap. 5).

2. *Die moderne Hausfrau* – a catalog for all eventualities

2.1 The mail-order catalog – a dying breed?

"Brilliant things. Guaranteed cheap"[3] – For years *Die moderne Hausfrau* has been successfully using this slogan as its subtitle.[4] The mail-order catalog has been pub-

3 "*Geniales. Garantiert günstig*."

4 Ironically enough, a first glance at the title page of the catalog reveals that the name *Die moderne Hausfrau* ('The Modern Housewife') appears totally outmoded – particularly the combination of the traditional female role ascription and the pretension to modernity. Walz informed us that internal

lished by the catalog company Walz GmbH from Bad Waldsee in Upper Swabia since 1967. Following several takeovers, the firm is currently a subsidiary company of the Apollo Global Management Group in America. Its services include online marketing and the sale of individual items via teleshopping. The cheap range of products, which varies slightly according to the season, covers household items, interior furnishings, health and the garden. The almost 1,000 articles generally cost between €5 (c. $5.60) and €15 (c. $17), occasionally up to €50 (c. $56), and only in exceptional cases up to €100 (c. $113). The catalog is well-known for its collection of unusual products, ranging from the practical, through the unusual, to the superfluous. Next to special household appliances for mounting and fixing or cleaning, there can be found low-tech gadgets and problem-solvers, such as a zipper repair kit, an adapter for different light bulb fittings, a pen for touching up scratches on furniture or reading glasses with a built-in light. The catalog offers a wide range of items for interior design; we will focus specifically on these in this article. The products are developed or produced specially but are discovered at fairs all over the world, put together to form a line of merchandise and then marketed via mail-order trading. An essential element is that the items are advertised and commented on in the catalog by specially written short texts that frequently comment on or extol the items on offer tongue-in-cheek. Walz themselves claim "cult status"[5] for the catalog; as long ago as 1997, the German weekly newspaper *Die Zeit* made it the subject of a report, which is still worth reading today: "Ruthlessly useful."[6] As regards the buying public, the article detects a tendency towards "the older generation" from all social classes; the key to success lies in finding products "that are useful and in some way amusing." Walz recently confirmed to us that the average age of the predominantly female (80%) readers and buying public is 65. Among them can be found a high percentage of unattached people; in addition they possess comparatively limited financial means ("a low budget"). The proportion of e-commerce is only 23%, which means that the catalog, which has a circulation of 2.2 million in six European countries, represents the principal method of communication, which, in addition, prompts the majority of the online purchases.[7] Overall, the range of articles appears to be a remarkably heterogeneous collection of diverse products of widely differing value regarding decorativeness or usefulness. There are objects on offer which many peo-

discussions had frequently taken place about whether to change the very well-established name but that such a change was not being considered at the moment.

5 https://www.versandhaus-walz.de/die-moderne-hausfrau.html, accessed on December 11, 2019.

6 "Gnadenlos nützlich." (Morch 1997). This article also quotes representatives from Walz who describe the buying and selling strategy. They give the circulation of the catalog as 2.5 million and the number of Schnarch-Ex-Clips (nose clips to prevent snoring) sold annually as between 10 and 20 thousand; these figures illustrate the catalog's remarkable scope.

7 Email communication from Walz on 17.12.2018.

ple never knew could even exist. Consequently, even the company's representatives mentioned in the report in *Die Zeit* that "the demand is awakened by the catalog."

Although, by now, the halcyon days of the well-known everything-from-one-source catalog companies, such as Quelle, Neckermann or Otto, appear to be over or to have been superseded by, for example, Amazon, successful markets still appear to exist for smaller, specialized product ranges. The mail-order catalog generally represents a powerful method of presenting goods which boasts its own medial and cultural history and leads the potential customers to a specific reception attitude of observation with anonymous interest, as they can consider the articles away from the direct presence of a salesperson in a store (Carrier 1995: 126–144). In terms of its presence, the range of goods on offer and the pricing, DmH is definitely located far from the well-known ecological companies or those that cultivate an image of high quality, such as *GEA, Grüne Erde or Manufactum* (Bönisch-Brednich 2002). Whereas the latter clearly focus on expensive, high-class goods, created by craftsmen and characterized by an aesthetic of quality and naturalness that combines practicability, durability, simple elegance and aesthetic tastefulness, DmH follows a completely different path. Customers look in vain for concepts such as sustainability, ecological correctness, tradition, high-quality craftsmanship, regionality, nostalgia, "authenticity" or energy efficiency; the company – almost as a sort of counter-program – focuses on practicability, price consciousness, smartness, and jewelry with a completely different concept of "beauty," which is characterized in many places in the catalog as "sweet," "charming," "delightful" and "wonderful." Walz's management informed us that particularly products that contain images of cats or have cats formed or appliqued on them are regular bestsellers. The company's linguistic strategies in the catalog include advertising slogans which promise, above all, simplicity and practicability. "The modern housewife," followed by, for instance, "a perfect household – a beautiful life," "your best household help," "always a good idea," "1,000 things that make life easier," "always good for a surprise," "always one idea more" or "brilliant solutions."

2.2 The mail-order catalog as an immersive-receptive practice

Occupying oneself with a mail-order catalog cannot be described simply as 'reading a catalog,' or 'looking at a catalog'. Both would mean regarding one form of mediality, either the textual one or the visual one, above the other. Browsing, leafing or rummaging through, rereading or omitting pages in a printed catalog is, however, a very special form of everyday immersive media reception which is structured systematically in this catalog. It would generally be too exhausting to go through the approximately 240 pages in one go. Hardly anybody could take in such a wide variety of products, visual impressions and explanatory notes *en bloc*. Nevertheless, the catalog develops a specific pull that grips and fascinates people.

In order to present this everyday cultural form of practice of browsing through a catalog more precisely, we will, first of all, document a few material cultural observations regarding the thin pages of the colorful paper catalog in A4 format and then undertake an additional investigation into what effect the mere 'assimilation' of the catalog can produce. We cannot offer our own reception research here, but we were given a first indication by the management of Walz, who told us of female(!) customers who told them on the phone when placing an order that (in the pre-Christmas period) they would first make themselves a cup of tea and light a candle before sitting down at the kitchen table to "read" the latest catalog.

To begin with, the "bargain hunters" among the customers are activated by special products that are advertised on the cover (which is made of somewhat thicker paper) and highlighted as a "crackerjack," "hit" or "special" on the fold-out pages on the inside, both at the front and at the back of the catalog. Unfolding and closing these pages means that customers have to slow down the pace at which they leaf through; this represents an initial handling with its own special character. The users of the catalog now have an optically enlarged "bargain counter" in front of them before they proceed to the inside pages. There are tempting saving vouchers; red price boxes attract the readers' attention; and the editorial by "Eva Fröhlich"[8] – complete with photos of her – addresses the subscriber personally. Not only are the subscriber's name and address printed on the back cover of the catalog, but the name is repeated in the salutation of the editorial and sometimes on the vouchers. After this 'greeting,' the standard pages display, firstly, above all, decorative articles, before continuing with categories, such as (household) helper, bathroom, garden, cemetery, jewelry, feet, personal care and pest control. The catalog pages present the articles in boxed units, partly bounded by frames and grouped together by a common, unobtrusive background color whose transparency can, however, vary from double page to double page. Each double page has its own character, in that there are artistic aesthetic elements that 'get the product description going.' Red arrows indicate the direction of rotation, insertion and extension of, for example, telescopic gutter cleaners. 'Before and after' pictures tell the story of the successful use of a product, for example, the elderly lady who, thanks to the wedge-shaped cushion, can now see over the steering wheel through the windshield and no longer has to look through the steering wheel. A single sequence of events generally tells everyday stories, such as the photo of the person wearing a rain hood with a transparent plastic panel in front of their face ("All clear even when it is raining. Waterproof hat 'vista'" DmH D542N-234)[9] that demonstrates a clear view. Or the crossed legs that

8 As well as being a fairly common family name in Germany, "*fröhlich*" also means happy or cheerful.

9 We cite *Die moderne Hausfrau. Geniales. Garantiert günstig. (The Modern Housewife. Brilliant things. Guaranteed cheap.*) D stands for the German edition, A for the Austrian one, followed by the number of the issue and the page number. The examples date from between 2012 and 2018.

plainly display the polyester Christmas socks for guests in use. A smaller photo is added to remote-controlled LED appliances showing the thumb touching the buttons of the remote control; bed-caps and thigh cushions are presented on the body; a hand is pushing the jumbo flapjack tosser under the flapjack ("The great turn in the kitchen" DmH D542N-227). Many of these familiar little stories of household scenes go towards producing a chronological elongation in the sense of a quasi-animation while browsing through the catalog. This form of perusal facilitates an analog reading experience in a retro style that ergonomically and sensually is completely different to surfing on the Internet. However complex the catalog may be, its world is self-contained: No hyperlinks lead to the outside world. Search and discovery experiences are initiated whose nature is reminiscent of the receptive modalities when looking at children's 'Wimmelbooks.'[10] Occupying oneself with Wimmelbooks may be familiar to many customers from their childhood and schooling; in reading matter research, this form of children's literature is characterized as being particularly playful and immersive (Rémi 2011: 129–131, 2018: 161–162).

This manner of being led into contact with the products in the catalog, therefore, causes a high degree of absorption in action. Another strategy is the unpredictability of the groups of products as the customer browses. Despite the general categories, the range of products is presented in a largely unsorted order. Thus, cookie tins and slippers, suction pads and adhesive label printers can variously be found in the categories decorations, kitchen or helps. In this way, each page is a cognitive challenge for everyday sorting and tiring for our orienting predictions and even reduces them to absurdity to such a degree that the absorption is increased. It is taxing to come to terms with the catalog, however simple and playful looking at, reading and leafing through it may appear at first sight.

3. The taste of the masses, dissolution and material culture – interrelationships and concepts

3.1 The taste of the masses and everyday aesthetics

The tradition in the discipline of dealing with aspects of the taste of the masses is a long one, albeit with several interruptions. People have repeatedly demanded that the preferences in taste of wide sections of the population should be investigated, but these demands have been met with varying intensity and occasionally with a certain bourgeois bias. As far as the examination of goods from mail-order companies is concerned, the most important one in our context is an article by Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich (2002), which deals with the *Manufactum* catalog, the counterpart to *Die moderne Hausfrau* for the educated classes. In her article, Bönisch-Brednich

10 Wimmelbooks are mere picture books that assemble multiple scenes of people's interaction at the same time on one side. "Wimmeln" ("be crowded") means this synchronicity of episodes.

defines the characteristics of the marketing logic implemented there, points out the great importance of the catalog presentation (Bönisch-Brednich 2002: 152–159) and can make clear how the supporting of the goods by means of history and stories is a central element in the establishing of an exclusively middle-class style of consumption. In the theory of her argumentation, however, a pattern of explanation is dominant – doubtless expediently – that conceives of questions of taste as being questions of environment and interprets them in terms of Bourdieu's concept of "habitus" as being primarily a sign of distinguishing and self-assurance (Bönisch-Brednich 2002: 151, 160, 161). We propose to tread a different path, because we assume that such a theoretical framework would not do justice to the specifics and the point of *Die moderne Hausfrau* that interests us here. Points of presentation and communication with guests are also important for these products – the catalog repeatedly refers to this with phrases such as "Your visitors will be impressed" – but not primarily with a socially distinguishing purpose. The cheap plastic goods on offer here are not suitable for classic boasts of quality and games of distinction of the bourgeois. What is more important is the 'amusing' element already mentioned just after note 5 – an audience is not a disadvantage here – and the immediate pleasure of the owner in the objects themselves; be it the practical cleansing tool for cleaning underneath and inside windows, the slippers with cat's eyes or the glittering fairy lamp. The discipline deals with such items either not at all or only gingerly. Ueli Gyr (2012) has demonstrated this aptly in a survey. When it does, terms such as kitsch, trinkets, trivial or mass culture continue to be found, which all include a more or less pronounced pejorative element, even though, in any given case, this may not have been the intention.

Even the research into wall decoration, which was carried out several decades ago initially with a certain enthusiasm, was – even though it was not really interested in aesthetic judgments – based on an enlightening objective, critical of ideology, and attempted to decode implicit messages and power constellations or aimed at functions of self-expression, representation or differentiating one's environment (Katschnig-Fasch 1998: 182–212; Tübinger Wandschmuckforschung 1970). Even though the early works of Wolfgang Brückner (1973) and Heinz Schilling (1971) similarly made determined attempts to avoid aesthetically judgmental approaches, (Schilling 2013: 134–155), it cannot be denied that a certain tendency to downplay the matter can be found even retrospectively in the adage "decoration not shock"[11] (Schilling 2013: 147–149) and the opinion in the summary that the decorative articles examined were harmless and risk-free.

Even Ueli Gyr, who, citing the media scholar Jürgen Grimm (1998), advocates vehemently taking kitsch seriously as "a sentimental mode of experience" (Gyr 2012:

11 "*Schmuck statt Schock*."

45) and calls for functional everyday analyses far removed from judgments concerning taste, at the same time, retains the term kitsch and cannot totally free himself from the pejorative semantic which terms like simulation, imitation or deception bring in their wake (Gyr 2012: 50–52).

To the present day, therefore, practices of pleasurable and affirmative surrender to such aesthetic everyday joys continue to be critically addressed by the discipline from the perspectives of escapism, numbing, seduction or late capitalistic 'opiates consumption' and, ultimately, described using the paradigms of deficit and passivity. The fingers with which the discipline probes the matter remain strangely conceptional and move terminologically gingerly. We, by contrast, want to inquire into the subjective gain, enjoyment and usefulness of the practice of everyday aesthetic perception and, in this way, follow Kaspar Maase, who has repeatedly (Maase 2005, 2010) demanded that the immediate experience of aesthetic happiness in everyday circumstances be discussed without a reflex rejection reaction. In the sense of 'positive anthropology,' he follows Sherry B. Ortner and proposes not only analyzing "the growing pleasures and proliferating practices of aesthetic experience" (Maase 2019: 148) from a critical perspective but also taking them seriously and accepting them as a component of and a precondition of a "good life for all" (in this case, at least for the readers of the catalog).

3.2 Dissolution of the religious and 're-enchantment'

Several products inspired by religion are also to be found in DmH: Figures of Buddha, Zen gardens, dwarfs, trolls, elves and fairies from popular nature piety, Christian motifs of crosses, pendants, rose of Jericho, figures of the Virgin Mary, grave decorations and, above all, angels that are supposed to provide special support. These figures from the Christian tradition have become extremely popular in the last few decades and have, in part, become totally divorced from any Christian connection and become completely independent or embedded in the stock of New Age cosmology and alternative spirituality (Murken and Namini 2007). The following example can be found on a double page concerning the care of graves: "I will never forget you! That is the comforting message of the angel 'Longing' which will stay with your loved ones even when you have to go home" (D514–46). Or: "We will not leave you alone! That is the joyous message of the necklace 'Guardian Angel'! The adjustable necklace is 20 inches long […] The chain and the angel are of nickel-free metal and divinely beautiful" (D571–116). Similarly: "Give yourself an angel as a present! You will be accompanied by a good spirit night and day. A very beautiful embodiment of this is the angel made in china for the rose candle" (D571–97). Products are presented as symbols, with a specific reference to being accompanied round the clock: "Night and day" stands for a holistic and, nevertheless, simply manageable

everyday phenomenon. This protection also exists in a secular[12] variant, such as the good luck charm 'Night watchman Sweet Dreams' (A532–145), a little figure in a white monkish habit, with a bulbous nose and a lantern. Some of the products in *Die moderne Hausfrau* which are located in a gray area between the magical, the religious and the spiritual can be classified as 'base mythology.' These include figures such as the Easter bunny, dwarf and guardian angel, and customs linked to them are not restricted to a specific class or level of education but are part of the popular shared imaginary (Heimerdinger 2010; Korff 1995: 80).

DmH, therefore, presents a challenge from the point of view of the science of religion, because here the "Dissolution of religion in the religious" (Knoblauch 1991) can be seen very clearly. It is not, however, the task of the science of religion to determine to what extent objects are still to be regarded as religious or purely as decorative. We do not comprehend religion as being functionalist, for example, as a premodern 'relic' or as compensation for the incomprehensible. Instead, from the perspective of the science of religion, religion/religious/spiritual is for us a purely historical heuristic concept and will be examined in terms of a cultural phenomenon as an aesthetic social practice. In the secularization paradigm, one of the many forms of privatization and the new social form of a this-worldly, private and 're-enchanted' religion is described as the dissolution of religion (Knoblauch 1991: 9). Re-enchantment occurs frequently precisely in the material culture by ascribing support, consolation and strength to products through the new context of consumer societies, as can be seen from our angels and good luck charms. Dealing with emotionality and religiosity is to be seen as an implicit style of perception and practice which remains below the threshold of articulation that is so important for the "logocentric culture of the elite" (Maase 2005: 289). We do not, however, interpret this pattern of behavior and the absence of an elaborated rhetoric of self-declaration as passive avoidance due to a lack of cognitive ability, as Schilling (2003: 151) intimates, but rather as a practical option without any definite character of commitment.

Privatization is also an important point of reference for our catalog, where homely privacy is addressed with the words "everything for the well-cared for home" (D534–81). Thomas Luckmann distinguishes between various "levels of transcendence" in *Die unsichtbare Religion*, depending on how far an event leaves the everyday world behind it (Luckmann 1991). These range from experiences of a 'little' transcendence of obliviousness when gazing at a mountain range to conditions of ecstasy in the context of a religious event and the sacrosanct. Almost as a counter-program, DmH well-nigh permanently and indefatigably utilizes nontranscendent experiences: "Practical" and "simple" are the most frequent markers of this, so that

12 In as far as one wants to use this term at all, because in this context the mythological and the religious appear so strongly de-semanticized that it hardly seems to form an antithesis.

a scientific sociological understanding of religion is not relevant here. An impressive example of how a barely endurable emotion is converted into action is the text for a tombstone angel: "Big words aren't always necessary. A little gesture by the graveside often says more. Like this decorative angel which can be planted in the ground quite simply by means of the wire stick" (D534–123). This decolossalizes the burden of pain at the loss and guides the emotional state towards an acting out. Only individual problems are focused on in homely privacy and, consequently, this dynamic can no longer be distinguished from a total subjectivization of the approach to life. This form of privatization of religion has also been described as laicization, which manages without religious experts. In analogy to this, the readers of DmH become their own plumbers, gutter cleaners, backscratching assistants and document shredders. The common denominator of these various phenomena is the moment of empowerment and the increase in agency on an individual level.

Colleen McDannell (1995: 163–197) considers the "rhetoric of bad taste" in the "kitsch" of Christian material culture in the USA since the 19th century and she is (together with Morrow Long 2011) one of the few people to also analyze mail-order catalogs from suppliers of specifically religious articles as a source. In the history of religion, devotional items such as good luck charms, traditional Christmas figures, jewelry, Easter symbols or holy water containers are associated with the intensification and cultivation of both positive and negative feelings and the attribution of powers (Morgan 2012). Not infrequently, they move between religion and popular culture in such a way that dichotomies such as religious – profane no longer apply. Morgan, too, is opposed to classifying the commodification of religious icons at Christmas, for example, simply as the loss of the religious content but as a form of material performance.

In this sense, the economics of religion has also concerned itself recently with the aesthetic of religious articles. Focusing on devotional items, pilgrims' souvenirs, clothing, children's toys, 'halal' goods, etc. (Koch 2014: 131–163), it demonstrates, for example, the ambivalent and diverging relationships and dynamics of the branding of 'Islamic' products (Shirazi 2016). Most of the product descriptions in DmH are formulated as a sort of instructions for use. By means of this strategy of individualized acquisition, the marketing text anticipates the consumers using the products and instructs them in how to use them, thereby constituting them as co-producers, as 'prosumers' of the usefulness of the products. Examples of this are the tombstone for animals that can be given an individualized inscription (D530–88) or the hanging dwarf Elmar (D571–67):

> What can we learn from 'Elmar'? Quite right; he wants to show us that 'letting go' isn't so difficult. So hang up the hanging dwarf 'Elmar' in a prominent place on your favorite tree right away, so that he can remind us of this every day.

Against this background, the question arises to what extent maxims or mental hygiene are delegated to decorative objects as placeholders or substitutes for sense, to be made use of as and when necessary and to permanently materialize this dimension of life symbolically within one's own four walls, or to consummate it, or even not to have to consummate it any longer.

4. Problem-solving promises

For all the heterogeneity and range of articles offered in DmH, certain patterns and mechanisms can be detected regularly: The creation of operability ("simply practical"), responses to the social desires for conviviality and being-seen, and emotional longings.

