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Christiane Schwab

Between natural history, statistics and the social novel

The production of ethnographic and sociological knowledge
in the context of 19th-century sociographic journalism*

Abstract: The rise of market-oriented publishing during the first half of the 19th century correlated with an increasing desire to inspect the modernizing societies. The journalistic pursuit of examining the social world is reflected in a unique way in countless periodical contributions that, especially from the 1830s onward, depicted social types and behaviors, new professions and technologies, institutions, and cultural routines. This article discusses the interrelationships between epistemic and political shifts, new forms of media and the systematization of social research by analyzing how these "sociographic sketches" documented and interpreted the manifold manifestations of the social universe. It focuses on three main areas: the creative appropriation of narratives and motifs of 18th-century moralistic writing; the uses of description and contextualization as cognitive and representational modes of knowledge; and the adaptation of empiricist principles and a scientific terminology. To consider 19th-century sociographic journalism to be a form between entertainment, art and science, provokes us to narrate cross-medial, transnational and interdisciplinary tales of the history of social knowledge production.

Keywords: history of anthropological and social thought, 19th century, journalism, periodical literature, Europe

Medial and epistemic ruptures around 1800

The *Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière* (1749–1804) is considered Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte du Buffon's (1707–1788) masterpiece: the naturalist, whom Louis XV appointed director of the Royal Botanical Gardens (today's *Jardin des Plantes*) in 1739, published 36 volumes of his lavishly illustrated natural history during his lifetime.[1] This work not only cataloged all known animal and plant species, but also discussed the most recent approaches and theories in natural history research, which encompassed the idea that living beings, including humans, differentiated themselves based on their

* This paper was first published in German in Zeitschrift für Volkskunde 2021, 117 (2): 141–162. The text and quotations in German have been translated by Christiane Schwab.
This article is based on my inaugural lecture at the *Faculty for the Study of Culture* at Ludwig Maximilian University Munich on February 6, 2020, and largely reproduces its narrative structure.

1 Another eight volumes were published posthumously under the direction of Bernard Germain Lacépède (1756–1825).

physical and social environments.[2] However, the *Histoire naturelle* not only contributed decisively to the encyclopedization, classification and reinterpretation, but also to the popularization of natural history knowledge. The serial was translated into numerous languages and repeatedly reprinted until the 1950s (Levacher 2009: 304–435). At least 250 abridged editions were published in cheaper forms, including volumes such as *Le petit Buffon des enfants* (Buffon 1833) and *Le petit Buffon illustré* (1876), up to the 20th century.

Journalist and novelist Honoré de Balzac (1799–1850), similar to the Comte du Buffon, was intrigued by the multifaceted surfaces of the world that surrounded him. But while the naturalist was interested in analyzing its biological and geological features, Balzac set out to study human behaviors and societal configurations. After first publishing his analyses of French society in serial novels and brief sketches that appeared in newspapers and magazines, Balzac drew on a significant portion of these periodical writings when he launched his social panorama titled *La Comédie humaine* beginning in 1842.[3] Interestingly, Balzac referred to Buffon's *Histoire naturelle* in the preface as a guide for his social explorations, instead of the writings of his contemporaries Henri de Saint-Simon (1760–1825) or Auguste Comte (1798–1857), who are today regarded as the pioneers of French sociology (Kruse 2018: 30–40): "If Buffon could produce a magnificent work by attempting to represent in a book the whole realm of zoology, was there not room for a work of the same kind on society?" (Balzac 2019: 37). Accordingly, in his justification of the diversity of human appearances and behaviors, Balzac falls back on the model of the formation of zoological species coined by Buffon:

> 'The Animal' is elementary, and takes its external form, or, to be accurate, the differences in its form, from the environment in which it is obliged to develop. Zoological species are the result of these differences. [...] I, for my part, convinced of this scheme of nature long before the discussion to which it has given rise, perceived that in this respect society resembled nature. For does not society modify Man, according to the conditions in which he lives and acts, into men as manifold as the species in zoology? The differences between a soldier, an artisan, a man of business, a lawyer, an idler, a student, a statesman, a merchant, a sailor, a poet, a beggar, a priest, are as great, though not so easy to define, as those between the wolf, the lion, the ass, the crow, the shark, the seal, the sheep, etc. Thus social species have always existed, and will always exist, just as there are zoological species. (Balzac 2019: 36–37)

The references to Buffon in the *Comédie humaine* – and its various links to other natural historians and scientists – are neither coincidental nor extraordinary, but rather reflect

2 In this respect, Buffon's natural history is considered a precursor to the works of naturalists such as Jean-Baptiste Lamarck and Charles Darwin (Johnson 2019).

3 The ensemble with the title alluding to Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy* consists of 92 works (novels, essays, sketches, philosophical treatises, etc.) and was written between 1829 and 1850. In 1842, the first volumes of the *Comédie humaine* appeared, and its publication was not completed until 1856. On the publication history of the *Comédie humaine*, see Baron et al. (1993).

an epistemic trend towards the scrutinous examination of all subject areas which began to take hold at the end of the 18th century. Experiment, description, analysis, classification and historicization acted as keywords for this new form of positive thought. It was, not least, due to the increased importance of scientific knowledge on an expanding print market that the empirical approaches of the triumphing fields of zoology, anatomy, botany and especially the leading science of physiology soon determined the modes of perception and understanding of the 'social' as a secular phenomenal universe (Sarasin 2001; Sheets-Pyenson 1985).[4] The *feuilleton scientifique* section, for example, developed in French newspapers as early as the 1820s (Vautrin 2018: 301), and journalists were admitted to lectures at the *Académie des sciences* from 1835 onwards (Stiénon 2012: 52). Popular knowledge magazines are another illustrative example, as they spread throughout many regions of Europe from the 1830s onwards (Bennett 1984; Schwab 2020). Firstly, the *Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge* (founded in 1826) published the *Penny Magazine* starting in 1832, which presented scientific knowledge for a broad audience. The French *Magasin pittoresque* (1833–1938) and the German *Pfennig-Magazin* (1833–1855), among others, were based on the English model, as were rather local publications, such as the Sevillian *Semanario Instructivo. Periódico popular de ciencias naturales y conocimientos útiles en todos los ramos del saber*,[5] which was printed between February and July 1845 in the extreme southwest of Europe. Peter Burke (2013: 97) refers to a new "era of 'mass communication'" (Mainardi 2017; Osterhammel 2009: 63–73), citing the widespread introduction of novel print goods as a result of the invention of the steam press, the relaxation of censorship and increased literacy rates. Due to the broad availability of affordable newspapers, magazines and books, knowledge had escaped the confines of academic and governmental networks and become a popular commodity (Burke 2014: 101–127). The historian of knowledge Philipp Sarasin (2001: 127) emphasizes that, "[n]ever before have so many authors (mostly men) written about nonfictional topics for so many readers, and never later has the relative weight of popular science in the media been greater and the enthusiasm of the public bigger."[6]

This paper is concerned