4.1 Simply practical – the creation of operability

The targeted problem fields are as commonplace as they are unspectacular and for that precise reason of elementary significance. In most cases, it is a question of dealing with dirt, untidiness, monotony, confined spaces or the lack of space, cold, damage, or the lack of strength, dexterity or competence, also mourning, the desire for stability and meaning and consolation. By analogy, the products promise to provide appropriate remedies; they are to help establish cleanliness, tidiness, variety, storage options, warmth and insulation, or represent, in the widest sense, tools that provide assistance for repairs or dealing with unpleasant, tiring, advanced motoric or complicated tasks. It is typical of the entire marketing of the range of products that the everyday challenges in question are presented from the point of view not of the deficit but of the solution. It is not the limitations and shortcomings of people (a lack of skill, visual, motoric, auditory or other impairments) or of their environment (confined space, dirt, loneliness, poverty, mourning) that are placed in the foreground but the smart solutions available. A graphic description of this is the egg separator "*Rotz-Nase*" ('Runny Nose', Fig. 1).

Many people have difficulties separating eggs. Either because they never learnt to do it properly or because they have become too old to do it – if bits of eggshell or small quantities of egg yolk get into the egg white, success of the baking operation is endangered. But this is not specifically mentioned in the description of the article. The focus is on the useful gadget that not only supports the task to be carried out but, into the bargain, provokes a harmless, even flippant chuckle with the 'cold effect' when the egg white oozes thickly out of the nose. It is of no importance how successful or practical one considers this article to be in the last analysis – for €8.99 [c. $10.20], the everyday problem has been provided with an "amusing" and "genuinely practical" solution which is, in addition, dishwasher-safe. The trials of everyday life have been outwitted, and, with the humoristic bonus, the gadget

Fig. 1. Egg separator (D541–37)

Fig. 2. The angel can also be used as a supermarket trolley chip. Added usefulness, protection and practicality go hand-in-hand. (D517–74)

makes the aspect of everyday practical awkwardness, which in the end is the motivation behind this helper, fade away. The solution is objectivized and to hand and is reliably available if and when necessary. Even though it is, of course, clear that the basic problem, difficulties separating eggs, is a relatively minor one.

A further really practical object is a key-ring talisman in the form of a guardian angel, which also contains a supermarket trolley chip (Fig. 2): “‘I will protect you on all your journeys.’ That is the good message of the key-ring ‘Guardian Angel.’ Made of stainless steel, its beautiful styling is comfortable to hold in your hand. The detachable angel can be used as a supermarket trolley chip. Diameter c. 4 cm [c. 1.5 in]” (D517–74). The additional value is created by its additional usefulness. We speak of a lucky charm or an amulet if a permanently available source of strength and consolation or a protection against harm can be carried with one with this object in one’s pocket.

4.2 Social needs: Capable of acting and conviviality

Those objects that reflect social needs or social predicaments are, to a certain extent, connected with the practical and concrete problem-solving promise but lead in a somewhat different direction. A large number of the products on offer are not specifically advertised as items for the households of elderly single people and are not to be seen exclusively as such, but, taken together, they fit logically into the overall picture of elderly and often single customers with relatively little purchasing power who Walz have currently identified as being their main clientele. In this category, we find all the products that aim at the makeshift repair of traces of wear and tear, adhesives for textiles or leather that replace seams, adhesive tapes that solve fixation problems and insulate gutters, and polishes and varnishes that are meant to conceal minor damage to furniture surfaces. Similarly, many mechanical and chemical aids that are intended to help with blocked drains without having to unscrew the pipes. Household utensils that are clearly meant for one-person households: Small storage containers or tiny dish racks, for example. And, finally, all the articles that, in the widest sense, contribute to safety and security, that prevent doors and windows from slamming (clamping devices), ward off uninvited guests or dangers (front door peepholes and door chains, warning lights and floodlights, smoke detectors) and protect one's possessions (small safes). The objects offered create or, at least, promise moments of safety and security, the ability to act and, in the widest sense, the establishment of agency.

In addition to that, the qualities of thrift, conservation and efficiency are central elements of many products. Examples of these are protective items for edges, corners and floors, clips for squeezing tubes, containers for storing small quantities of left-over foodstuffs, simply constructed multifunctional tools that can allegedly be used "for almost everything," and dirt traps for radiators, cupboards or windows. Advertisements for these objects consistently employ arguments that they increase comfort and reduce costs (e.g. draft exclusion) but not that they are ecological or sustainable. We interpret this as another clear reference to economically relatively weak customers or to elderly ones who actively possess the classic postwar virtues. That these products are aimed at a largely female clientele, as Walz tell us, is clearly reflected not only in the title of the catalog but also in the scenic illustrations which predominantly feature female models.

The many problem-solving tools for all conceivable situations in life promise a state of being prepared and equipped for all contingencies and, thus, having concrete escapes from diverse forms of helplessness. This pattern is repeated consistently in the interior decoration sector. Particularly conspicuous are a range of products which shield the home from any unwelcome gaze from outside (curtains, small screens and window decoration) and, at the same time, furnish it on the inside and in some way enliven it.

The garden is turned into a menagerie of artificial stone with meerkats, elves, gnomes, dwarfs, flamingos, owls, etc., which raises the question what these motifs from "base mythology" externalize and stage on a psychological level. Do they have a comforting effect by reminding one of one's first animal books, i.e. a coping achieved by means of the aesthetic strategies of idealization, and with elves and suchlike, a coping of enchantment? Or is the underlying element the need of the frequently elderly and single customers for communication, which has already been mentioned, and the desire to make the cozy home cuter by decorating it with a cuddlesome material culture in order to escape as far as possible from one's onerous existence? The title of this paper "It looks and blinks" reflects DmH's striking strategy of offering items of everyday life with faces or a blinking (and, therefore, seeming) communication.

In addition, the style of humor that pervades DmH's advertising texts is tongue-in-cheek, smart and amusing, never inscrutable, ironic, black, suggestive, biting or nasty. Sometimes, the humor is reminiscent of the mischievous style of Heinz Erhardt, the popular German humorist of the 1950s and 1960s ,or the typically 'cheerful' tone of German postwar entertainment, often criticized for being escapist and playing down problems (Zehrer 2002: 74–76, 133). This also serves to regulate the explosive power that interpersonal relationships can have and is a counter-program to the serious and even onerous nature of life. This basic atmosphere can defuse loneliness and be useful as entertainment. This overriding aim is also served by witticisms, proverbs, words of wisdom, puns and phraseology that are reminiscent of the linguistic customs of postwar society.

4.3 Emotional needs: Love and indulgence

Finally, the emotional need for love, harmony and enchantment must be emphasized. We have already discovered a great deal about the emotional household on offer. The style of humor establishes a very specific form of emotional security and protection; courses of action are offered to counter paralyzing mourning; good luck charms and simple symbols such as ladybugs or four-leaf clovers represent protection and happiness. Even objects intended purely for ornamental purposes, such as the decorative cats "Motherly love" (D535 N-73, made of artificial stone for € 5.99 [c. $ 6.80]), with the key words 'love,' 'mother,' 'heart,' 'charm' and 'tenderness,' aim at the same intensive affirmative decor with feelings with positive connotations.[13] The object can be regarded as the reflection of a program of emotional longing, which

13 The cats and kittens in the catalog are deserving of an article of their own. As early as 1961(!), with the example of a coffee pot in the shape of a cat, Bausinger (1961: 150–151) drew attention to the "catification" of objects of daily use. He discusses this phenomenon with the concept of sentimentality and links it – absolutely pejoratively – to the terms kitsch (in quotation marks) and ostensibility (without quotation marks).

Fig. 3. “Solar elf Melanie” and “Solar elf Sabine” (D514–51)

needs neither content-related ambivalences nor references to questions concerning the excellence, high quality or artistic sophistication of the object. What is certainly relevant is the interaction between displaying something and enjoying it oneself. Both these aspects can be clearly seen, and they resemble each other in an elementary communicative mechanism that seems to function even in the inanimate world: Where people look, people look back.

Enchantment and magic in terms of being equipped with a diffusely transcendent added aesthetic value are further strategies of calming emotionalization, silence, dreaming and floating away. These emotions are bought into the cozy home most probably by products that derive from religion or ‘base mythology,’ such as fairies,[14] elves and gnomes: As a cheeky delicate flower-girl elf or as a “wonderful Halloween witch … LED pumpkin aunt ‘Martha’.”[15] The “Solar elves” Melanie and Sabine (cf. Fig. 3) are a good example of how differing motifs are interwoven.

The advertising text with the attributes tantalizing, magical, mystical and delicate also atmospherically cites the highly-charged spring nights, coupled with a reference to Shakespeare’s “*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*,” which does not, however, fit with spring. Naked limbs and girlishly prepubescent femininity do not become

14 They are currently experiencing a general popularization and diversification, for example, in the form of a pacifier fairy (cf. Heimerdinger 2010).

15 D530–60 china doll Rosalie; D530–33, for the popularization of Halloween (cf. Knoblauch 2009: 246–247).

linguistically tangible, but they are included in the delicacy and the general magic of the figures. The LED light-play is also coupled both with the idea of a mystical aura and with the impact of an ornamental effect in the darkness.

The governance of the gaze comprises several elements: Controlling the gaze to exclude unwelcome glances from outside and simultaneously staging eye-catchers and desired products that look back at you and, in this way, establish an intimate partnership of gaze in the interior of the home.

All in all, a multilayered and heterogeneous, sometimes even ambivalent picture of addressing loneliness and sociality can be seen throughout the catalog. Whereas some products aim either at overcoming loneliness practically (tools that replace a further human helping hand) or symbolically replacing them (eyes, whiskers and blinking signals), others aim decidedly at social situations: Every moment of displaying, impressing or amusing are conceptually designed for communal situations (with a partner) or situations with visitors (friends, neighbors, relatives).

5. Conclusion: "Decoration with Depth!"

> "Decoration with Depth! Enchanting decoration, practical accessory, spiritual companion: This set consisting of a figure of Buddha, tea-light holder, bowl and glass stones is all this" (D534–81 Buddha set).

This citation from an advertising text aptly sums up the aspects that are combined in the products. Using selected examples, we have explained various characteristics of this style that DmH typically employs to sell security and well-being, and we have identified four recurring secondary practices: The combination of different areas of life, amusement, dethematization and the transformation of problem experiences into opportunities for action.

The environmental multidimensionality of the products on offer is programmatic. They claim to combine areas of life that are otherwise separated from each other by advanced specialization and sophisticated logic limited to a specific area. It is very often a question of what might be termed the framework of life – and that this framework is all right: A home, a functioning bathroom, protection against glances from outside, drafts, intruders and vermin, dealing with mourning and fear. In other words, it is a question of basic conditions of life; they occur repeatedly, we work like slaves to master them.

What does the ideal type of the private sphere, the home, look like? It is decorated and has been appropriated: My home, cozy in every season, making use of the space available, protecting material and furniture covers, and it constitutes itself by reference to being seen by others. Many articles offer a practical use, make a statement about the owner, in this way, offer an added value for social appreciation and contribute to making life more aesthetic. The beautiful object has a concrete purpose, and the practical object is at the same time beautiful and decorative.

This multidimensionality can of course be observed in other product ranges – that of *Manufactum*, for example, in which form and function are similarly intended to complement each other in ideal fashion. In this respect, DmH displays a characteristic of a process of the narrowing of aesthetics and usefulness that has been going on for much longer (Dorschel 2002). It is conspicuous in how many cases an attempt is made to combine the practical dimension with the aesthetic one: We need only think of the numerous animal figures that appear in all product ranges. And here – in contrast to *Manufactum*, for example – it is not the successful combination of form and function that is emphasized, but the far less tasteful, 'trashy' both-and. The formal aesthetic heterogeneity appears not as a problem but as a 'gag.' Walz themselves have identified the supremacy of the 'gag' that dictates the compilation of the product range. The articles offered are supposed to amuse in some way; if necessary, smartness takes precedence over durability; the goods target the short-term moment of surprise rather than tasteful materialism. This effect is achieved, on the one hand, by the combination of differing functional levels that we have already mentioned, which make the individual product appear amusing and, on the other hand, by the harmless and cheerful chuckle element, which is realized on both the textual level of the product description[16] and the functional level of the purpose of the product: There are things that we never even dreamt of! Many products appear quaint and amusing precisely because they offer solutions to problems of whose existence many readers of the catalog may, so far, not have been aware, and if they were, then without reckoning on the existence of the possibility of a material cultural solution to them. Who would have expected a sandwich box with a spy window, a brush for dusting off the leaves of gum trees that is shaped like a pair of tongs or an asymmetrical pair of spectacles with a single lens on a hinge so that one can make up the other eye? (D533: 39, 112, 180) These helpers convey the comforting feeling that if the worst comes to the worst, one is forearmed; they permit the creation of the positive imagination of self-empowerment and the experience of control and, in this way, provide security against the hardships of everyday life.

This principle of chuckling at imponderables and problem situations is developed still further when it is applied to dimensions which can no longer be classified as mere harmless everyday problems. As we have demonstrated, this mechanism is subtly expanded to include questions of experiences of loneliness and loss and, thereby, elevated to a more basic principle. It would be an oversimplification to consider them purely from the pejorative point of view of playing-down or avoid-

16 Many of the effects we have mentioned can be found when browsing the catalog precisely in the combination of the image and the description of the article – by the way, Bönisch-Brednich similarly concludes that *Manufactum* products frequently create a far more impressive effect when combined with the relevant description than they do in the store, on the shelf or in the hand.

ance; instead, a coping strategy that is suitable for the clientele would seem to be effective here.

We have now arrived at the last and perhaps the most important strategy that is realized in DmH: Presenting simple, practical opportunities for action to counter difficulties on the most diverse levels. It is significant that the problems touched on are many and varied and that the range of products addresses them in an almost overwhelming manner. They range from practical dimensions of life (confined spaces, dirt, cold), through social (loneliness, being observed), economic, health (ailments of old age) and emotional ones (fear of burglary, mourning), as far as spiritual ones.

It seems that we can observe a correlation between a dethematization, on the one hand, and an emphasis on the functional significance (keyword: practical), on the other. A Buddha set, for example, refers to other products already mentioned – Buddha figures and gemstone bracelets – and demonstrates how the religious significance is reduced in favor of a logic of everyday practical usefulness: The elastic bracelets mean that they will fit and can be used by everybody, which makes them a suitable present for all wrist sizes. Simply put it on – done! There is no longer any need for 'big words.' Dethematization comes in many forms and can perhaps also be seen as a counter-program to the academic concentration on verbalization in psychotherapy, literature and science. Instead of a program of articulation, nonverbal references to the product aesthetic are offered, for example, to the animal kingdom, the artisanal, the household (for instance, practices to create cleanliness) or idyllic scenery.

Thus practical, concrete, action-oriented solutions are provided for the various demands of life; they frequently offer the prospect of more than just a solution; they promise pleasure, appreciative comments and perhaps even momentary happiness. These emancipatory components of the product range can be interpreted as empowerment. Its basis is an externalization of emotional situations and a fundamental neediness that is compensated for by means of consumer products and ornamental objects. Perhaps only for a brief moment, perhaps only in the imagination and perhaps only until the catalog is laid aside again. But that is better than nothing.

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Comparisons as anticipatory and relational practice*

Abstract: Comparisons play a central role in socio-spatial and cultural localizations. They are a necessary requirement for establishing difference, which actors require in order to position themselves in society. In this article, I discuss comparisons from the perspective of European Ethnology and, in particular, shed light on the role of anticipation and relationality in comparisons. The first step is a discussion of the criteria for quantitative and qualitative comparison. Next, the relationship between comparisons and expectations is questioned to address concepts of rationality and the contingent content of comparisons. On this basis, the significance of anticipatory and relational dimensions for comparisons is outlined. The article concludes by calling for an ethnological approach to comparisons as an anticipatory and relational practice.

*Keywords: c*omparison, anticipation, relational practices, comparisons as orientation

Comparisons have been a standard method in the repertoire of European Ethnology as a discipline of "comparative cultural studies" (*vergleichende Kulturwissenschaft*) – a term many German-speaking institutions have added to their name – and of social anthropology (Eggan 1954; Gingrich and Fox 2002), where they are used as a method for contrasting different objects or phenomena with one another. Comparisons draw on past developments to help understand current circumstances, put key figures in relation to different time periods to identify differences or similarities, and compare the properties of different characteristics with a clearly defined point in time. The stages of evolutionism in the history of science are an example of how anthropologies used comparisons between different cultures to provide information about cultural development (Morgan 1976). Ethnographic longitudinal studies are empirical means of comparison that allow processes of change – in the sense of ethnographic temporalization (Welz 2013) – to be traced and put into historical dimensions.[1] Today's cultural and social sciences increasingly engage with the methods and problems of scientific comparison (Scheffer and Niewöhner 2010; Schnegg 2014).

* German version in *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 2019, 115 (2): 238–259. Translated by Julia Heinecke and Jessica Wallace.

1 The German *Socio-Economic Panel* (SOEP), which was established in 1984, on the other hand, is an authoritative example of a longitudinal survey of '*empirical and analytical*' social research in Germany.

These disciplines are also examining how social scientists (Deville, Guggenheim, and Hrdličková 2016a) and different expert cultures perform specific comparisons. Regarding being used for constant changes in cities, Thomas Hengartner spoke of "doing transformation" (2016) as a habitualized attitude towards change in which it is barely explicitly perceived. In analogy, we could use the phrase '*doing comparison*' to describe the extensive use of comparisons in different lifeworlds and dimensions. Sørensen, Marlin, and Niewöhner (2018) describe the ethnographic exploration and methodical reclamation of specialized ways of "comparing and categorizing" that are "'native' to the field" as "emic comparison" – in contrast to "scholastic comparison."

Comparisons play a pivotal role in socio-spatial and cultural contexts: Actors contrast their lifestyles or consumer practices with those of other actors, compare products or different solutions, and put their achievements and accomplishments in relationship to those of others. Comparisons are a necessary requirement for determining or establishing difference and are used by actors to position themselves on a social or political spectrum. In doing so, elements of anticipation and relating are crucial. This paper focuses on these two elements, exploring what an approach based on European Ethnology coupled with existing research on comparisons would look like and what role anticipation and relating play. The first step is a discussion on the criteria for quantitative and qualitative comparisons and, subsequently, their relationship to expectations in an attempt to better understand the concept of rationality and the degree of contingency in comparisons. This, in turn, forms the basis for answering the central question of the paper: What is the importance of anticipatory and relational dimensions for comparisons? The article then concludes by making a case for examining comparisons as anticipatory and relational practice from the perspective of cultural anthropology.

1. Comparisons as a social form

In an attempt to establish a "sociology of comparison," the sociologist Bettina Heintz conceptualized comparisons as a "basic social form" (Heintz 2010: 162) and a "social phenomenon of its own right" (Heintz 2016: 306). According to her, comparisons are not only scientific methods used in a variety of disciplines but also a fundamental social practice. In addition, comparisons represent a '*cultural technique*'[2] that actors use to cope with everyday life. Similar to how ethnographic knowledge (Köstlin and Nikitsch 1999) is used as a resource for self-stylization and identity formation,

2 Winthrop-Young (2013) discusses the genesis of the German term *Kulturtechniken*, or *'cultural techniques'.* The term was derived from the field of agriculture (to describe the cultivation of land), where it has been used since the 19th century. Since the 1970s, the term has also been employed in media research (to describe the everyday use of consumption of media and technology). In this paper, the term is used in a third sense that is based on cultural sciences and expresses the entanglement of actors, technology and objects.

comparisons can also be understood as a cultural technique with which 'lifeworldly' actors relate to others and establish their social-spatial positions, thereby relying on cultural representations or symbolic meanings to achieve this. With reference to knowledge and in contrast to scientific practices of comparison, Katrin Amelang and Stefan Beck (2010) speak of "comparisons in the wild": These are an epistemic practice with which knowledge can be organized, acquired and negotiated, including in nonscientific, everyday contexts. Helge Gerndt explains in the *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* [Encyclopedia of Fairytales] that comparisons, for example, as metaphors or part of a narration, are an ever-present linguistic pattern and a powerful factor for human thinking (Gerndt 2014). Such linguistic patterns also apply to scales, tables and rankings as extremely common forms of communication that visually organize and materialize comparisons. Furthermore, technology is also used to support and communicate comparisons, for example, via measuring devices or online platforms. Consequently, I understand comparisons as an everyday practice that comprises social, cultural, material, cognitive and linguistic dimensions, instead of as a methodological approach.

Comparison as a practice, where two or more phenomena or facts are compared from an intellectual point of view in order to determine common features or differences, serve to help us contrast circumstances with "a third variable in order to observe their differences or similarities and thus put them into relation with one another" (Heintz 2016: 307). According to Heintz, this requires an "*assumption of similarity*" that generally presumes that the phenomena being compared with one another are actually comparable and that each can be assigned to a "category that is in some way abstract." In addition to this assumption of similarity, a second requirement is the "*observation of difference*," which must refer to criteria of comparison – the third variable – in order to be able to distinguish the two (Heintz 2016: 307). It is subsequently of particular interest for European ethnologists to analyze how such classifications of comparability and criteria for comparison come about in the microperspective of everyday life: What do concrete actors compare with what, what criteria do they use, and what notions, systems and dimensions come into play?

2. Criteria for quantified and qualified comparisons

There is a wide range of very different phenomena, from standardized rankings to social distinctions, that constitute specific types and practices of comparison. For each of these, a *tertium comparationis*, or third of the comparison, is needed – it is impossible to make comparisons without comparative criteria. The *tertium comparationis* can be found, for example, in social norms, based on which actors compare themselves with others. Timo Heimerdinger used parenting practices to demonstrate how quantified comparisons with the norm – for example, the motor and cognitive development of children – are related to processes of quantification and standardiza-

tion when parents compare their children to standard curves or normed developmental stages (Heimerdinger 2013). Research on recreational bicycle racing also shows how athletes measure their achievements, for example, using technical instruments and evaluation software (cf. Groth 2017) for classification in normed models and comparison with others;[3] here, however, the goal is often not to be among the best but rather to belong to a subjectified average (Groth 2019c).[4] Bettina Heintz also emphasizes quantitative comparisons that serve to establish "numeric differences" based on standardization and quantification (Heintz 2010).

However, quantitative comparison has its limits. The papers in Beckert and Musselin (2013a) show how the "classification of goods in markets" not only has quantitative elements but that aspects that are only indirectly quantifiable, such as uncertainty, ambiguity, individual preferences or moral judgments, also play a role. Classifications are not a clear-cut process but rather represent the interplay between producers, consumers and market intermediaries (Beckert and Musselin 2013b).[5] Contingency is, thus, an important part of quantitative comparisons and of comparisons as a whole. The limits of quantitative comparison become even more evident when we change perspective and, instead of classifying goods, examine situations in which things and social facts become important for the very reason that they cannot be compared with one another – or because they are construed as being incomparable. Lucien Karpik's "Economics of Singularities" (2011), Andreas Reckwitz's discussion of the importance of singularities (Reckwitz 2017), or Luc Boltanski and Arnaud Esquerre's (2018) "Economy of Enrichment" come to mind in this context. Boltanski and Esquerre use the term "economy of enrichment" to describe the fact that the Fordist production and mass consumption of standardized consumer goods are no longer the paradigmatic principles of the consumer world. Instead, they claim that the "*new form of capitalism*" is characterized by the consumption of goods that are particularly unusual and unique and can, therefore, be symbolically and economically enriched (*enrichir*) by attributing a corresponding narrative that justifies their value. The goal of such examples of a more or less modernized "*conspicuous consumption*" (Veblen 2007, first published in English in 1899), for example, travel, eating out, expensive wines, artwork or luxury real estate, is public acknowledgment. Conspicuous consumption is a communicative act that establishes differences

3 From the perspective of European Ethnology, Hermann Bausinger's discussion of "personal sports statistics" (2015: 13–27) is another example of such categorical comparisons in sports.

4 Cf. Lupton (2016) and Mau (2017) on social processes of quantification.

5 Sarah May's research on regional food (2013) or Gisela Welz's analysis of European products (2015) illustrate how the value of products in these processes are connected to cultural repertoires and are part of complex negotiations that are, at times, even political.

between unique goods on the level of social and cultural capital.[6] In this respect, goods are incomparable because they are "different" from other, similar objects or their comparison is rhetorically framed as inadmissible (using corresponding phrases such as "incomparable experiences" or placing products in a *'class of their own'*) – which is precisely the special nature of singularity and prestigiousness.

Here, however, emotions, such as envy and jealousy as "social comparative orientations of action," as Frank Nullmeier (2016) phrases it, begin to assert their influence. They, too, are based on comparisons: Habitus and practices of social distinction entail comparative elements, and the perception of difference implies distinction tied to comparisons. Envy and jealousy, as well as admiration and generosity, emphasize *'qualitative'* dimensions of comparisons. Consequently, restricting the focus to quantitative comparisons alone becomes problematic: The quantification of envy and jealousy may be an econometrically practicable method, but it is not appropriate for an approach based on European Ethnology. Part of the problem with reducing comparisons to their quantitative dimensions is the existence of indirect comparative effects or indirectly quantifiable elements of the consumption of goods in which, for example, the incomparability of goods is constructed. Furthermore, when goods are compared, so are the corresponding social relationships, consumer practices, lifestyles and attributions. From the perspective of European Ethnology, the specific approach to comparisons is that we cannot begin our analysis by separating the comparison of goods, services, characteristics or expectations into different categories. What is being compared with one another is relevant for contextualizing *'constellations of comparison, even though' it* does not offer the possibly of fundamentally abstracting different forms of comparison. Nadine Wagener-Böck's (2015) and Moritz Ege's (2013) studies on vestimentary (consumer) practices show how the comparison of styles or the assessment of clothing can be understood as practices that are intergenerational or characteristic of specific social groups. They investigate how people consume goods not by focusing on their quality but rather on the social-comparative effects that emphasize membership to a social group or the differences and similarities between generations. They show how this process helps to produce the very features of the objects that make them special. If consumption is understood as a cultural practice, the social embeddedness of goods becomes the focus of interest (cf. Groth 2015b)[7]. This practice requires contextualization to show how sociocultural, cognitive and communicative presumptions play

6 Boltanski and Esquerre go even further: Not only do they look at social distinction, they also examine the increase in economic value and the connected processes of valorization that go hand in hand with the economy of enrichment.

7 The term "embeddedness" was used by Marc Granovetter (1985) to describe the sociocultural basis of economic action and suggest a perspective that would incorporate models of rational decision-making and social contexts in which decisions are made. Economic action is, thus, no longer reduced to formal models but neither is the role of social behavior overemphasized. The term is

into comparisons, for example, when attempting to construct objective procedures for comparison in the form of tests or rankings This perspective can also be found in European Ethnology research on (cultural) property that examines social relationships by means of these objects (as a process of recognizing or distinguishing the desire for an object) instead of examining the goods themselves or their possession.[8] Research on the sociocultural embeddedness of goods in the sense of the "social life of things" (Appadurai 1986) or the role of things for biographies and social positioning (Miller 2010) is closely connected with this approach. Since property relationships are socially constructed, comparisons of goods or by means of goods are always comparisons of social relationships as well. In this context, differentiating between the comparison of goods, as Beckert and Musselin discussed, and comparisons of, for example, vestimentary practices and the social relationships connected with such practices (bearing in mind comparative effects such as appreciation and jealousy) would introduce a reductive dichotomy.

Comparison as a social practice is, thus, not restricted to the very small subsection of '*quantitative*' dimensions of comparison. On the other hand, a fixation on '*qualitative*' elements may be a meaningful emphasis in certain cases, although doing so bears the risk of being overly reductive. It is necessary for an analysis of specific and situated constellations of comparison to show how comparisons integrate these two elements, as well as material and technical artifacts, in everyday contexts.

3. Comparisons and the future

A look at what comparisons have to do with the future enables important insights into how such an interplay of elements and artifacts can be conceived. In order to achieve this, it is important to recognize that consumer practices are connected with expectations – especially when it comes to conspicuous consumption. When actors seek distinction, for example, via consumer goods, they compare their expectations with those of others. This comparison provides information about the probability of successfully achieving distinction. One essential element of social and cultural capital is the ability to judge the temporality of distinction, i.e. will today's practices produce distinction in the future as well? This is not simply a "capacity to aspire" as Appadurai (2004) describes the capacity of actors to collectively aspire to and follow future developments, but also a more individual '*capacity to anticipate*.' Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) based their premises on the fundamental principles of pragmatic sociology, which assume a dedifferentiation of lifestyles (i.e. the deconstruction of social categories and criticism of the idea that practices are reproduced),

used in economic anthropology in the formalist-substantivist debate and further discussed, cf. Spencer (2002).

8 Cf. Groth (2011: 14, 2015a: 66); Hann (1998); Kojève (1969: 40).

due to which, relatively stable expectations are no longer possible. According to this theory, the pluralization of options for legitimate differentiation (as everyday tests and in critical moments) also means that expectations for the future are very diverse. Boltanski and Thévenot and other representatives of pragmatic sociology particularly emphasize the fragility, uncertainty and disarray of social life and, thus, the plurality of interpretations, which increases the complexity of dealing with expectations. These expectations are a type of complex and contingent social-spatial positioning for comparisons and other forms of relating one thing to another. As the outcome of the comparisons, they show (or appear to show) the social position of the person drawing the comparison within a comparative space. Furthermore, this person must always anticipate the future: What expectations are connected with actions that are guided by the future?

How can we come to a better understanding of such expectations? Firstly, I would like to make a cursory excursus about expectations from an economic perspective in order to explain some of the important aspects of what I would like to call '*anticipatory comparison*.' Some economic theories of rational expectations, for example, by Robert E. Lucas, assume that actors use the information available to them to form rational expectations, based on which they act to maximize their utility (Lucas 1972). Expectations about market trends can, according to this, be, to a large extent, rationally justified. To a large extent because, in contrast to neoclassical economics, Lucas does not presume the existence of 'perfect markets,' which are characterized by absolute transparency and an absolute rationality of market participants. Central to rational expectations is that market participants only have access to "*incomplete*" observations of previous (Windmüller 2018: 362–365) and current developments on the market and that these observations are used to progressively find rational solutions. Paul Davidson also remarks that "future outcomes are merely the statistical shadow of past and current market signals" (Davidson 1996: 480)[9]. The fact that information is incomplete and that rational expectations are contingent is emphasized even more strongly in new institutional economics and, specifically, by the principal-agent theory (Jensen and Meckling 1976). Here, the information asymmetry between market participants ("hidden characteristics," Akerlof 1970) and their "bounded rationality" (Simon 1982) are highlighted. Due to these factors, expectations are contingent, their rationality is limited and they are not completely efficient. From the perspective of neoclassical economics, the resulting uncertainty can be reduced to a – as André Orléan puts it – "probablizable list of events that can be defined in advance" (Orléan 2014: 70). Possible options can then be compared and weighed against one another. Keynes, in contrast to this, sees intuition and "animal spirits," i.e. practices based on human nature, as

9 Friedemann Schmoll (2008: 74) quotes Alfred Schütz, who took a similar view, claiming that "knowledge about the future [is] simply a form of the past being projected to the future."

fundamental factors that determine how we respond to contingency spontaneously (Keynes 1936: 141f.). The comparison of different options can, thus, either remain implicit or play no role at all. It is assumed in behavioral economics (Kahneman and Tversky 1979) that actors deal with this relative uncertainty by, for example, using heuristic shortcuts (relying on practiced routines and rules instead of comparing all possible options with one another) or that their decisions are influenced by the way in which certain tasks are framed (which can change the criteria for comparison). In the wake of the worldwide financial crisis of 2007, which – public critics claim – cannot be explained by economic theories of efficient markets and rational assumptions regarding economic behavior, Akerlof and Shiller (2009) outlined these '*irrational*' elements of the market, thus, combining Keynes' assumptions with newer theories of behavioral economics in order to incorporate psychologically, intuitively and socioculturally defined and affective practices into economic theories. This includes comparisons with the partially rational expectations of others that actors use to orient themselves in imperfect markets.

The ethnologist Stefan Leins discussed "affective elements" of prediction and the central role of narratives for making expectations plausible in his recently published study on the *Stories of Capitalism* (Leins 2018: 96f.), which looks at financial analysts who predict market trends and make recommendations for investments. The method Leins describes for dealing with contingency is subjective and influenced by sensual practices and cultural forms of narration. This contingency and partial subjectification of financial markets is, however, not a fundamental problem but rather – according to Jens Beckert's work on "fictional expectations," recently published in German – the driving force behind capitalist dynamics. Contingency is, thus, not seen as a problem but rather as an opportunity (Beckert 2018). Similarly, Arjun Appadurai (2016) describes the financial crisis as a "failed promise" that can be traced back mainly to verbalized expectations in contracts on the derivatives market. Appadurai illustrates the relationship between insufficient regulation, ignorance and irresponsible risk-taking. According to him, linguistic power reinforced this relationship, resulting in a kind of snowball system of expectations. These linguistic promises could not be upheld and culminated in the financial crisis. At the same time, however, such promises are the foundation for value creation: 'Banking on words' is based on 'promising' profits that are fictional in the sense that not '*all*' of them can be fulfilled. The work of Appadurai, Leins, and others illustrates that in order to understand expectations, the practices of actors, when understood as socio-material arrangements, are just as decisive as their actions and decisions and the rational or irrational basis on which they are made. Other factors that play a role include, for example, how financial analysts and brokers combine technical systems, news feeds and indicators, use screen technology, such as "trading screens"

as "scopic media" (Knorr Cetina 2012) and communicate with other actors in order to compare expectations and assessments in these kinds of arrangements.

The dual role of imaginations for fictional expectations, language for promises on derivates markets or narratives for investment advice,[10] as discussed by Beckert, Appadurai, and Leins, as both a problem and an opportunity has practical and affective dimensions. The work of these authors not only examines presumed chains of cause and effect and rational reductions of contingency but also looks at the question of what a limited rational response to contingency looks like both *'in'* practice and *'as'* a practice. Intuition, orientation to others, cultural repertoires that address uncertainty and narratives about the future play an essential role in this response. The focus, thus, shifts to the fact that the imagination, narrations and language shape expectations and evoke questions about when scenarios of prediction are credible and when they are not. These aspects are not limited to economics but rather play an equally important role in comparisons in other fields. Here, quantifying and qualifying practices of expectation and comparison come together. Within the context of assessing consumer goods, Gisela Welz refers to this as *"qualculation"* (2006) – a term used in analogy to Michel Callon and Fabian Muniesa. Intuition, judgment and appraisal collide with quantitative elements that appear to be standardizable and, thus, rationalizable. Comparisons – in Welz's case of "European products" – are not limited to quantitative elements, and their scope is expanded to include the dimension of the future.

The linguistic anthropologist Michael Silverstein (2004: 640–644) demonstrates how *'oinoglossia'* ('wine-talk') as a linguistic register for wine consumption indicates not only a speaker's social status but also reveals expectations and promises of quality in comparisons between wines. Talking about products and the practice of consuming them (which includes other aspects, such as consumption itself, one's surroundings or objects like wine glasses or wine labels) constitute the "cultural basis for the aesthetic experience" (Silverstein 2006: 484). In addition, the linguistic construction of the *'connoisseur'* as a social figure reduces the complexity of unpredictable markets.

Specific aspects of comparisons are central in this comparison of products and in comparing experiences of consumption: The indexicality of social status as a social phenomenon is culturally coded as wine expertise. Based on this, consumption is cognitively processed as an aesthetic experience and communicated in the register of *'oinoglossia'* in specific settings (wine tasting, wine ratings, wine purchasing). Furthermore, other elements come into view that can be a component of comparisons: They function as the interplay between irrationality and rationality by referencing different perceptions of rationality. This includes differentiated at-

10 Cf. e.g. Heid 2017.

tempts to categorize and evaluate contingency (in wine ratings when explaining different taste factors or referring to knowledge about terroir, types of grapes and vintages) and 'gut decisions' as an affirmation of nonrational moments of aesthetic perception. This wide range from the construction of absolute rationality to the negation of rational criteria is coupled with elements of quantification and qualification. Quantification and qualification are intertwined in the assessment of goods, in particular, but also in other cases of lifeworld comparisons, becoming qualculation, making it difficult to separate one from another. An apparently purely quantitative choice of a particular wine, for example, based merely on its price may also be related to an explicit or implicit assessment of the value of quality.

This is precisely the reason why everyday cultural comparisons of this kind should be understood as a practice that involves making and rationalizing decisions, which, however, can only be explored at the interplay of a wide variety of factors: Perception and aesthetics, rationalization and quantification, mediatization and materialization. Another aspect that is connected with the question of rationality – although it goes even further – is the role of intuition and affects. Intuitive or affective elements of decisions can be rationalized *ex post* but – due to their epistemic quality of immediacy and pre-reflexivity – cannot be entirely subsumed as part of decision-making. The intuitive assessment of a wine may, thus, be made plausible by training one's palate, which is a habitual and cultural codification '*of its own*' that is socially acquired. By contrast, I use the term 'affect' to refer to the "precultural 'first step' in an emotional process" (Scheer 2012: 198). Scheer rejects the term "affect" for research on emotions because it reduces the focus to this first step, evokes a linear sequence for generating emotions and is decoupled from sociocultural aspects. But in my analysis of comparisons, I am interested specifically in affects as unmediated cognitive elements *per se* that have not yet been integrated into processes of comparative practice. These elements may be culturally coded and cognitively categorized; they have a different epistemic quality that is difficult to grasp from a methodological perspective but which, however, plays an important role as an aspect of comparisons in interactions with others.

Moreover, comparisons should be understood as the point of ambiguity between promises and disappointments: By dealing with uncertainty, contingency and, thus, the risks involved, the expectations that comparisons arouse are *per se* risky, contingent and uncertain. A wine that has been compared to others and deemed good may disappoint, just as fictional expectations of markets may flip-flop. This is due partially to limited information, limited rationality and the relative unpredictability of future wine quality or market trends but also to the fact that the logic of legitimacy in cultural areas is very disparate and is based on different concepts of rationality; the fact that there are no homogenous groups with shared expectations or universal taste preferences; and the fact that cognitive and affective processes

and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative moments play an important role in comparisons.[11]

Examining comparisons that focus on the future from the perspective of cultural theory instead of concentrating on methodological individualisms illustrates the complexity of comparative mechanisms on markets, during consumption and in other everyday contexts. This is particularly the case when predictive categories of expectable events are involved, i.e. fictional expectations based on socioculturally and institutionally embedded imaginations. Assuming that comparisons are social phenomena, then comparing the expectations of others becomes a central aspect, for example, stock markets as a reflexive comparison of expected market trends that results in acts of purchasing and selling based on predictions that are only rational up to a point. Expectations become uncertain predictions that are represented in market ratings, materialized in purchasing recommendations, lead to the signing of contracts or serve as the basis for consumer practices.

4. Anticipatory comparisons

Prediction, however, appears to be the wrong term for describing everyday cultural comparisons for three reasons: Firstly, people must take action in order to make predictions. The theory of rational expectations, for example, restricts assumptions, to some degree, via complete information and rationality, but it still assumes that actors think in a cognitively rationalizable manner in order to deal with incomplete information and, thus, achieve maximum benefit. This is also the case when predictions are made using qualitative and non-standardizable dimensions. Comparative practice, on the other hand, can be understood, in some cases, as active behavior based on rational principles, although it goes beyond that. Secondly, predictions require a reflexive and standardizable comparison of expectations, which can be influenced by affects and intuitive practices but, in essence, draws on rational principles, causalities or models – causalities, which are based on assumptions of regularities and rules, are the "decisive factor for predictions" (Schmoll 2008: 81). Thirdly, qualitative and affective dimensions of everyday cultural comparisons and of the comparison of consumer goods are considerably more pronounced and, in particular, do not imply inaccuracy (i.e. inefficiency, market failure or modeling failure).

I would like to suggest using the term 'anticipation' for everyday cultural comparisons as a whole. This term incorporates the pre-reflexive, affective, emotional and cultural dimensions of comparison more strongly without excluding predictive

11 In addition to Akerlof and Shiller, Slovic et al. (2007) ("affect heuristic") and Kahneman (2011) ("fast and slow thinking") also emphasize affective and instinctive elements for decisions that have since become important for behavioral economics.

elements of quantification and standardization. Passive, habitualized and implicit elements also become clearer by using the term anticipation. According to Polanyi (1966), "*tacit anticipation*" is a cultural technique used within the context of uncertain futures. What Andreas Hartmann and Oliwia Murawska (2015) call individual, collective and cultural storage that focuses on the future and future opportunities also comes into view: Culturally constructed ways of dealing with expectations and the future as part of the cultural coding of comparisons. This is also an argument for including affective, habitual and implicit dimensions of anticipatory comparison in European Ethnology research that link qualitative and quantitative aspects and sees comparisons as socially situated and culturally coded everyday practices that can serve as orientation for actors.

Increasing the scope of '*comparison as a form of subjectification*' is also important because comparison with oneself has become a common social form. Manifestations of "*audit culture*" (Shore and Wright 2015; Strathern 200) and the entrepreneurial self (Bröckling 2007) gauge the potential of the self and draw comparisons in view of future developments; these comparisons are connected with expectations but they also represent one method for how we currently deal with contingency. One example from the academic world: Many Ph.D. students ask themselves how long others needed to write their doctoral dissertation. This presumably familiar question is not only important as a source of information, but the answer can also help to gauge one's own performance and can be either a relief or a burden – depending on whether the other person took more or less time than one's own anticipated time frame and whether their time frame can be construed as representing the norm. The information does not only serve to appreciate or reject current plans of action, but also to guide actions in the future. According to Deville, Guggenheim, and Hrdličková (2016b), scientists are not only agents but also objects of comparison and comparative standards. They are embedded in comparative regimes that put publication outputs, the total number of applications submitted and career paths into relationship with one another; not (only) are these aspects standardized and quantified, but they can also pertain to qualitative, non- or only partially quantifiable elements. This can include aspects such as originality, excellence, and subjective and affective elements of comparison and individual life scripts. The fact that academic comparisons with oneself cannot be constricted to quantifiable criteria is demonstrated by Fochler, Felt, and Müller (2016), using the example of Austrian doctoral and postdoctoral candidates and their comparative practices. Fochler, Felt, and Müller refer to "narrowing evaluative repertoires" whereby doctoral candidates are placed in "heterarchical" regimes of valuation with multiple, parallel comparative dimensions (instead of in a hierarchic constellation of comparison with a single overarching evaluative principle) that does not focus solely on scientific aspects but also takes other private interests into account. A recent report on a study on student

orientation carried out by the corporate consultant *Ernst & Young* spoke of a "triad of family, friends, and free time" (Stoldt 2018) that '*still*' plays a role for doctoral students. Postdocs, on the other hand, have a clear hierarchy that emphasizes 'academic tokens' – academic achievements are, therefore, more important to them than any other criteria.

In this case, comparative criteria are narrowed down, making it evident that comparisons of oneself are situative and dependent on the situation and, therefore, have biographic and temporal components as well as being oriented to the future. The repertoire of comparisons is reduced by a restricted range of possibilities, i.e. by the assumption of contingency with a view to future 'chances of success' in the university system – risks, however, are not considered. Comparisons are situative and highly subjectified; they, therefore, appear to be both an opportunity and a restriction of opportunities (Groth 2019a, 2019b). They are oriented to the future and must anticipate future comparative criteria ('*capacity to anticipate*'), for example, by gauging how certain achievements will be evaluated in the future and what criteria will be used to do so (and who will be the judge). This example shows that comparisons are also linked to other comparisons. The idealized setting of the comparative triad of compared elements, the *tertium comparationis*, and the comparative criteria is just that: An idealization that is supplemented by other comparisons through empirical observation. In academia, therefore, not just comparison based on 'academic tokens' but also the comparison of comparative criteria: How do these tokens compare to other motives such as the triad of family, friends and free time?

5. Relational comparison

Furthermore, the example of comparison within the economic system shows that comparisons ignore certain dimensions while emphasizing others – comparisons are, thus, also a focusing, a reduction of contingency, that makes a selection using comparative criteria. While some economic theories speak of narrowing down a list of probable events that are determined by rational criteria (Orléan 2014), these processes can indeed be implicit, spontaneous and situative and are coupled with emotions – this can include omitting dimensions of comparisons with negative emotional connotations. For these kinds of comparisons, others also play a role with whom we compare ourselves, for example, in terms of academic achievements or time required to complete dissertations. Fochler, Felt, and Müller (2016) argue that changeable sets of factors must be considered that put the elements under comparison into relationship with other interests or motives. This constellation of comparison, in which a comparison to other actors is linked to different motives, also applies, for example, to recreational cyclists: Here, motives to do sports and train are pluralized and personalized that can then be used to analyze how different comparative criteria relate to one another (Groth 2014). The idealization

of the codification of winning and losing in sports as the deciding comparative criteria (between winners and non-winners) is, thus, insufficient for everyday cultural interpretations, including competitive comparisons. Other motives for doing sports – health benefits, work-life balance – must be reflected in a stratification of motives in order to be able to analyze situative comparisons. Comparisons are, thus, not only a technique for differentiating between winning and losing, they are also an *'instrument for relating'* that puts their socio-spatial positions in relationship to other actors (Groth 2019c).

In the context of recreational bicycle racing, athletes orient themselves through social comparison – for example, at public races – with the aim of finishing somewhere in the middle. Recreational athletes who participate in such races are highly motivated and train a great deal. However, their competitive orientation focuses either solely on improving their own performance (i.e. increasing their performance from one season to the next) or on comparable groups who are at a similar level – the same age group, athletes with similar experience or one's training group. It is less often that these athletes strive to be one of the best; instead, they compete for average (Groth 2019c). By doing so, they distinguish themselves from the top athletes in a positive sense both from those above and those below them, using a stratification of motives that places less emphasis on the competitive side and highlights aspects such as work-life balance or health benefits. Instead, *'relative comparative dimensions'* can be determined, such as improving one's own race time or comparing one's achievement to other groups who represent 'realistic' benchmarks. Achieving these relative goals – being in the athletic average – is, nevertheless, highly demanding and requires athletes to distinguish themselves from those at a lower level, i.e. poorer athletes. By contrast, following the absolute goal of being the best would be inefficient because it is too risky, too much work or because athletes realize that they simply cannot be the best in this field.[12] In recreational sports, competing for the average is connected with restricting oneself to average goals. Instead of setting absolute goals that are to be achieved by competing with other actors, goals are relativized in relation to other actors who can achieve the same or similar goals. Here, the average is relational and dynamic: If an athlete improves their own performance or requires less training, then the average may be raised or

12 It is important to note that even in recreational sports, especially in endurance sports, drugs and, specifically, other means of improving performance do play a role. Non-steroidal antirheumatic drugs, in particular, are consumed for "pain management" (Nina Degele refers here to "pain normalization," 2006) during training and races (cf. Groth 2014: 52f.). Even cases of doping have come to light in recent years. Most of these cases, however, involve top athletes in recreational sports and are not usually a mass phenomenon. One study on recreational triathletes also showed that athletes are more concerned with the general improvement of their achievements than with top performance in a specific race (Dietz et al. 2013: 8). It is, thus, unclear – despite existing studies on the use of drugs – to what extent doping plays a role among average athletes.

lowered as needed. Comparisons may also be drawn to oneself by contrasting current performance with previous achievements.

Similar findings have been made regarding work life. Here, striving for average is based on statistical average values, such as average income. However, in order to explain their income, actors then refer to their immediate social environment – i.e. friends, relatives or colleagues. Limiting or restricting oneself to the average is, thus, relational to one's own lifeworld and, to a lesser degree, to static or statistical values. These, too, can be adapted depending on the situation or when changes take place in one's social environment, such as work performance and company structure. In such cases, comparisons are based on one's social self, i.e. on the achievements or positions of one's social environment. What is deemed average is subjective and negotiated in relation to one's own lifeworld. In these cases, comparisons are based on the direct social environment and, to a lesser extent, on average values, such as average income. The direct social environment is no longer limited to direct contacts but can also include acquaintances from online forums and platforms where, for example, recreational athletes compare themselves with one another (Groth 2019c; Krahn 2019). An important aspect is that it is not the overall reference group that is considered but only a selection that is made according to variable sets of criteria, such as comparable age and weight, a similar (athletic) career and performance level,[13] or direct or indirect acquaintance.

Allowing average achievements to guide our actions is a form of social comparison, in the sense that these actions are relational and subjectified. This does not involve fixed social-demographic characteristics or political self-positioning but rather subjective and situative interpretations and interactions that reflect a varying degree of stability. The middle and average are, thus, not clearly differentiated or objectively determinable positions that are expressed by a certain income, a specific apartment size or a clearly definable performance level. We are, therefore, dealing with different criteria for guiding behavior based on different social relationships. In this context, comparison is a social practice comprising a subjectified, relational and situational construction of comparative benchmarks that include the selection or omission of certain comparative dimensions. Another dimension for comparison, thus, comes into focus for which not only the comparative criteria but also the reference groups are situatively and subjectively adapted – i.e. who is one comparing oneself to? For recreational cyclists, the answer has been linked to an athlete's own anticipated performance, i.e. the expectation of observing a specific difference. If, for example, an athlete assumes that they will be significantly worse than the best, a relationing may take place in which athletes use their own age group or direct social environment as the reference group.

13 For more on evaluating and measuring performance in recreational cycling and the role of technical aides such as instruments for measuring performance, cf. Groth (2017) with further references.

6. Comparisons as an anticipatory and relational practice

Comparisons can be understood as a social practice that is culturally coded, cognitively categorized and processed, communicated in different ways and which has material and technical dimensions. Comparing oneself with others, the comparison of goods as a comparison of social relationships, a comparative perspective on the self over the course of developmental processes: Comparisons in different contexts and constellations are drawn without necessarily being an explicit act. Comparisons can provide orientation for dealing with uncertainty, contingency and complexity and function as an intermediary between irrationality and rationality by referencing different concepts of rationality. Elements of quantification and qualification are combined and become incomplete 'qualculations' in lifeworld comparisons, making it difficult to separate the two again. Their dual role of promise and disappointment is just as relevant as anticipatory elements of comparison: When recreational athletes compare themselves with better athletes, they do not simply determine different performance levels but also gauge their options for performing similarly in the future; in the sphere of work, comparisons with the careers and performance levels of others serve to assess one's own career chances or financial situation after retirement. These and other examples are not systematic but rather anticipatory comparisons that provide information on future developments based on uncertain and selective data. They can be understood as a form of subjectification that helps to determine individual responses to social demands. Here, comparisons with oneself are situative and dependent on the situation, i.e. have both biographical and temporal components and are linked to other comparisons. They are dynamic instruments of relating as well as subjective and situative interpretations and interactions that can have varying degrees of stability. An essential element for drawing comparisons is the subjectified, relational and situational construction of comparative benchmarks that can include the selection or omission of certain comparative dimensions. In order to understand comparisons as a social practice, it is important to look at how such comparative benchmarks are constructed, when comparisons are deemed legitimate and when not, how people use predictions about the future to deal with uncertainty, and how the social practice of comparing serves to anticipate future developments or circumstances. Within this context, the role of imaginations and narratives is linked to nonrational, fictional expectations of possibilities.

Not only comparative criteria but also reference groups (with whom one compares oneself) can be situative and subjectively adapted. Seeing comparisons as a social practice allows us to analyze both comparisons and adaptations to their results, but not to confuse the two: When actors compare things or themselves, they are already practicing a socially acquired way of dealing with comparison, with one's own expectations and the expectations of others. In summary, comparisons are a multidimensional, everyday practice that has relational and anticipatory elements.

A concept of comparisons based on European Ethnology, as I have outlined in this paper, is, thus, capable of analyzing specific comparative constellations in their various dimensions – particularly both rational and affective – and to grasp their importance for different fields.

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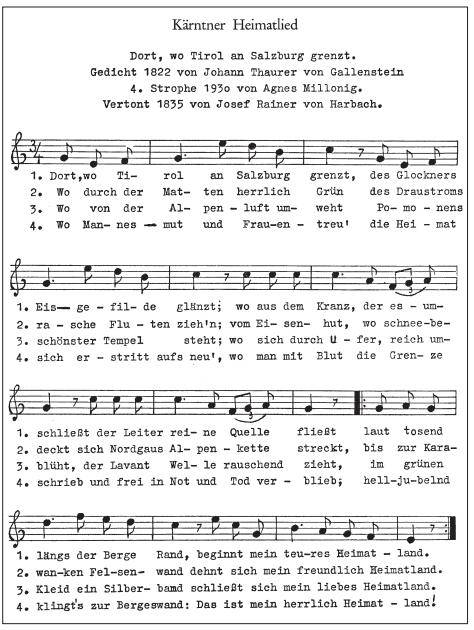
Ute Holfelder

"Where Salzburg borders on Tyrol …"*

The Carinthian anthem and the construction of the *Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška*

Abstract: In this contribution, the genesis and the use of the *Carinthian anthem* ("Kärntner Heimatlied") will be examined using the methods of cultural analysis. The period under investigation ranges from the 19th century to the time of the Carinthian defensive struggle and the 1920 plebiscite up to the present. The Carinthian anthem, which has been official since 1966, is examined as part of the *Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška* (*Dispositiv Kärnten/Koroška*), in the context of which conflicts over languages, borders and affiliations of German national groups and the Slovene minority have been and still are being negotiated.

Keywords: Folksong, Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška, national anthem, Kärntner Heimatlied


Kärntner Heimatlied

Dort, wo Tirol an Salzburg grenzt.
Gedicht 1822 von Johann Thaurer von Gallenstein
4. Strophe 1930 von Agnes Millonig.
Vertont 1835 von Josef Rainer von Harbach.

1. Dort, wo Ti- rol an Salzburg grenzt, des Glockners
2. Wo durch der Mat- ten herrlich Grün des Draustroms
3. Wo von der Al- pen - luft um- weht Po- mo - nens
4. Wo Man- nes - mut und Frau-en - treu' die Hei - mat

1. Eis- ge - fil- de glänzt; wo aus dem Kranz, der es - um-
2. ra - sche Flu - ten zieh'n; vom Ei- sen- hut, wo schnee-be-
3. schönster Tempel steht; wo sich durch U - fer, reich um-
4. sich er - stritt aufs neu', wo man mit Blut die Gren- ze

1. schließt der Leiter rei- ne Quelle fließt laut tosend
2. deckt sich Nordgaus Al- pen - kette streckt, bis zur Kara-
3. blüht, der Lavant Wel- le rauschend zieht, im grünen
4. schrieb und frei in Not und Tod ver - blieb; hell-ju-belnd

1. längs der Berge Rand, beginnt mein teu-res Heimat - land.
2. wan-ken Fel-sen- wand dehnt sich mein freundlich Heimatland.
3. Kleid ein Silber- band schließt sich mein liebes Heimatland.
4. klingt's zur Bergeswand: Das ist mein herrlich Heimat - land!

Fig. 1.
The *Carinthian Anthem*. In: Landesgesetzblatt für Kärnten 21st Issue (1966)

* This paper was first published in German in the Österreichische *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 2019, LXXIII/122: 215–239. Translation by Mark Schreiber.

Where Salzburg borders on Tyrol,
the ice fields of Mount Glockner shine;
where, from its mighty powerful rim
the clean well of the Leiter flows,
roaring along the mountain's edge,
that's where my precious homeland starts.

Where through the meadows' wondrous green,
the torrents of the Drau draw on;
from the snowy caps of the Eisenhut
the Nordgau's alpine chains stretch out,
all to the rock wall of the Karavanke,
stretches my friendly homeland.

Where, blown over from the alpine air,
Pomona's prettiest temple sits,
where through the flowery riverbanks,
the murmuring waves of the Lavant flow,
a silver band all dressed in green
there ends my lovely homeland.

Where faithful women and brave men
reclaimed their homeland once again,
where borders were inscribed with blood
left all things free to suffer and die;
onto the mountains we cheer and chant:
This is my wondrous homeland!

"Where borders were inscribed with blood" – on the continuing relevance of the *Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška*

During the summer semester of 2018, the Rector of the University of Klagenfurt, Oliver Vitouch, announced a competition for ideas for a new fourth verse of the Carinthian anthem.[1] He justified the competition by saying that the current text was no longer in tune with the present because "today, borders are no longer inscribed with blood." This refers to the border between Austria and Slovenia, which was drawn in 1920 after military and political conflicts. In the border area of Carinthia, members of the so-called ethnic Slovenian minority group live alongside the German-speaking majority population. The precise proportion of Slovenian-speaking Carinthians is controversial and has been so in the past. However, there has been a sharp decline in the numbers of Carinthian Slovenes: Of an estimated 25 percent in

1 N. N. "Wettbewerb für eine neue Strophe der Landeshymne." Accessed December 9, 2019. Available at: https://www.aau.at/landeshymne/.

1890 to 2.4 percent in 2001 (Sima 2006: 10–13). Discussions about the significance of the Slovenian language and culture in Carinthia continue to this day (Hamm and Schönberger 2020; Petritsch, Graf, and Kramer 2012).

As a university, according to Vitouch, we stand "for the transgression of borders" and would like to see a new verse "for a Carinthia that is located at the heart of a united, peaceful Europe" and the text should signal "openness, tolerance and a contemporary identity." The stanza selected and awarded a prize by an expert jury would be submitted to the provincial government as a proposal and published on the university's homepage.

As soon as the competition had been announced, controversial debates about the reason for and purpose of the matter flared up. The party Partei Team Kärnten stated in a press release that changing the text of the anthem would be "an absolute no-go."[2] The anthem meant "history and identity" and "similar to the Carinthian state constitution, it should not be an object for petty party-political games." What one could imagine, however, was to add a fifth verse to the four existing ones, which would remain unchanged. The Carinthian section of the Freiheitliche Partei Österreich particularly polemicized against the university rector and rejected a modification of the text as "politically motivated mutilation."[3] The Kärntner Abwehrkämpferbund ("Carinthian Defense Fighters' Association")[4] also intervened and called for "the completely undisputed merits of the Carinthian freedom struggle" (Müller 2018), which are referenced in the current fourth verse of the anthem, to be continually cherished. The daily newspaper *Der Standard* in its blog *City*, *Country*, *Politics*, cites Vitouch who is quoted as having claimed that "[o]nce again, Carinthia has split into two factions, similarly to the time of the signage dispute." According to Vitouch, this fourth verse was "not an ode on the self-determination of the state" but, instead, was occupied with the "nationalistic conflict" and "charged with old clichés of the fatherland, loyalty and death" (Müller 2018).

Further examples of this exchange of blows could be cited. Whether this debate is a reason why the university jury is one year behind schedule and the 15 submissions have not yet been viewed at the time of writing this article in the summer of

2 N. N. "Kärntner Heimatlied – Team Kärnten/Köfer: Neue fünfte Strophe statt politisch motiviertem Eingriff in den bestehenden Text!", press release April 18, 2019. Accessed September 16, 2019. Available at: https://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20180418_OTS0125/kaerntner-heimatlied-team-kaerntenkoefer-neue-fuenfte-strophe-statt-politisch-motiviertem-eingriff-in-den-bestehenden-text.

3 Cited in Sedlaczek (2018).

4 The Kärntner Abwehrkämpferbund (KAB) was founded in 1955 and describes itself as a "bearer of the tradition of the defensive struggle and of all those people who cherish their homeland and who, with their idealism and will to sacrifice, made possible the plebiscite of October 10, 1920." KAB website, https://www.kab-or.at/59.html. Accessed September 16, 2019.

2019, could not yet be clarified.[5] It is a fact, however, that the debate about the Carinthian anthem is aimed directly at the heart of Carinthia's recent history and the conflicts over the sovereignty of its interpretation that still fester today. It is part of the *Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška*, thus, capturing the complex interrelationship of discourses, practices, perceptions, and value and relational systems that emanate from the so-called Carinthian defensive struggle and the referendum of 1920.[6] The specificity of the terminology *Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška*, developed from Michel Foucault's original thesis (Foucault 1978: S. 119f.), is that the hegemonic German-national discourse on 'people,' language and culture and the counter-hegemonic criticism of this discourse are dichotomously related to each other and should be considered in conjunction. Moreover, the application of the concept of *dispositif* offers the opportunity to look not only at the discourses but also at the practices, rituals and power relations connected with them – because in order to produce the *Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška*, artifacts and practices that constitute and perform it are needed. These can be found especially in the implementation of folk culture, for example, in the form of traditional costumes, musical folk culture (here, the *Carinthian Song* [*Kärntner Lied*[7]] is of particular relevance), the cultivation of folklore and the annual celebrations taking place throughout the state on October 10, the state holiday commemorating the 1920 plebiscite. Against this background, the *Carinthian anthem* will be regarded in the following as a discourse element of the *Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška*, an element that has contributed to keeping the latter alive. The starting point of the following analysis is the observation that the semantics of the Carinthian anthem have developed and sharpened since its creation in 1822 as a result of its respective historical uses.

On the one hand, the contribution is, therefore, to be understood as a historically focused and object-oriented case study within the field of popular music/ethnomusicological research (Leimgruber and Oehme 2007: 21) in the field of folk song research and, on the other hand, as a contribution to an empirically and cultural-scientifically situated piece of regional history research (Haid 2002: 93). The focus is on the genesis and uses of the Carinthian anthem in a diachronic perspective. Aspects that concern singing research, such as the question of experiences

5 This information was retrieved via email communication with the university rector's office in July 2019. I was informed that 15 contributions had been submitted, and that up to now, no selections had been made, but that the winner would be determined during the fall of 2019.

6 This terminology was developed within the FWF Project *PERFORMING REALITY – Dis- and Re-Articulation of the Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška. A Co-Production between Arts-Based and Cultural Science Research on the Occasion of the Centenary of the Carinthian Plebiscite* (http://volksabstimmung2020.aau.at/) at the Institute for Cultural Analysis of the University of Klagenfurt. Cf. also Liepold-Mosser (2020).

7 The term *Kärntner Lied* is used as a collective term for a dialectal song genre from Carinthia. Cf. Antesberger (2019). It has great significance in the Carinthian folk music scene to this day.

of singing from a subject's perspective, can only be touched upon in passing. Sources used in this research are various versions of the song, articles from print media and archival material.[8]

"The Carinthian's Fatherland" – The patriotic song of the fatherland

The Carinthian anthem in its present form is a conglomerate that originates from two text authors and a composer. The first three verses are taken from the four-stanza poem "The Carinthian's Fatherland" (*Des Kärntners Vaterland*) by Johann Thaurer von Gallenstein (1779–1840), which was published in the journal *Carinthia* in November 1822 (Thaurer von Gallenstein 1822).[9] The most significant difference between the original version and that in use today is that Thaurer did not speak of the "homeland" (*Heimat*) but of the "fatherland" (*Vaterland*) and that he dedicated the fourth verse to the imperial house of Habsburg.[10] According to legend, the poem was set to music by Josef Rainer von Harbach (1804–1870) in 1835 at a social gathering at Waldenstein Castle in Carinthia's Valley of Lavant.[11]

The genesis of the text and melody must be seen against the backdrop of the Napoleonic Wars, in the course of which Carinthia had to cede parts of its territory to the "Illyrian Province" of the French Empire, which was administered by Napoleon I (1809) (Anderluh 2010: 74). It was only in 1849 that both Upper and Lower Carinthia were again under Austrian administration and Carinthia became an independent crown estate.

On the one hand, the text of von Gallenstein's poem bears the characteristics of patriotic "*Vaterlandslieder*" (songs of the fatherland) (Kurzke 1990: 64–86), as they arose, with a political claim, from the opposition in the context of the German national movement (Anderluh 2010: 74). On the other hand, the fourth verse in honor of the emperor corresponds to the affirmative "*Fürstenpreislied*" (song in honor of the prince) (Linder-Beroud 2003: 56–62). The *Carinthian anthem* followed

8 Archival documents can be consulted in the Carinthian provincial archive and the Saarbrücken city archive. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Kärntner Landsmannschaft for permission to inspect the documents relating to the competition for the fourth verse of the Carinthian anthem.

9 The exact time of composition of the poem is discussed in Dinklage (1955).

10 After the death of Emperor Franz I (1835), the fourth verse – "*Und breitet über Öst'reichs Haus/Der Kaiseraar die Schwingen aus –/Dann auch, von Feinden ungeneckt,/Sein Flügelpaar Karenta deckt;/ Und segnend strecket Franzens Hand/Sich über dich, mein Vaterland!*" – was no longer part of the song. In this publication, a small number of details have been changed: "*Da, wo Tirol an Salzburg grenzt*" became "*Dort, wo Tirol an Salzburg grenzt*" (Pfeiffer 1841).

11 This is a reference to an anecdotal article written by the contemporary witness Fritz Wlattnig, which is said to have been published in the *Draupost* of January 21, 1864. The anecdote is referred to in Anderluh (2010); Dinklage (1955: 8); and Wlattnig (1928: 4, 1935: 40 f).

the typical development from the fatherland song to the homeland song ("*Heimatlied*") (Greverus 1972: 281–335). In terms of its content, the latter stands for the praise of the homeland (Greverus 1972: 312), while lyrically and musically, it is characterized by its formulaic, folk-song-like form (Greverus 1973; Haid 2019). In the Carinthian anthem, this can be seen in the "(Dort-)Wo model" at the beginning of the original German verse, which has been imitated many times (Haid 2019), and the description of the geographical area by indicating its territorial boundaries (Greverus 1972: 312). Many later (national) anthems have their origin in a homeland song (Haid 2019).[12]

The Carinthian anthem probably had no anthemic function in the first phase of its existence (Anderluh 2010: 74). Gerda Anderluh substantiates this thesis with the fact that *The Carinthian's Fatherland* found its way into song collections of the local nobility and the upper middle class, typical of the 19th century, in which an anthem would have had no place (Anderluh 2010: 74f.). The obituary of the Thaurer of Gallenstein, who died in 1840, makes no mention of the original text (Mayer 1840), from which it may also be concluded that the song probably did not have any special significance in the first half of the 19th century. The sources also point in this direction, but they also show that the song played an increasing role in various contexts during the 19th century – at concert events (especially those given outside the country by visiting Carinthian male choirs),[13] at local festivities in honor of local dignitaries,[14] for the opening of regional exhibitions[15] and at school celebrations.[16] Initially, the male choral societies that emerged in the middle of the 19th century were the main carriers and, thus, multipliers of the song (Greverus 1972: 303–310).[17] It was usually sung at the opening or closing of ceremonies and often together with everyone present – which already paved the way for later use as the state anthem. *The Carinthian's Fatherland* was additionally used for tourist advertising for Carinthian health resorts[18] and was printed at the end of a book of Carinthian local history and geography for schools published in 1876 (Quantschnigg 1876: 85).

12 See also the song types listed in Steinbauer (1997: 9 f): royalty/ruler song (e.g. "God Save the Queen"), popular anthem of national significance ("Marseillaise"), homeland song, from which national anthems have developed.

13 Cf. the reports about a concert in the health resort Sauerbrunn (*Klagenfurter Zeitung*, August 11, 1856: 754) and the performance of the Carinthian Mischitz Quintet in December 1858 at the Gasthof Bergkeller in Dresden (cf. Kollitsch 1948: 42).

14 Cf. the reports about the celebrations on the occasion of the inauguration of the regional parliament of 1861 (*Tagespost*, April 4, 1861: 3) and the promotion of the district judge to head of the regional court in Bleiburg (*Freie Stimmen,* August 21, 1894: 4).

15 Cf. Von der Kärntner Landesausstellung. *Neue Freie Presse*, August 18, 1885: 5.

16 Cf. the reports in *Klagenfurter Zeitung*, July 15, 1871: 1008 and *Freie Stimmen*, July 15, 1891: 3.

17 On the tradition of male choirs in the 19th century, cf. also Fastl (2019) and Klenke (1998).

18 Cf. Österreichische Badezeitung. Organ für die Interessen der europäischen Kurorte und des Kurpublikums. Vienna 9 (8), 1879: 82.

Toward the end of the 19th century, the song increasingly acquired a German national connotation, for example, when the report on the Provincial Exhibition opened in Klagenfurt in 1885 mentions that the choral movement was the final point of a "celebration in a truly German spirit."[19]

The "Carinthian Anthem" – the anthem of German nationalism in Austria

It is not possible to determine when, by whom and with what justification the term fatherland was replaced by homeland in the title of the song and at the end of its verses.[20] The change was already included in a school songbook in 1908,[21] but initially still existed parallel to the first version. If the song was mentioned in the sources up to the 1910s, then with the beginning *Where Salzburg borders on Tyrol* and under the heading of *homeland song* or *Carinthian anthem*.

In 1911, the "Kärntner Landsmannschaft" (political and cultural organization for the protection of Carinthian traditions), which was part of the "Heimatschutzbewegung" (homeland movement),[22] declared that the song *Where Salzburg borders on Tyrol* should be supported and made known as the regional anthem (Deuer 1985: 92). The government had the music set for string orchestra and brass instruments, and had copies of the sheet music and lyrics disseminated among the public. The local military band presented the song in its orchestrated form during the regional parade of traditional folk dress on August 27, 1911. Since the introduction of this version, the word "fatherland" has been terminally replaced by "homeland."

While it took until 1966 for the Carinthian anthem to be officially declared the regional anthem,[23] the song had already taken on an anthemic function by 1911. This consolidated the attributions of meaning that had developed in the first phase of the song's use in the 19th century.

19 N.N. Von der Kärntner Landesausstellung. *Neue Freie Presse*, August 18, 1885: 5.

20 Anderluh (2010) takes "fatherland" (*Vaterland*) to have meant Austria and "homeland" (*Heimatland*) to stand as a synonym for Carinthia. However, it could also be the case that the terminology was in line with the zeitgeist and, from 1911, followed the interests of the Carinthian regional government.

21 Cf. August Hilbrand: Liederbuch für österreichische allgemeine Volksschulen. Third, improved edition. Vienna 1908 cited in Anderluh (2010), footnote 4.

22 The "Heimatschutzbewegung" emerged toward the end of the 19th century. Its goal was the "protection" of regionality. On this, cf. for example, Greverus (1979: 62–69); Klueting (1991). The "Kärntner Landsmannschaft" was founded in 1910 and has existed, with a break between 1938–1945, until today. It is particularly active in the area of preservation of local folk culture. Cf. http://www.k-landsmannschaft.at/geschichte.htm (accessed September 16, 2019).

23 Cf. Illustration 1.

Connotations of German Nationalism during the Defensive Struggle and the Plebiscite 1919/1920

The tendency to instrumentalize the Carinthian anthem as a declaration of German nationalism continued, especially during the time of the so-called Carinthian defensive struggle (Suppan 2015). After the end of the First World War in 1918, border conflicts arose between the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (SHS State) and the Republic of Austria. In November and December, Slovenian troops entered Southern Carinthia and the Carinthian provincial assembly decided on military resistance. The ensuing clashes lasted until June 1919, during which more than 200 people were killed and 800 wounded on the Carinthian side. The territorial conflict was finally resolved on October 10, 1920, on the basis of a plebiscite in which a vote was held in southern Carinthia, with an estimated Slovenian-speaking population of 70 percent, on whether the voting area should remain with Austria versus joining the SHS state. The plebiscite turned out in favor of Austria; the Carinthian anthem was also utilized during the preceding intensive propaganda campaigns.[24] Thus, unofficial final verses were already circulating before and during the period of the defensive struggle. According to a newspaper report, the following final stanza was sung at an extraordinary meeting of the Klagenfurt municipal council in 1914, at which the question of potential Slovenian attacks was already being discussed:

> My Carinthian land, my homeland,
> To thee we pledge our heart and hand.
> As long's our veins pump German blood,
> We will defend you, true and strong.
> From Alpine lake to mountain high
> You're German and will always be![25]

24 Cf. the documents in Grafenauer (2016) and Neumann (1970).

25 "*Mein Kärntnerland, mein Heimatland,/Dir weih'n wir uns mit Herz und Hand./Solang' in uns noch deutsches Blut,/Stehst du in treuer, sich'rer Hut./Vom Alpsee bis zum Felsenkar/Deutsch bist und bleibst du immerdar!*" Cf. "Gegen den Sloweneneinbruch in Klagenfurt. Außerordentliche Gemeinderatssitzung." *Freie Stimmen*, June 21, 2014: 4–5, here 5.

In 1919 and 1920, the *Carinthian anthem* was sung – often spontaneously – at local events[26] and public rallies[27] that were intended to support Carinthia's remaining in German Austria. This continued – also spontaneously but also in an organized form – at the so-called voting ceremonies[28] immediately after the plebiscite on October 10, 1920, where the song was sometimes embedded in programs of German national songs, such as *Die Wacht am Rhein* and *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*.[29]

Incorporation of Carinthian regional history: the new fourth verse 1930

The use of the Carinthian homeland song (now only under the title "Kärntner Heimatlied") at representative events, such as the unveiling of monuments, laying of foundation stones, midsummer celebrations, school celebrations and the commemoration ceremonies for the Carinthian plebiscite, which have been held annually on October 10 since 1921, became more widespread in the 1920s and 1930s.

In April 1930, the regional government sent a letter to the Kärntner Landsmannschaft to ask them for help with the "creation of an entirely new verse [of the *Carinthian anthem*], which would directly refer to the time of the plebiscite."[30] These lyrics should be official for the entire state. The Landsmannschaft organized a competition and formed a committee of seven prominent members of the association.[31] The German national newspaper *Freie Stimmen* polemicized against this competition,[32] referencing a letter to the editor, according to which such a competition would be superfluous: The fourth verse, which had become commonplace during the time of the plebiscite could certainly sung by all Carinthians, apart from those

26 Cf., for example, N.N. "Klagenfurt 26. August. Kärntner Liederabend." *Grazer Tagblatt. Morning Issue*, August 28, 1919: 3; Wlattnig (1935: 42).

27 Cf. N.N. "Massenkundgebung im Landhaushofe." *Freie Stimmen*, September 10, 1920: 1–2; N.N. Kärnten deutschösterreichisch und ungeteilt! *Freie Stimmen*, April 13, 1920: 1–2; Kärnten in Not. *Die Frau*, October 2, 1920: 3–4.

28 Cf. e.g. N.N. "Abstimmungsfeier in Klagenfurt." *Freie Stimmen*, October 14, 1920: 1; N.N. "Feier in Velden." *Freie Stimmen*, October 21, 1920: 6.

29 Cf. N.N. "Kärnten deutschösterreichisch und ungeteilt! Kundgebung am Neuen Platz." *Freie Stimmen*, April 13, 1920: 1–2, here 2.

30 Letter of the governor Arthur Lemisch to the Kärntner Landsmannschaft of Aril 1, 1930 (*Schreiben des Landeshauptmanns Arthur Lemisch an die Kärntner Landsmannschaft vom 18.4.1930*), in: Kärntner Landesarchiv (KLA), Archiv der Kärntner Landsmannschaft, Faszikel 42, No. 216.

31 Hans Suppan (Chairman of the Kärntner Landsmannschaft), Anton Anderluh (folk music collector and researcher), Georg Graber (folklorist), Eduard Manhart (painter), Josef Friedrich Perkonig (writer), Johann Bapt. Unterluggauer (Canon), Ernst Wlattnig (railway inspector). Cf. KLA, Faszikel 42, No. 216.

32 The newspaper *Freie Stimmen* was the "voice of the Großdeutsche Volkspartei" (Markt-Huter 2018). It was published between 1881 and 1938. The last issue declared that the newspaper had reached its aim: "Greater Germany has become a reality." It was succeeded by *Der deutsche Grenzruf*. Cf. H. P. Freie Stimmen. *Freie Stimmen,* August 31, 1938: 1.

who "still have their eyes on Yugslovia."[33] This is the version of the fourth verse in question:

> Whether German or Windisch we sing,
> It still sounds properly Carinthian!
> True to the homeland in dire times,
> We carry the heavy burdens with pride,
> Until justice's strong and rightful hand
> Gave us a free Carinthian land![34]

"Windische" (and Windisch-speaking people) were called "German-friendly Slovenes" by journalism and historiography, with tendencies toward German nationalism, especially after 1918 (Fischer 2016). They were juxtaposed with "National Slovenes" (also referred to as "Slovenes with a national conscience")[35] who, during a time of politics characterized by increasing Germanization and after the plebiscite, were seen as traitors to the homeland.[36]

The competition received 256 entries. These were screened in an anonymous procedure and 13 draft texts were shortlisted.[37] Overall, the text proposals that are stored in the Carinthian Provincial Archives are characterized by a moderate style. Typical set pieces are terms such as "loyalty" and "love," the description of Carinthia as a "land of mountains, songs and lakes" and the phrase of "free and undivided Carinthia," which is still used today. The few proposals that refer directly to the 1920 plebiscite (e.g. with the concrete date of October 10, terms such as "*Heimatdienst*" (Homeland Service) and "*Landsmannschaft*" or the colors of the ballot papers) and aggressive, defamatory texts (with set pieces such as "*Slavengier*" (greed of the Slavs), "*Slavenbrut*" (brood of the Slavs), "*Slavenjoch*" (yoke of the Slavs) or "*Slavenfeind*" (enemy of the Slavs) were not considered. Some of the entrants claimed to be Carinthians, some emphasized that they had actively participated in the defensive struggle. The greetings in the letters often referred to the "homeland"[38] or belonging to the German ethnic group.[39] Various verses were also submitted which were already in use in the family or local environment.[40]

33 N.N. "Zur Preisauschreibung der Kärntner Landsmannschaft." *Freie Stimmen*, May 29, 1930: 4.

34 "*Ob deutsch, ob windisch ist der Sang,/Er hat doch echten Kärntner Klang!/Der Heimat treu in schwerer Zeit,/Geduldig tragen wir das Leid,/Bis daß das Recht mit starker Hand/Uns schuf ein freies Kärntnerland*!" *Freie Stimmen*, May 29, 1930: 4.

35 These attributions were based on partly biologistic theories and theories that devaluated Slovenian. Cf. Fischer (2016: 1519).

36 For a differentiated perspective, see Fischer (2016: 1519) and Pleterski (1996: 226–266).

37 Cf. KLA, Faszikel 42, No. 216.

38 E.g.: "with Carinthian greetings," "with deepest love for the homeland."

39 "With German greetings."

40 Karl Mayerhofer from Villach, for example, submitted a verse in four parts, which he said he had already written and performed on the fifth anniversary of the plebiscite. The text read: "*Du Land, das einst so heiss begehrt,/wie bist du uns doch lieb und wert,/begehrt von falscher Feinde Wut,/*

The winner of the competition was the proposal submitted by the teacher Agnes Millonig (1884–1962). Her text read:

> Where faithful women and brave men
> reclaimed their homeland once again,
> where borders were inscribed in blood
> left all things German to suffer and die;
> Onto the mountains we cheer and chant:
> This is my wondrous homeland![41]

Similar to other respondents, she also uses the "(Dort-)Wo model" in her original German version. With reference to the virtues of the female and male inhabitants of the country, Millonig also served the genre of the homeland song, in which such stereotypes can often be found as patterns (Greverus 1972: 311–316). Millonig's text submission, however, went through an editorial process. The jury suggested that the author should change the fourth line ("left all things German to suffer and die"). They argued that:

> "Not only the Germans, but also the Windische people have been exemplary in their defensive struggle and in the preparations for the plebiscite. In your draft, the fourth line reads: 'left all that is German to suffer and die.' We fear that perhaps the word 'Germans' will raise concerns among Carinthians of Slovenian descent who are loyal to their homeland."[42]

Eventually the word "German" was substituted by "free."[43] This shows that the intention of an anthem that was to stand "for the whole country" was taken into account in that all those who voted to stay with Austria were construed as a unit – regardless of whether they were German- or Slovenian-speaking. At the same time, however, the "non-native" Carinthians were excluded. This meant for the development of the *Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška* that the division of the population was not based on the languages practiced but on an affirmative or negative attitude toward Austria.

getränkt mit teurem Kärntner Blut,/erhalte Gott, dich jederzeit,/in treuer Kärntner Einigkeit" ("Oh country, once so strongly craved,/how dear and valuable you are,/desired by rage of wrongful foe,/drowned in dear Carinthian blood,/so keep us oh, our gracious Lord, in faithful Carinthian unity").

41 "*Wo Mannesmut und Frauentreu/Die Heimat sich erstritt aufs neu,/wo man mit Blut die Grenze schrieb/und deutsch in Not und Tod verblieb;/Helljubelnd klingts zur Bergeswand:/Das ist mein herrlich Heimatland!*"

42 Letter from the Kärntner Landsmannschaft to Agnes Millonig dated July 7, 1930, in: KLA, Faszikel 42, No. 216.

43 The proposal of jury member Graber had been to replace the disputed fourth line with the words "left all that is German to suffer and die." Eventually, however, Perkonig's suggestion "left all things free to suffer and die" was adopted.

The winner of the competition received prize money of 100 Austrian schillings, which at the time was a large sum.[44] In order to introduce her to the public as the author of the new fourth verse, the Kärntner Landsmannschaft asked Millonig to share her curriculum vitae and to make clear her connection to Carinthia. The crux of the matter was that although Agnes Millonig's parents and grandparents came from Carinthia, she herself lived in Neumarkt in neighboring Styria, where she was born, grew up and had been professionally trained.[45] In this respect, Millonig's "Carinthian identity" could only be construed based on her family ancestry.

The continuation of the German national style after 1930 and 1945

In the following years, the *Carinthian anthem* continued to be used as a ritualized component of the October 10th celebrations, during local occasions[46] and at folkloristic events.[47] The first and fourth verse were usually sung, often standing up.

The so-called *Anschluss* (voluntary annexation) of Austria by Nazi Germany was also welcomed in Carinthia on March 13, 1938, by employing the *Carinthian anthem*.[48] There, in an article in the *Kärntner Volkszeitung*, an explicit parallel between the Carinthian plebiscite of 1920 and the 1938 referendum was drawn and

44 By contrast, the starting annual salary of a teacher in Carinthia in 1930 was between 1,650 und 2,670 Austrian schillings. Cf. Deuer (1985: 94).

45 Cf. the correspondence between the Kärntner Landsmannschaft and Agnes Millonig of September 19, 1930, September 23, 1930 and undated, possibly end of September, 1930, in: KLA, Faszikel 42, No. 216.

46 During memorial services for local celebrities, such as Switbert Lobisser, an artist in the "blood and soil" tradition, in 1943 (cf. N.N. "Kompromißlos im Leben und in der Kunst. Kärntens Abschied von Switbert Lobisser." *Völkischer Beobachter. Kampfblatt der national-sozialistischen Bewegung Großdeutschlands*, Vienna Edition, October 6, 1943: 4), the composer Karl Frodl (cf. N.N. "Trauerakt im Wappensaal. Totenfeier für Prof. Karl Frodl." *Völkischer Beobachter. Kampfblatt der national-sozialistischen Bewegung Großdeutschlands*, Vienna Edition, December 9, 1943: 5) and the first national socialist Gauleiter (regional director) of Carinthia, Hubert Klausner (cf. N.N. "Der feierliche Staatsakt in Kärnten." *Völkischer Beobachter, Kampfblatt der national-sozialistischen Bewegung Großdeutschlands.* Vienna Edition, February 19, 1939: 2). The *Carinthian anthem* was also used to frame the opening ceremonies of sports events (cf. N.N. "Festtage am Wörthersee. *Salzburger Volksblatt mit der Bilder-Zeitschrift 'Bergland'*." Monday July 12, 1937: 7) or the launching ceremonies for sporting boats produced in Velden am Wörthersee (cf. N.N. "Vom Kärntner Jachtklub." *Kärntner Volkszeitung. Unabhängiges Blatt für alle*, May 5, 1937: 11).

47 Cf. the report on a film evening in Vienna, organized by the Federal Police Directorate: After the presentation of Carinthian dances, a film on the tenth anniversary of the Carinthian plebiscite was screened and at the end of the screening the "Salon Orchestra" played the *Carinthian anthem* (cf. N.N. "Ein Film der Sicherheitswache." *Neues Wiener Journal,* February 24, 1931: 10).

48 Cf. N.N. "Velden a. W. Siegesfeier." *Kärntner Volkszeitung. Deutsches Grenzlandblatt*, Villach, April, 13, 1938: 10; N.N. "Der Führer im jubelnden Kärnten." *Alpenländische Rundschau*, April 9, 1938: 5.

a historical continuity between the two events was claimed.[49] Further variations of verses were created in which the incorporation into the German Reich was praised. According to an article in the *Freie Stimmen* of April 10, 1938, another competition had already taken place, from which the SA member of Standarte 17, Sturm 3, Gabriel Engler, had emerged as winner with the following text:

> O Carinthia, home and faithful land,
> You child, who found your mother's hand!
> The cuffs burst open, the ice gave way
> The German spring came here to stay!
> "One people, one Reich, one Führer!"
> the German happiness resounds
> through mountains, forests, valleys, mounds.[50]

The *Carinthian anthem* could, thus, be easily integrated into the politics of the new rulers, whereby the song's reference to the historical events of the defensive struggle and the plebiscite may well have been important.

The fourth verse, added in 1930, seems to be a consistent perpetuation of the significance that has been attributed to the song since 1919/1920, at the latest. The invocation of the German national version of history has the function of constructing and legitimizing a specifically nationalist state identity (Binder, Niedermüller, and Kaschuba 2001: 9). If one considers the fact that a third of those eligible to vote in the 1920 Carinthian plebiscite did not vote for Austria, these efforts can also be understood as a weapon in the struggle for the interpretive sovereignty of Carinthian state history. Performative means and the introduction of rituals are of great importance in such negotiations and struggles for interpretation over hegemony. Legitimizing traditions are invented and institutionalized (Hobsbawm 1983: 4; Löfgren 1989: 5–23). In this context, anthems are particularly suitable as mediators of "semantics of the national" (Binder, Niedermüller, and Kaschuba 2001: 10), since they can be used as "aesthetically sensual media" (Kaschuba 2001: 21). Music has the potential to create emotions (de Nora 1999), and singing is a sensual and communicative practice that can have community-building functions, especially because of its emotionalizing power (Kaiser 2017; Stadler Elmer 2008: 1501–153, 159f.).

49 Cf. "Velden a. W. N.N. Siegesfeier." *Kärntner Volkszeitung. Deutsches Grenzlandblatt*, Villach, April, 13, 1938: 10.

50 "*O Kärntner Heimat, treues Land,/Du Kind, das heim zur Mutter fand!/Die Fessel sprang, das Eis zerrann,/Der deutsche Frühling brach dir an!/'Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer!' schallt/Das deutsche Glück durch Berg und Wald*." Cf. N.N. "Dort, wo Tirol an Salzburg grenzt." *Freie Stimmen*, April 10, 1938: 9; also cf. Gasper (2003: 6f.). As can be seen in the *Kärntner Jahrbuch* of 1942, the following was added to this verse: "The German Eagle spreads his hands/across the mighty Ostmark lands/ Not fearing pain or great despair/our home is shielded by his pair/of wings that like the Führer's hand/stretches across you, my Carinthian land." (Sammer 1942: 85f.).

The *Carinthian anthem* contains essential set pieces on a semantic and social level, which were constitutive for the development of the *Dispositif Carinthia/ Koroška*. It is suitable for ceremonial staging and singing the song became a ritual in the context of public events. This performative moment forms the basis for the constant repetitions on which a dispositive is dependent.

Against the background of the function of the *Carinthian anthem* as a declaration of belief in the German nationality, it is hardly surprising that in the 1930s, the anthem could also be used in the context of other territorial claims by the German Reich: The Carinthian-born chairman of the "Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland (VDA)"[51] (People's Association for German heritage in Foreign Countries) Hans Steinacher (1892–1971), who had already made a name for himself in the defensive struggle and as a propagandist for the "Kärntner Heimatdienst"[52] (Carinthian Homeland Service), pushed for the installation of a carillon at the Saarbrücken town hall in the run-up to the Saar vote in 1935. This was intended as a "fostering of sympathy for the other German voting areas"[53] and a return present for the bells donated by the VDA in the Carinthian town of Völkermarkt in October 1931. The VDA initiated the raising of funds for this in Carinthia (from local authorities, church communities and private individuals) and in Schleswig, East Prussia, West Prussia and Upper Silesia.[54] In October 1934, after tough negotiations between Steinacher and the Lord Mayor of Saarbrücken Dr. Neikes, – and after delays due to, among other things, the difficult customs regulations in occupied Saarland – the carillon was inaugurated under conspiratorial circumstances. Until 1941, it played three other pro-German

51 The VDA was founded in 1880 as the "Deutscher Schulverein" (German School Association) with headquarters in Berlin, renamed in 1908 as the "Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland" (Club for German Culture Abroad) and in 1933 as the "Verband für das Deutschtum im Ausland" (Association for German Culture Abroad). The club/association supported the so-called *Auslandsdeutsche* (Germans living abroad) and *Volksdeutsche* (people whose language and culture had German origins but who did not hold German citizenship), especially by establishing and running schools, kindergartens and libraries (Eisler 2015). The "Deutscher Schulverein" and its successor institutions were also active in Southern Carinthia.

52 The "Kärntner Heimatdienst" (KHD) was founded in the run-up to the Carinthian plebiscite by all political parties in March 1920 to organize pro-German propaganda. It pursued an anti-Slovenian policy of Germanisation in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1924, the Social Democrats left the KHD. Thereupon the Carinthian Homeland Service changed its name to "Kärntner Heimatbund." In 1957, the KHD was founded anew. Its orientation is regarded as pro-German; its activities during the signage dispute in 1972 are controversial (Fritzl 1990). In the meantime, however, a willingness to engage in dialogue can be observed: The "Carinthian Consensus Group" has existed since 2005, in which, among others, representatives of the KHD and the Central Association of Slovenian Organisations try to find common solutions to issues concerning the ethnic groups. Cf. for example, Feldner and Sturm (2007).

53 Letter from Hans Steinacher to Lord Mayor Neikes dated June 29, 1931, in: Stadtarchiv Saarbrücken (SAB), Bestand Großstadt 3234.

54 Cf. SAB, Bestand Großstadt 3234.

songs daily in addition to the *Carinthian anthem*: *Deutsch ist die Saar*, the Schleswig-Holstein song *Wanke nicht, mein Vaterland* and the Haydn melody *Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser* (or *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*).[55] Afterwards, the bells had to be melted down due to the war.

In Carinthia, the *Carinthian anthem* continues to be used without interruption after 1945.[56] In 1966 the provincial parliament passed a resolution to decree it by law as the Carinthian state anthem.[57] This was flanked by various efforts – again by the Kärntner Landsmannschaft – to raise public awareness of the *Carinthian anthem* further. In 1954, the Kärntner Landsmannschaft initiated and financed the erection of a memorial stone in Waldenstein Castle to commemorate the creation of the melody of the *Carinthian anthem* (Dinklage 1955: 9).[58] There were also initiatives to create a memorial site for the poet Johann Thaurer von Gallenstein after his grave in the Klagenfurt cemetery St. Ruprecht was abandoned in the 1960s (Gasper 2007: 108f.). In September 2007, the then Governor Jörg Haider – also at the suggestion of and in the presence of representatives of the Kärntner Landsmannschaft – unveiled a commemorative plaque for Agnes Millonig in Neumarkt (Styria), thus, initiating a public debate on the involvement of the local poet in National Socialism.[59] Millonig is said to have joined the NSDAP as early as 1933 and had enthusiastically welcomed the so-called *Anschluss* with her poem *Das heilige Ja* (The Sacred Yes).

A new song – a better song?

Even a cursory presentation like the one in this article shows the role of the *Carinthian anthem* as a carrier of meaning for the interests of German nationalists in Austria. In a ritualized form, the song becomes an important building block for the maintenance of the *Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška*.

55 Cf. Letter from the Lord Mayor Dr. Neikes to the Director of the Interior and the Cabinet of April 18, 1934, in: SAB, Bestand Großstadt 3897.

56 Cf. N.N. "Schlußfeier des dritten Umschulungskurses für Junglehrer." In: Kärntner Nachrichten, November 24, 1945: 5.

57 In: Landesgesetzblatt für Kärnten 21st Issue (1966).

58 Cf. also: "Gedenkstein Kärntnerlied." *Kärntner Bildungswerk* (in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Institut Urban Jarnik, dem Koroški pokrajinski muzej und dem Denkmalamt Maribor): Juwelen. Unsere Kulturlandschaft. N. D., http://www.kleindenkmaeler.at/detail/gedenkstein_kaerntnerlied (Accessed September 16, 2019).

59 Cf.: N.N. "Haider ehrt umstrittene Dichterin Agnes Millonig." *Die Presse*, September 20, 2007, https://diepresse.com/home/innenpolitik/331319/Haider-ehrt-umstrittene-Dichterin-Agnes-Millonig (Accessed September 16, 2019); "Gedenktafel für Millonig." *kaernten* ORF.at, September 20, 2007, https://ktnv1.orf.at/stories/223233/ (Accessed September 16, 2019); "Illegale Millonig 'minder belastet'." Volksgruppen ORF.at Slowenen, July 20, 2012, https://archive.fo/jpAK (Accessed September 16, 2019).

However, song texts are also altered by actors and given other connotations.[60] Numerous text versions that circulated at the time of the Carinthian defensive struggle and in current parodies are testament to this.[61]

Initiatives, such as that of the Klagenfurt University Rector, illustrate the desire not to continue the *Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška*. This can also be seen in further efforts, such as translations of the *Carinthian anthem* into Slovenian.[62]

Even the chairman of the Kärntner Heimatdienst, Josef Feldner, in his speech on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of its foundation, made an effort to stop serving the *Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška*.[63] The festive event focused on the "reconciliation of the ethnic groups" envisaged by the "Carinthian Consensus Group" (Kärntner Konsensgruppe). The festive event focused on the "reconciliation of the ethnic groups" envisaged by the "Carinthian Consensus Group.." Feldner proposed a new fourth verse, which apparently had been transmitted to him by a Carinthian Slovene. To what extent the blood-and-soil metaphor and the exaggeration of the "German" implied in the juxtaposition of "Slavic blood" and "German spirit" are a contemporary way of overcoming the hegemonic thinking inherent in the *dispositif,* should be a matter of discussion:

60 On methods of parody, cf., for example, Schepping (1994).

61 Cf. the version cited in Haid (2006: 49f.), which was published as a commentary on the article "Haider bezeichnet Slowenien als Bananenrepublik," in the newspaper *Der Standard* of April 20, 2006 under the name of Gert Weihsmann:

1) Dort wo Tirol an Salzburg grenzt, kasnudlreich der Südgau glänzt. Wo aus dem Geist, der es umschließt, sich purer Fremdenhass ergießt. Laut johlend schreits zur Felsenwand: Hoch lebe unser Selchwuaschtland!
2) Wo durch des Führers dumme Red, so manche böse Saat aufgeht. Wo man die deutsche Sprache spricht, dafür Slowenisch lieber nicht. Ortstafeln werden schnell verbannt In diesem dumpfen Selchwuaschtland!
3) Wo Mannesmut dem Bierdunst treu, dem Führer folget stets auf Neu. Wo man im Geist von gestern bleibt und laut nach alten Riten schreit. Laut jubelnd schreits zur Bergeswand: Heil unserm herrlich Selchwuaschtland. It is not without reason that the state of Tyrol issued a strict prohibition of parodies when it introduced its state anthem in 1948. Cf. Haid (2002: 94).

62 Cf. the reference in Gasper (2003: 7) on an event at the Klagenfurt Concert Hall in 1988, where the first verse was printed and distributed in Slovenian on a supplement, and the reference to a translation of the first three verses found by Gasper in a Slovenian school songbook (Gasper 2007: 108f.).

63 Cf. Krug (2019).

> Where suffering and ignorance
> were overcome with bravest heart
> where Slavic blood and German mind
> praise the same small speck of earth
> there where we shake each other's hand
> that is my united homeland.[64]

However, conflicts over anthems in which a province or state is to be represented by means of symbols and narratives do not only exist in Carinthia. Similar conflicts arose when national anthems were introduced in Germany (Kurzke 1990: 49) and Austria (Steinbauer 1997: 113–167) after 1945, and they are also known from Tyrol (Haid 2002) and Styria (Müller 2019). Thus, according to reports of the Standard, the advance of the rector of the University of Klagenfurt in the matter of the Carinthian state anthem has revived the debate about the *Dachstein Song* in neighboring Styria (Müller 2019): In this case, the point at issue is that the border with Slovenia, sung of in the Styrian state anthem, had already ceased to coincide with the current political border since the end of the Habsburg monarchy.

In conclusion, the question can be posed as to the significance that can and must be attributed to the lyrics of songs and the productions associated with them. Hermann Bausinger states that, from the perspective of singers, texts often only have a subordinate meaning for the content of songs, whereas the "context of singing, which often forms a tradition of its own and gives songs a specific content orientation," is "just as important, and sometimes even more important" (Bausinger 2003: 45). It is necessary to differentiate here between the politics of symbolism, which has been conducted at the level of the debates about the *Carinthian anthem*, and the level of the actors, who in very different ways contribute to the *Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška* or even undermine it. Random surveys have shown that young adults, adolescents and children in particular, regardless of the numerous interventions in schools, have only a very fragmentary or no knowledge at all about the Carinthian plebiscite and the 'defensive struggle.'[65] According to the surveys, the most important aspect of the Carinthian state holiday for quite a few pupils is that they do not have to go to school on October 10.[66]

64 "*Dort wo man Leid und Unverstand/mit tapfrem Herzen überwand,/wo slawisch Blut und deutscher Geist/vereint ein Fleckchen Erde preist,/wo man einander reicht die Hand/das ist mein einig Heimatland*."

65 These surveys were conducted in Klagenfurt between September and November 2018.

66 I would like to thank Vesna Frauke Harbig, Wilhelm Kuehs, Ute Liepold, Bernd Liepold-Mosser, Roland W. Peball and Klaus Schönberger for the stimulating and fruitful discussions within the project *Performing Reality*. I would also like to thank Klaus Schönberger for his constructive criticism during the development of this article.

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"Otherwise, it is of course very quiet and lonely for me, but the books are a great help"*

Lily Weiser-Aall and her scopes of action in occupied Norway, 1940–1945

Abstract: Using primary sources from Oslo and Berlin, this article examines the activities of folklorist Lily Weiser-Aall (1898–1987) in Norway during the occupation by the German Wehrmacht, her cooperation with the "*Ahnenerbe*" of the SS and the "*Germanischer Wissenschaftseinsatz*." It shows how it is possible for her to be celebrated as the "First Lady of Norwegian folklore studies" in Norway, a country in which collaboration with the National Socialists is very firmly rejected. One should also be able to (re-)approach the first female folklorist to qualify as a professor with greater ease, both in the German-speaking world and beyond.

Keywords: Nazi past, history of knowledge, Norway, Germany, Lily Weiser-Aall

Helge Gerndt in his closing speech of the conference *Volkskunde und Nationalsozialismus* ('Folklore Studies and National Socialism') in Munich in 1986, postulated that the effort to be judicious, differentiated and precise must remain a central point in the process of coming to terms with the folklorist past during National Socialism (Gerndt 1987: 328). Ten years later, a specific person (re-)entered the focus of German-language folklore. In a workshop of the Commission for Women's Studies of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Volkskunde in Mainz in 1996, Christina Niem paid tribute to the woman who was the first female folklorist to qualify as a professor (1927): Lily Weiser-Aall (1898–1987).[1] Weiser-Aall was researcher who taught only briefly at the University of Vienna but who from 1929 onwards, as an award-winning private scholar in Norway, presented a comprehensive body of work and served as a curator at the Institute for Norwegian Ethnological Research from 1946 to 1968 – in Niem's words, a remarkable specialist of the discipline in many respects (Niem 2000).

At that time, it was already known from documents held in German archives that had become accessible in the meantime that she was on the payroll of the SS "*Ahnenerbe*" ('Ancestral Heritage') in Norway – occupied by the German Wehrmacht – in 1943, at 100 German Reichsmarks per month (Bockhorn 1987: 235f.,

* This paper was first published in German in *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde/Archives Suisses des Traditions Populaires* 2019, 115 (2): 41–60. Translation by Stefanie Everke Buchanan.

1 For an overview of her biography, see Fuchs (2002); her bibliography in Niem (1998: 46–52).

footnote 25, 1994: 570). In 1944, an organization chart recorded her as part of the "*Germanischer Wissenschaftseinsatz*" ('Germanic Scientific Mission') in Norway (Kater 2006: appendix chart III)[2].

Building on her presentation, Christina Niem (1998) presented the first major biography, which was published in the same year in a "remembrance book" (Moestue and Kvideland 1998) in Norway.[3] Since Lily Weiser-Aall was considered a mediator between Scandinavia and Central Europe through her research reports and reviews, there had, however, already been earlier interest in her: The volume of the 1978 *Ethnologia Scandinavica* was dedicated to her on the occasion of her 80th birthday, and even before the biography and the commemorative publication in 1998, smaller biographical contributions had been published in Scandinavia and in Austria (Kvideland 1983; Ropeid 1987).

Like Christa Niem and Christine Eike (1998) in the "remembrance book" in 1998, Elsbeth Wallnöfer also relied above all on the classification of Weiser-Aall's work from the perspective of the history of science (Wallnöfer 2008). Dunja Sporrer (2012) delivered further building blocks in *Volkskunde zwischen Wien und Norwegen* ('Folklore Studies between Vienna and Norway') with letters from Weiser-Aall to Viktor Geramb. A comprehensive contribution appeared in 2013 in the yearbook of her former place of work, the *Norsk Folkemuseum* in Oslo: *Lily Weiser-Aall. Norsk etnologisk granskings førstedame* (Skjelbred 2013). She was, thus, celebrated as the "First Lady of Norwegian Folklore Studies" although her activities during the Nazi era were by no means swept under the carpet. Recent Norwegian research reports in detail the (albeit few) known facts and, at the same time, makes it clear that not much more is known about the specific activities of Lily Weiser-Aall than what was already the case in the 1990s (Skjelbred 2013: 123–126). This circumstance was the decisive factor for the research underlying this contribution to be based on primary sources.[4]

Women in the Nazi regime did not necessarily fall into only one of the categories of perpetrator, victim, follower and spectator, but often into several – at different times or even simultaneously (Bock 1997: 245). This insight from women's and gender history also dates back to the 1990s when research into Lily Weiser-Aall's biography began. Here, it is the study of the different spaces of the action of women which is promoted, because the terms 'victim' and 'perpetrator' are less suitable as analytical categories but rather convey, above all, moral connotations.

If one takes a closer look at Lily Weiser-Aall, it quickly becomes clear that the presentation of her activities during the Nazi era lacks the sense of proportion,

2 The original is held in the Bundesarchiv Berlin, NS 21/798.

3 Review in German language: Brudvik (1999: 99–102).

4 For better readability, direct quotations from these primary sources have been translated into English by Stefanie Everke Buchanan.

Fig. 1.
Lily Weiser-Aall, 1950.
Norsk Folkemuseum.

differentiation and precision that Helge Gerndt demanded over 30 years ago. To this day, far too little is known about Lily Weiser-Aall's scopes of action. After a brief reference to her biography, this contribution, therefore, for the first time, makes use, among other things, of her correspondence on her work as a translator in the 1940s in the Norwegian National Library,[5] respectively from the Mohr-Siebeck Verlag's archive,[6] which is held today at the Berlin State Library. Lily Weiser-Aall's personnel file[7] and other documents of the SS "*Ahnenerbe*"[8] as well as personal files of SS officer Hans Schwalm, who was responsible for the "*Germanischer Wissenschaftseinsatz*" in Norway,[9] held in the Federal Archives in Berlin, reveal a differentiated picture. This is also important because misinterpretations or errors have become established or are increasingly present in the literature which greatly impede a critical analysis of Lily Weiser-Aall.[10] The aim is, therefore, to examine the period and

5 Nasjonalbiblioteket Oslo (NB Oslo), privatarkiv og musikkmanuskripter, Ms. fol. 4250.
6 Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz (SBBPK), Nachlass 488.
7 Bundesarchiv Berlin (BA), NS 21/2634.
8 BA, NS 21/36a, NS 21/83 and NS 21/798.
9 BA, NS 21/135.
10 Lily Weiser-Aall's husband Anathon, for example, is confused or equated with his brother, making her the wife of a notorious Norwegian Nazi collaborator. Or there is speculation about a personal meeting with Heinrich Himmler in 1941.

the extent of her activities within the framework of her personal circumstances and to examine the extent to which propaganda was used in the context of the "*Germanischer Wissenschaftseinsatz*." Did Lily Weiser-Aall receive instructions or approach Nazi authorities with requests or plans herself? Based on the information published to date, it is also conceivable that Lily Weiser-Aall could have been a central figure for German Nazi propaganda, the center of a network of prominent folklorists with affinities for the Nazi regime, or a woman who had access to the SS security service and whom Heinrich Himmler visited for tea.

Academic origins

Lily Weiser was born Elisabeth Weiser in Vienna in 1898, grew up in an educated middle-class environment and studied Nordic philology and German Studies at the University of Vienna. As a student of Rudolf Much, who understood German Studies as the science of the Teutons and the German people, and German ethnology as a subarea of Germanic archeology (Niem 1998: 27), she wrote her dissertation on Christmas presents and the Christmas tree (Weiser[-Aall] 1923).[11] She traced individual customs back to the Germanic yule, a typical example of the ideas of continuity at the time and the desire to be able to link customs with the Old Germanic period (Niem 1998: 32). She regarded the development of customs as a historical process and, thus, the history of the German Christmas as extraordinarily difficult and intricate, which was why one should never try to explain folk customs based on details (Weiser[-Aall] 1923: VII).

Lily Weiser also devoted her habilitation to highly topical issues at the time: Since the turn of the century, male societies had been a popular research topic with a wide variety of approaches. In 1902, Heinrich Schurtz's ethnological study *Altersklassen und Männerbünde* ('Age Classes and Male Societies', Schurtz 1902), which pointed to the spread of male societies in a tribal context, gained widespread attention. Initiation rites, rituals in which young men participated, were of central importance (Brunotte 2004: 25–36). Lily Weiser opened up a new field of research in this area with her habilitation *Altgermanische Jünglingsweihen und Männerbünde* ('Old Germanic Initiation Rites and Male Societies') (Weiser[-Aall] 1927).[12] Building on internationally recognized research (e.g. van Gennep 1909), she pursued the question of what traces of initiations could be found in the Old Germanic traditions. She used concrete sources, such as the *Germania* by Tacitus and the Icelandic sagas, and combined linguistic and etymological research with approaches from ethnological psychology. While she saw the initiation of young men as the struggle of two generations, for male dominance over women and predominantly generation-specific

11 On the content and scope, see Grabenweger (2016: 197–205).

12 On the content and scope, see Grabenweger (2016: 206–216).

aspects, Otto Höfler's research, which was based on hers, emphasized "*völkisch*" ('ethnic German') and racial classifications. It was precisely this latter approach that was subsequently also carried out by dedicated National Socialists (Höfler 1934; Wolfram 1936–1938; cf. Brunotte 2004: 130–36; Meier 1999: 324f.). While an older scientific-historical analysis (Peuckert and Lauffer 1951: 118) still clearly distinguishes between Lily Weiser-Aall's and Otto Höfler's approaches[13], the positions were later, as Carlo Ginzburg noted, simply summarized as the "Schule von Much" ('School of Much') (Ginzburg 1993: 81). Lily Weiser-Aall requested the Venia Legendi for "Germanic Archaeology and Folklore," which was confirmed by the Ministry in Vienna in August 1927. It was the first habilitation in which "folklore" appeared by name, and she was, thus, the first woman to be habilitated in the discipline of "folklore" in the German-speaking world (Grabenweger 2016: 184; Niem 1998: 27). She only lectured in the summer semester of 1928 as she married the Norwegian psychologist Anathon Aall (1863–1943) in October of the same year, went on a world trip and moved to Oslo in 1929.

There, on the one hand, she continued work she had already begun, and over the next few years made contributions to 40 keywords for the *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* ('Handbook of German Superstition') (Hoffmann-Krayer and Bächtold-Stäubli 1927–1942).[14] On the other hand, she published more extensively on psychological issues. In 1933, she was awarded the Royal Gold Medal for *Zum Aufbau religiöser Symbolerlebnisse* ('On the Construction of Religious Symbolical Experiences') and became a member of the Norwegian Academy of Science in 1937.

13 Peuckert and Lauffer write that the years from about 1910 onwards were increasingly influenced by society-oriented thoughts and institutions and that the social and political situation encroached on academia, beginning with Lily Weiser's habilitation on Germanic initiation rites and male societies and then, already influenced by political events, drifted towards Höfler's "cultish secret societies", Stumpfl's essay on folk drama ans Wolfram's sword dance (Peuckert and Lauffer 1951: 118).

14 Vol. 1, 1927/28: Amboss, column (col.) 359f., Balken, col. 856–859, Berg, col. 1043–1056, Blocksberg, col. 1423–1428, Brocken, col. 1579–1581; vol.2, 1929/30: Dach, col. 115–124, Dachfirst, col. 124f., Dachstroh, col. 125, Dachtraufe, col. 125–129, Decke, col. 181f., Ecke, col. 544–550, fahrende Schüler, col. 1123f., Faustus, col. 1269–1274, Firstsäule, col. 1526f.; vol.3, 1930/31: Gaufridy, col. 317f., Gerbert, col. 668, Grandier, col. 1113f., Hammer, col. 1370–1376, Haus, col. 1552–1558, Hausbau, col. 1558–1567, Hausgiebel, col. 1570f., Heuberg, col. 1818, Hexe, col. 1827–1919; vol.4, 1931/32: Hörselberg, col. 400f., Keller, col. 1241f., Kette, col. 1279–1286, Klabautermann, col. 1437–1439, Klopferle, col. 1242; vol.5, 1932/33: Kobold, col. 29–47, Kummet, col. 810f.; vol.7, 1935/36: Schwelle, col. 1509–1543; vol.8, 1936/37: Tür, col. 1185–1209, verhexen, col. 1570–1584, Virgil, col. 1665–1672; vol.9, 1938/41: Wagen, col. 24–48, Walen, col. 63–66, Paracelsus, Nachtrag, col. 59–64, Weihnacht, Nachtrag, col. 864–968, Wohnungswechsel, Nachtrag, col. 988–990, Zaun, Nachtrag, col. 991–1003. For a critical review of the „Handwörterbuch", see Daxelmüller (1987). At present, in the 21st century, generally only Lily Weiser-Aall's comprehensive entry "Hexe" ('witch') is referenced.

With *Volkskunde und Psychologie* ('Folklore Studies and Psychology'),[15] she presented an introduction to concepts such as perception, attention and memory as a guide for folklore researchers in 1937 (Niem 1998: 28f.; Wallnöfer 2008: 70–75; for a critical analysis, see Höfig 2009). At this time, psychology in Germany, in turn, began to shift towards folklore studies. Cultural anthropology was granted a guest role for the first time at the conference of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Psychologie* ('German Society for Psychology') in 1934, which was dedicated to the psychology of community life (Spamer 1934: 1).

Positions

"Would you not agree that war is already just around the corner?" wrote the legal historian Emil Goldmann,[16] who had emigrated to London, in a letter dated August 19, 1939, that was addressed to his "honored Madam Colleague" to "reported their safe arrival on free ground around good, helpful people."[17]

After the "Anschluss" ('annexation') of Austria to the German Reich and the subsequent forced retirement from the University of Vienna in May 1939, the Jewish scholar and his wife had begun a struggle to find a way of leaving the country that lasted for months. Invited to Oslo in the autumn, the family eventually got stuck in England, while the books and manuscripts were already in Norway. A letter from Vienna dated March 6, 1938, a week before the "Anschluss," had shown similar foresight: "Everything is still in flux and, as we fear, not in good flux. The enemy has broken into our lines and we have, for the time being, absorbed the shock only with the greatest of difficulty, but he has reached deeply into our territory. God only knows what the next push will bring."[18]

Emil Goldmann died in Cambridge in 1942. Lily Weiser-Aall, who had been friends with Goldmann for many years, stayed in touch with his widow Rosa and secured the scientific estate for research. The contact with the Goldmann family dated back to the 1920s. Lily Weiser-Aall had dedicated an essay to Emil Goldmann in 1933 and also acknowledged his "untiring participation" in this work (Weiser-Aall 1933: 209).

Networks of this kind can only be explored through letters and publications, because Lily Weiser-Aall apparently hardly ever talked about herself. One of the few

15 Lily Weiser-Aall's daughter Louise Jilek-Aall (born 1931), doctor, tropical medicine specialist, ethnologist and Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, in any case, saw her mother as an ethnologist and psychologist and dedicated her first book "To my mother Lily Weiser-Aall who inspired my interest in anthropology and folk medicine" (Jilek-Aall 1979: 5).

16 For his biography, see Brandenstein (1956: 35–43).

17 Nasjonalbiblioteket Oslo (NB Oslo), privatarkiv og musikkmanuskripter, Ms. fol. 4250: B Goldmann, Emil to Lily Weiser-Aall, August 19, 1939.

18 Ibid., Goldmann, Emil to Lily Weiser-Aall, March 6, 1938.

anecdotes from her time as a student in Vienna was handed down by her long-time colleague Marta Hoffmann:

> I once asked her if her father was not sad because she had moved to Norway. She looked at me in surprise and said: 'No, he was very relieved.' He knew of her social commitment and certainly knew that she, together with two fellow female students – the three of them were called 'the Amazons' at the University of Vienna – were actively advocating for other students who were Jewish or who had been harassed or persecuted for other reasons. (Moestue and Kvideland 1998: 14).[19]

A similar story, which suggests that Lily Weiser-Aall was not a convinced National Socialist, comes from the well-known Nazi opponent Will-Erich Peuckert, who was shunned by colleagues when Hitler seized power in 1933 and soon after had to make his living as an employee of the *Berliner Tageblatt*. As Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich pointed out, Peuckert thanked Lily Weiser-Aall forty years later in a congratulatory letter on the occasion of her 70th birthday that she had had the courage not only to speak to him in at the Weimar Folklore Studies Conference 1933 but also to sit down next to him at the coffee table (Bönisch-Brednich 1994: 203).

Based on such networks and narratives about her that are documented in Lily Weiser-Aall's estate, folklorist Reimund Kvideland (1935–2006) concluded that she had an anti-National Socialist orientation. By means of his contribution, this was recorded in the most current (electronic) edition of the *Norsk biografische leksikon* in 2009.[20]

War around the corner

In 1940, however, as Emil Goldman had put it, war was also just around the corner for Lily Weiser-Aall. The Wehrmacht began the occupation of Norway on April 9, 1940. On April 10, the couple with their three children left the capital and moved to a small, simple summer house in Roa, about 60 kilometers from Oslo – the reasons for doing so must remain unanswered for now. Lily Weiser-Aall had continued to publish in Germany, particularly in the *Niederdeutsche Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*. The fact that both she and her husband were both actively publishing is probably also the reason for the double surname Weiser-Aall, ensuring that her publications prior to her marriage did not 'disappear.' In 1941, the last delivery of the *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* with six keyword entries she had compiled was printed and a large-scale project thus completed. The loss of access to literature due to the move to the countryside, combined with massive restrictions due to wartime rationing, her husband's ill health – he was over 30 years older than she – and caring for the three children, whom she homeschooled, led to her concentration on individual

19 I would like to thank my colleague Ursula Stachl for the translation from Norwegian.

20 Accessed February 2, 2020. Available at: https://nbl.snl.no/Lily_Weiser_Aall.

works, respectively, a field of activity that did not demand comprehensive literature research. She was in contact with the Mohr Siebeck Verlag publishing house and the Swedish religious historian Martin Person Nilsson from September 1941 regarding a translation. Works by Nilsson had already been published in Germany by this company (Nilsson 1911, 1914, 1927).

The driving force behind the translation of the second edition of the *Årets folkliga fester* ('The Folk Festivals of the Year'), published in 1936, was the religious scholar Otto Huth – a member of the "*Ahnenerbe*", one of the most important 'scientific' centers of Nazi ideology, since March 1937. The "*Ahnenerbe*" was founded in 1935, initially as a private association, at the suggestion of Heinrich Himmler, as an "ideological-scientific training organ for the SS" and was expected to provide 'scientific' evidence for the superiority of the German 'Aryan' through research – especially on Germanic prehistory. In 1937, the association received a new statute and was now intended to conduct research beyond the German area for the entire Indo-European world. Heinrich Himmler, as the *Reichsführer* of the SS, was the curator, and Walther Wüst, the later rector of the University of Munich, was president. Wolfram Sievers took on the day-to-day business of staff and organization and, under his leadership, the "*Ahnenerbe*" grew into a network of 45 research institutes until the collapse of the Nazi regime in May 1945 (cf. Schmidt and Devantier 2013). The spectrum of activities ranged from comprehensive surveys in South Tyrol and the Gottschee on the occasion of the (forced) resettlement of the local "*Volksdeutsche*" ('ethnic Germans') (Dow 2018) to the "*Germanischer Wissenschaftseinsatz*" in countries occupied by the Nazi regime (Gasche 2014) or the search for the "arisch-nordisch-atlantische Urkultur" ('Aryan-Nordic-Atlantic primeval culture') in Tibet (Kaufmann 2009) to the murder of 86 people in the Natzweiler concentration camp in order to exhibit their skeletons in a museum (Reitzenstein 2018).[21]

Otto Huth, who was head of the "*Forschungsstätte für indogermanische Glaubensgeschichte*" ('Research Centre for Indo-Germanic Religious History'), became a member of the NSDAP and the SS in 1939 and became a professor at the University of Strasbourg in 1941[22]. In 1938, he had authored the book *Der Lichterbaum: Germanischer Mythos und deutscher Volksgebrauch* ('The Tree of Lights: Germanic Myth and German Folk Customs'), which had been critically reviewed by Lily Weiser-Aall: She had "serious objections" and particularly criticized his theses of continuity (Weiser-Aall 1938: 11–13). For this reason, Huth contacted her, sent her offprints[23] and in the course of this professional exchange, the idea was born to publish a translation

21 "*Ahnenerbe*" managing director Wolfram Sievers was sentenced to death in the Nuremberg medical trials in connection with fatal human experiments and executed in 1948.

22 For his biography cf. Junginger (1999: 248–268) and Junginger (2008: 246–249).

23 BA, NS 21/2634 (*Ahnenerbe*: Personalakte Lily Weiser-Aall), transcript Huth to Weiser-Aall, October 12, 1938.

of the new edition of the Swedish standard work in the Mohr Siebeck Verlag: "As you have agreed with Dr. Huth, I can provide you with a translation fee of RM 500," as the order by publishing house director Paul Siebeck read on October 3, 1941.[24] Lily Weiser-Aall did not reply until March 1942, and her letter documents her difficult situation:

> The fact that my answer comes so late is due to extraordinary circumstances, such as a complete lack of domestic and other workers, a lack of water and electricity, extraordinary cold, so many unforeseen disturbances and extra work that it was not possible to predict when the translation could be completed.[25]

Her economic situation became precarious upon the death of her husband Anathon Aall, who passed away on January 9, 1943, at the age of 75. As he had already been over 60 years old when he married in 1928, Lily Weiser-Aall was not entitled to a pension, and the settlement of the estate also took many months ("Lily Weiser Aall – Norsk Biografisk Leksikon"; Sporrer 2012: 21). However, in January 1943 she was able to inform the publisher that the translation was almost finished: In 14 days, she wanted to send the last part of the manuscript to Nilsson.[26]

Work for the *"Ahnenerbe"*

In February 1943, Otto Huth turned to "*Ahnenerbe*" managing director Wolfram Sievers. Since he knew from Lily Weiser-Aall that she wanted to do more academic work in order to make an additional income, he asked him to check "whether it is possible to appoint Mrs. Weiser-Aall to a permanent position in the *Ahnenerbe* in my department and at the same time grant her a monthly bonus." She was, he wrote "the best employee imaginable" for work on the topic of the Christmas tree, May poles and village linden trees.[27]

SS Hauptsturmführer Hans Schwalm, Professor of Geography at the University of Posen, was the representative of the "*Ahnenerbe*" in Norway.[28] Apparently commissioned by the headquarters in Berlin, he first sought contact with Lily Weiser-

24 Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz (SBBPK), Nachlass 488, A 0498, 1, Blatt 3. The letter of *Ahnenerbe* managing director Wolfram Sievers probably also traces back to Huth. In August 1937, Sievers sent her two issues of the *Ahnenerbe* periodical *Germanien* since these covered questions "which will surely be of special interest to you." NB Oslo, Ms. fol. 4250: M *Ahnenerbe* to Lily Weiser-Aall, August 20, 1937. At the time, the German Studies scholar Bernhard Kummer, who was controversial within the Nazi regime because of his image of the Teutons, was of the opinion that Weiser-Aall had "the right attitude towards the Germanic past." Note from PA Kummer, quoted from Simon (2004).

25 SBBPK, Nachlass 488, A 0500, 1, Blatt 3 (March 27, 1942).

26 SBBPK, Nachlass 488, A 0501, 1, Blatt 13, Letter, January 21, 1943.

27 BA, NS 21/2634, Huth to *Ahnenerbe*, Sievers, February 19, 1943.

28 Before Norway, Schwalm had been working for the "*Ahnenerbe*" in Laibach/Ljubljana, (cf. Dow 2018: 167–95; Wedekind 2008).

Aall's brother-in-law Herman Harris Aall, a member of the fascist party *Nasjonal Samling* ('National Unity') and an important Nazi collaborator in Norway. However, there was little he could tell Schwalm since he had fallen out with the Aall family because of his political views:[29]

> He is not aware of any plight of his sister-in-law, whom he knows very little about, as his brother did not get married until 1928. Prof. Aall was vividly dismayed by this and expressed his admiration and gratefulness for the fact that in the middle of the war, German authorities were able to take such close care of individual members of their people. He knows nothing more about the political attitude of his sister-in-law.[30]

On April 8, 1943, Schwalm visited Lily Weiser-Aall in Roa and sent her a letter on the same day upon his return to his office in Oslo. He offered her the possibility of handling future communication with the publishing house or scientific institutions in Germany as official mail via the "*Germanische Leitstelle*" ('Germanic head office') in Oslo. He also wanted to check whether it would be possible to settle the fees via his office, as transfers from Mohr Siebeck Verlag to Norway would be difficult under foreign exchange law and would take a long time. He requested a curriculum vitae and a list of publications for the "*Ahnenerbe*" in Berlin and for Huth. If she needed any special assistance, Schwalm continued, she could turn to the commander of the Security Police and the SD ['Security Service of the SS'] in Oslo.[31]

Schwalm wrote a memo on the visit for Berlin: The furnishings of the house were primitive, she herself had been without help for two and a half years. She had to do everything herself, bake bread, food often had to be fetched from far away and the farmers would unscrupulously exploit the food situation. In addition, many foods were not available in Roa, the three children Cato (13), Luise (12) and Ingrid (10) had not seen any fruit for a year, the oldest daughter suffered from vitamin deficiency:

> It is admirable to the highest degree that Mrs. Aall has managed to do scientific work and complete the translation of Nilsson's book under these conditions in the last few months. She undoubtedly suffers in these circumstances and would certainly have known to prevent my visit if it had not been more or less sprung on her, similar to the way she was able to avoid Höfler's visit during his last stay in Oslo. The conversation clearly showed that Mrs. Aall has a fervent desire not only maintain her

29 Lily Weiser-Aall and her husband Anathon never had anything to do with the NSDAP. A report in the NSDAP party correspondence about the brother-in-law, Herman Harris Aall, on the occasion of his stay in the German Reich from December 1939 to April 1940 emphasizes his sympathy for the Nazi regime and his nationalist sentiments. BA, NSDAP Central Index, respectively, Gau Index negative; R 9361-II/15.

30 BA, NS 21/2634, note by Schwalm, April 7, 1943, about the conversation with Herman Harris Aall on March 29, 1943.

31 NB Oslo, Ms. fol. 4250, M Schwalm, Hans to Lily Weiser-Aall, April 8, 1943.

> scientific connections with German research but to deepen them in every respect. She therefore agreed without further ado to enter into a closer working relationship with Prof. Huth and the '*Ahnenerbe*'. […] Under the present circumstances, Mrs. Aall can, of course, do very little. For now, she is kept entirely busy enough providing the daily bread and teaching the 3 children, who do not attend school. […] In appreciation of the circumstances detailed above, I consider it important, first of all, that Mrs. Aall has a closer working relationship with Prof. Huth and the '*Ahnenerbe*' and she can also maintain her long-standing personal and scientific relationship with Prof. Höfler without difficulty.[32]

Schwalm suggested that she be paid a regularly monthly fee for the translation of fundamental treatises[33] by the Danish folklorist and narrative researcher Axel Olrik, even though Lily Weiser-Aall might have reservations about this because she was currently "unable to engage in regular work due to her unusual circumstances and the vulnerability of her children."[34] Schwalm also made a political assessment:

> With regard to her political views, full clarity could not yet be gained due to the caution with which such an initial conversation naturally had to be conducted. However, when talking about the ideological and political situation in Norway, she showed a full understanding of our German position. On the whole, she seems to tend avoid the war and all its consequences. […] In summary, my impression is that she has not yet been able to come to a clear position, torn between the voice of her blood and the love for her children who, according to the wishes of their father, are to become Norwegians, she tries to postpone the decision until the political circumstances in Norway lead to a decision in one sense of another. I believe that it would be wrong to try to bring about this decision from the outside with Mrs. Aall. Rather, we must give her time. I am convinced that this decision will then be positive.[35]

On May 12, 1943, based on Schwalm's report, Huth applied for a "monthly research grant" in the amount of 100 RM,[36] which "*Ahnenerbe*" curator Walther Wüst approved

32 BA, NS 21/2634, memo by Schwalm, April 10, 1943, about the conversation with Lily Weiser-Aall on April 8, 1943, p. 2–4.

33 Axel Olrik (1864–1917) was a pioneer in the development of formalist approaches to the analysis and comparison of epic forms. Particularly his work "*Epische Gesetze der Volksdichtung*" ('Epic Laws of Folk Poetry'), which was published in Denmark in 1908 and appeared in German in 1909 and in English in 1965, attracted international attention. His book on the principles of oral narrative research and the anthology on the Nordic world of gods, however, were published posthumously in 1921 and 1926 respectively, revised and supplemented by his student Hans Ellekilde in 1921 and 1926, respectively.

34 BA, NS 21/2634, memo by Schwalm, April 10, 1943, about the conversation with Lily Weiser-Aall on April 8, 1943, p. 4f.

35 BA, NS 21/2634, memo by Schwalm, April 10, 1943, about the conversation with Lily Weiser-Aall on April 8, 1943, p. 2f.

36 100 RM in the German Reich of 1943 corresponds today to a purchasing power of about 380 Euro, see Deutsche Bundesbank (2019).

on May 24 with a handwritten "Yes!".[37] Lily Weiser-Aall received a letter dated June 30, 1943, signed by Wüst and Sievers, in which she was officially informed of this: "We hereby appoint you as a staff member of the "*Ahnenerbe*" to the Lehr- und Forschungsstätte für indogermanische Glaubensgeschichte ['Teaching and Research Institution for Indo-Germanic Religious History']."[38]

Even before this, on May 17, Hans Schneider, the head of the "*Germanischer Wissenschaftseinsatz*" had received orders to provide her with a "working grant" of 500 RM.[39] This was in fact the fee of the Mohr Siebeck Verlag: The completed manuscript had arrived via the "*Ahnenerbe*" postal service, the publishing house sent a check to the "*Ahnenerbe*" in mid-May, and Lily Weiser-Aall confirmed receipt of her fee to the publishing house in mid-June.[40]

Lily Weiser-Aall and Otto Huth subsequently exchanged views on scientific publications. Books from the "*Ahnenerbe*" publishing house were also sent to her on Huth's orders.[41] A letter to Huth at the end of February 1944 indicates a further field of work:

> The plan to publish a summary of the 'Haus als Heiligtum' ['House as a Sanctuary'] naturally fascinates me greatly. As you suspect, I have often thought about doing such work, but I have always postponed it, because since 1937, when we moved to the country, the use of the various libraries was very time-consuming and difficult, and has not improved, but has become even more difficult due to the limited train service, etc. But apart from the external difficulties, I would very much like to cooperate. […] I would then be able to take over the door, fence, roof, ceiling, house and courtyard spirit, if that would suit you. The only thing that makes me insecure, as I said, is that I have to stay in the country because of the children, and this could create even more obstacles than would otherwise be the case.[42]

Lily Weiser-Aall's interest in this project and, respectively, Otto Huth's interest in retaining her as a well-read expert on the subject is not surprising, since she had already complied comprehensive material on these keywords for the respective encyclopedia articles in the *Handbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* in the preceding years.

In 1944, Huth gave a lecture on "The house as a sanctuary" to Norwegian students in the SS's ideological reeducation camps: In 1943, after the closure of the University of Oslo, the Nazi occupying power had taken 65 professors and about 1,500 students into custody, of whom about 650 were deported to Germany. Since the students steadfastly refused to convert to the Greater Germanic idea, they were

37 BA, NS 21/2634, Huth to *Ahnenerbe*, Sievers, May 12, 1943.

38 BA, NS 21/2634, *Ahnenerbe* to Lily Weiser-Aall, June 30, 1943.

39 BA, NS 21/2634, Schneider to Germanische Freiwillige Leitstelle, May 17, 1943.

40 SBBPK, Nachlass 488, A 0501, 1, Blatt 20, 19, 16, 15 and 1.

41 NB Oslo, Ms. fol. 4250, B Huth, Otto to Lily Weiser-Aall, July 29, 1943; M *Ahnenerbe* to Lily Weiser-Aall, July 12, 1943.

42 NB Oslo, Ms. fol. 4250, M Weiser-Aall, Lily to Otto Huth, February 20, 1944.

used as forced laborers, some of them even were even sent to Buchenwald concentration camp (Junginger 1999: footnote 48, 264).

Such actions of the "*Germanischer Wissenschaftseinsatz*," intended to serve as propaganda, seem to have completely bypassed Lily Weiser-Aall. In 1944, she was working on the evaluation of Scandinavian literature on the project "House as a Sanctuary" and organizing books for Otto Huth, and was thus – probably without knowing it – involved in the concrete preparation of the 'reeducation' attempts.[43] Furthermore, a contribution on the motive of love-death was to appear in the 1944 volume of the *Niederdeutsche Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*. In January 1945, the proofs were sent to her, and in March, Hans Schwalm sent a short summary of Lily Weiser-Aall to the internal newsletter of the "*Ahnenerbe*" as requested.[44]

At this time, the collapse of the Nazi regime was already obvious: Lily Weiser-Aall had Schwalm forward two letters with photographs of the children to an acquaintance in Freiburg and a cousin in Heidelberg via the "*Ahnenerbe*" service post as the normal postal route was no longer reliable. At the same time, Richard Wolfram, a member of the 'Norwegian Office in the Germanic Control Centre Norway' was carrying boxes of material home to the Reich as part of the 'Special Nordic Folklore Mission.'[45]

Lack of paper and manpower finally affected even such an influential SS organization as the "*Ahnenerbe*," whose journal *Germanien* could no longer be published. The 1944 volume of the *Niederdeutsche Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* was also never printed. Lily Weiser-Aall's work *Erlebnisgrundlagen der Volksüberlieferung und Dichtung. Der Liebestod* was only published in 1947 in the *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde*.[46] The Mohr Siebeck Verlag also announced in April 1944 that it saw "no possibility of overcoming the material difficulties for the publication of your translation" for the book *Die Feste des schwedischen Volkes im Jahreslauf* for the coming months.[47] This book also never appeared.

The role of Hans Schwalm

Malte Gasche, who has undertaken intensive research on the "*Germanische Wissenschaftseinsatz*" of the SS, calls the involvement of Hans Schwalm and the "*Ahnenerbe*" in Norway a fiasco from a German point of view (Gasche 2009). The fact that they did not even come close to implementing any Nazi objectives (creation of

43 NB Oslo, Ms. fol. 4250, M Weiser-Aall, Lily to Otto Huth, June 16, 1944.

44 BA, NS 21/135 (Handakten Hans Schwalm) s. v. Aall, manuscript as well as Schwalm to Aall, January 7, 1945, and Schwalm to Plassmann, March 19, 1945.

45 BA, NS 21/135, s. v. Aall and s. v. Wolfram.

46 Vol. 44 (1947), 117–140. It was not unusual that after 1945, Swiss folklorist publication organs offered space for the knowledge of the former NS folklore studies, cf. on this Kuhn (2017).

47 SBBPK, Nachlass 488, A 0501, 1, Blatt 2, letter, April 25, 1945.

a "common Germanic" awareness, integration of regional forces) was due, on the one hand, to political problems with "*völkisch*" right-wing circles which, although paying homage to the pre-Christian Norse, saw themselves as Norwegian patriots. On the other hand, there were massive internal conflicts within National Socialism, because when the "*Ahnenerbe*" began its activities in Norway in the autumn of 1942, the departments which were already on site had divided the responsibilities among themselves by this time. Last but not least, the NS plans failed because of Hans Schwalm's personality: He initially did not want to move to Norway as he considered himself unsuitable, and apart from Lily Weiser-Aall, he had not been able to motivate anyone else for scientific work on the "*Ahnenerbe*." Conflicts of authority also hindered his work: All invitations were sent out via the local head of the Germanische Leitstelle ('Germanic Control Center'), Karl Leib, and Leib himself took on these appointments, obstructing Schwalm wherever he could. The latter then concentrated on local heritage conservation activities and tried to protect Norwegian objects of antiquity that were threatened by the effects of the war as best as possible. SS Obergruppenführer Wilhelm Rediess, the Higher SS and Police Leader North, was so enraged by Schwalm's requests for building materials from German departments for the protection of Norwegian museum goods that in May 1944, he bluntly demanded that the "*Ahnenerbe*" "exchange Schwalm for a man who was more familiar with reality" (Gasche 2009: 109f., 113f., 116, 118).

At the beginning of September, Karl Leib became Chief of Staff in Oslo because of a reorganization of the SS and informed Schwalm "that he is of the opinion that the work of the *Ahnenerbe* should now be discontinued."[48] One month later, his revocation was a done deal. Accordingly, Schwalm reported back to duty in Berlin on December 5, 1944, but he still had two more tasks to complete which were obviously important to him. The first task was a book about the prehistoric sites of Norway, which was to give "insights into the life and attitude of the proud Germanic families of Norwegian early history" and was available in print at the beginning of 1945 (Gasche 2009: 120, 118). The second task was to ensure the financial security of Lily Weiser-Aall. Arguing that "Das Haus als Heiligtum" would result in additional work, Schwalm, in agreement with Huth, proposed a reassessment to 200 RM on December 14, 1944. In other words, a doubling of the salary, "particularly since living conditions in Norway have become unusually expensive and Mrs. Aall is more or less boycotted at her place of residence as a result of her cooperation with German authorities, which has now become known after all."[49] The next day, Schwalm wrote

48 BA, NS 21/36a, addendum to letter dated September 5, 1944, Schwalm to *Ahnenerbe*, Sievers and Schneider.

49 BA, NS 21/2634, memo by Schwalm, December 14, 1944.

to her with the prospect of this increase because "the increasing cooperation" must "also be taken into account in the assessment of the allowance."[50]

As early as January 7, 1945, Schwalm was able to write to Lily Weiser-Aall and also enclose a letter from "*Ahnenerbe*" managing director Wolfram Sievers, which, in addition to New Year's wishes, contained the information that this suggestion had been implemented.[51] In February, Schwalm also discussed with Huth the question of the meaningfulness of the translation of *Danmarks heltedigtning* by Axel Olrik, as no translation rights could be obtained during the war. Lily Weiser-Aall was working on this "on the tacit assumption that a German edition is out of the question for the time being."[52]

Lily Weiser-Aall immediately expressed her gratitude for the support: "I am very ashamed that the research grant is to be increased because I can actually do so little work since I have so much else to cope with. I hope that it will soon be easier again." She was also thankful for the delivery of her letters, wrote about the now friendly contact with her brother-in-law Hermann since November, about bomb raids in Oslo and about her children doing handicrafts:

> We had a very nice and harmonious Christmas Eve. With brother-in-law and sister-in-law from Roa with us. We even had plenty of food, we had slaughtered our billy goat, had received meat and bacon on ration coupons and from our neighbor. The Christmas package from the Germanic Leitstelle was also wonderful.[53]

With this letter, the direct contact breaks off. Lily Weiser-Aall never wrote to the Central Office of the "*Ahnenerbe*" in Berlin. The correspondence between Schwalm and Weiser-Aall lacks the usual characteristics of typical official Nazi correspondence. There is no "Heil Hitler!," but there are New Year's greetings, news about family and about bigger and smaller problems. Hans Schwalm's behavior in occupied Norway has, loosely based on Hannah Arendt, something of the banality *within* evil. As far as his motives are concerned, he can be taken at his word: Since pretty much everything was rationed in occupied Norway and Lily Weiser-Aall had lost her smoker's card, Schwalm suggested cigarettes to Sievers as a gift and justified this as follows: "With her heavy workload as a mother, housewife, teacher of her 3 children and last but not least as a productive scientist, she needs stimulation."[54]

It is the correspondence with the Nazi officer Schwalm which allows an insight into Lily Weiser-Aall's scope of action as a mother under precarious circumstances: "Now we are beginning with the Christmas preparations, I am holding back as much

50 BA, NS 21/2634, Schwalm to Lily Weiser-Aall, December 15, 1943.

51 BA, NS 21/135, s. v. Aall, Schwalm to Weiser-Aall, January 7, 1945, and Sievers to Weiser-Aall, January 2, 1945.

52 BA, NS 21/135, Schwalm to Huth, February 21, 1945.

53 BA, NS 21/135, s. v. Aall, Weiser-Aall to Schwalm, January 8, 1945.

54 BA, NS 21/135, s. v. Aall, Schwalm to Sievers, January 7, 1945.

as possible, but for the sake of the children I have to bake something, in these matters it is evident that they are still quite childlike."[55]

Did the correspondence about rather everyday events and problems, about food and the interests of the three children make it possible for Lily Weiser-Aall to avoid unpleasant political debates? Or was there a basis of common interest with Schwalm, who was two years younger and also had a family – especially in the case of an SS officer about whom, at least during his deployment in Norway, there was little to notice about indoctrination and National Socialist ideology?

Collaboration?

To this day, the period of occupation by German troops still plays an important role in identity formation in Norway. Disobedience and resistance was also shown or supported by broad sections of the population and was very effective. In May 1943, for example, the Quisling government's attempt to set up three Norwegian Wehrmacht divisions to fight on the German side on the Eastern front failed. One year later, of the approximately 70,000 young people who were legally obliged to register for work, only 300 could be forced into labor. The "boys in the woods" who went into hiding became an essential symbol of the Norwegian resistance. The place of women, on the other hand, was primarily seen on the inner front ("*hjemmefront*"), in order to save the threatened Norwegian identity and integrity from decay (Lenz 2003: 102, 51).

Lily Weiser-Aall's behavior was, on the one hand, probably socially accepted in the rural area around the summer house – but apparently also found favor among the "*Ahnenerbe*" men. Schwalm, himself a family man, respected her achievements, and the letters portray him as a friendly person for whom the three children liked to draw pictures.

For Lily Weiser-Aall, the financial support for the translations was central for sustaining herself and her children. The prospect of being able to enter more into classical folklorist research in addition to this was undoubtedly a gratifying prospect in the intellectually dreary atmosphere, which could also not be compensated for even by the polyglot education of the children. A letter to Schwalm in mid-December 1944 expressed this pointedly: "Otherwise, of course, it is very quiet and lonely for me, but the books are a good help."[56]

Of all the countries occupied by the German Wehrmacht, Norway persecuted collaborators most intensively. In a country with a population of 3.3 million, 93,000 Norwegians were prosecuted, 40,000 of them for party membership in the *Nasjonal Samling*, which collaborated with the German occupying power under its party

55 BA, NS 21/135, s. v. Aall, Weiser-Aall to Schwalm, December 11, 1944.
56 BA, NS 21/135, s. v. Aall, Weiser-Aall to Schwalm, December 11, 1944.

leader, Vidkun Quisling. People in the public service lost their jobs, the members of the *Nasjonal Samling* had to come up with 70 million kroner in compensation. Ultimately, 46,000 people were punished: 17,000 with prison sentences, and 29,000 with fines and loss of rights (Bundesarchiv 1994: 119f.). In addition to these penalties, the worst suspicion that could fall on a woman socially was that she had been a "German whore." Any actual sexualized or even sexual contact with German soldiers was condemned in the strongest terms. Psychological and physical abuse affected not only the women themselves but also the so-called "*Tyskerbarna*" ('German children'), a circumstance that has only been at the center of public debate since the 2000s (Lenz 2003: 226, 171).

Lily Weiser-Aall, as a native foreigner, as the sister-in-law of one of the most important 'Quislings,'[57] as a woman to whom a high-ranking SS officer had driven up to see, was certainly judged severely. She, in turn, as the list of her estate also shows, had apparently broken off practically all correspondence with Germany from the beginning of the war onwards.[58] As Schwalm writes, she had avoided Otto Höfler in Norway; contact with Otto Höfler is documented by only two letters during this period: In October 1942, Höfler asked Lily Weiser-Aall the long-winded question of whether she "perhaps happened to know a suitable person," since his wife did not have a maid at the time: "If you knew of anyone, I would be *most* grateful for a kind communication."[59] In a second letter, in March 1943, Höfler paid his condolences on the death of her husband.[60] During Richard Wolfram's stay in Norway, no meeting seems to have taken place either.[61]

In the most recent major contribution on Lily Weiser-Aall's biography in 2013, Ann Helene Bolstadt Skjelbred drew attention to a fact that Christa Niem had already mentioned in 1998: If Lily Weiser-Aall had shown any affinity with National Socialism, she would not have obtained a leading position at the Institute for Norwegian Ethnological Research (Niem 1998: 42f.). She would hardly have spoken in November 1946 before the Norwegian Academy of Sciences about "Experience as the basis for poetry and folk tradition. The Tristan Motif."[62] Skjelbred points out that after the war in June 1945, the Board of the Norwegian Folklore Museum dismissed an employee for membership of the *Nasjonal Samling*, and one has to ask oneself whether

57 Her brother-in-law, Herman Harris Aall, was sentenced to 15 years in prison in 1947 and a high reparation fee. For reasons of old age and health, however, the sentence on the 76-year-old was not carried out. Accessed February 2, 2020. Available at: Norsk biografisk leksikon https://nbl.snl.no/Herman_Harris_Aall.

58 Cf. www.nb.no/hanske/signaturskjema.php (entry: Ms. fol. 4250).

59 NB Oslo, Ms. fol. 4250, M Höfler, Otto to Lily Weiser-Aall, October 5, 1942.

60 NB Oslo, Ms. fol. 4250, M Höfler, Otto to Lily Weiser-Aall, March 4, 1943.

61 Richard Wolfram's extensive report on Norway is preserved in the Ahnenerbe estate (BA, NS 21/83). Lily Weiser-Aall is not mentioned in it at all.

62 Morgenbladet, November 14, 1946: 8; Arbeiderbladet, November 14, 1946: 9.

Lily Weiser-Aall would have been employed there if she had shown any political affinity with National Socialism. Apparently, people did not think so in Norway in 1945/46. On the contrary: Skjelbred writes that she enjoyed great respect among her colleagues Svale Solheim and Olav Bø, who were active in the resistance fight, and that the same goes for Andreas Ropeid, who had been imprisoned in Buchenwald concentration camp (Skjelbred 2013: 125, 129).

Skjelbred rightfully pointed out the need for further research, particularly concerning the activities for the "*Ahnenerbe*." Malte Gasche, who has examined the files of the "*Germanische Wissenschaftseinsatz*" of the "*Ahnenerbe*" in several countries, came to the conclusion that there were also people on site who participated in this project for reasons other than their ideological motivation and identifies material constraints on the part of Lily Weiser-Aall (Gasche 2014: 181).[63]

In any case, the examination of the "*Ahnenerbe*" files on Norway in their entire depth permit a possible answer to the question of why there was apparently no accusation of collaboration in Norway: Lily Weiser-Aall translated the works of a Swedish ethnologist and a (already deceased) Danish folklorist or procured books for Huth and Wolfram. She was not active in public or in propaganda, did not write (by contrast, for example, to Viktor Geramb) propaganda articles in the "*Ahnenerbe*" newsletter *Germanien* and had never demanded or requested anything from the "*Ahnenerbe*" headquarters in Berlin.[64]

Beyond simple victim-perpetrator stereotypes, the documents show above all the scope of action of a woman with three small children in difficult circumstances, who, in addition to baking bread and slaughtering rabbits, also wanted to undertake folklorist research. Looking back, Lily Weiser-Aall described the circumstances of her life at the time in a letter to Viktor Geramb:

> We also had a hard time, but one hardly dares to talk about it, it was bearable and we got through it without any damage to our health. It had its charms, even so alone and isolated with the children, 5 goats, 54 rabbits, a dog and cat.[65]

After 1945, folklorists who were considered to be independent of the Nazi regime were the preferred contact people for benevolent statements or recommendations for researchers who had (temporarily) lost their position in the course of denazification. In June 1953, for example, Richard Wolfram turned to Peuckert, Geramb and Weiser-Aall asking for a statement. He needed it for a scholarship from the Deutsche

63 It is also striking that Lily Weiser-Aall no longer concern herself with her former teacher as early as the mid-1930s. She is not represented in the celebrations for Much's 70th birthday nor did she write an obituary four years later. Cf. (Grabenweger 2016, 230).

64 Cf. BA, NS 21/2634.

65 Letter, December 11, 1947, quoted from Sporrer (2012: 21).

Forschungsgemeinschaft ('German Research Foundation') in order to be able to publish his book on sword dance.[66] Lily Weiser-Aall met his request.[67]

It is definitely worthwhile to take a closer look at the first female folklorist who qualified as a professor in Austria and the "First Lady of Norwegian Folklore Studies" and can, in a subsequent step, also deliver valuable building blocks on disciplinary history in Germany and Austria, because the catalogue of her estate in the Norwegian National Library contains 1,244 letters and manuscripts.[68]

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66 Salzburger Landesinstitut für Volkskunde (SLIVK), Nachlass Richard Wolfram, 0022925-N (June 8, 1953).

67 SLIVK, Nachlass Richard Wolfram, 0027508-N, respectively, 0027509-N (letter and report, June 19, 1953). On the exonerative function of Switzerland (and its publication organs) for NS folklorists, see Kuhn (2017).

68 NB Oslo, privatarkiv og musikkmanuskripter, Ms. fol. 4250, Lily Weiser-Aall.

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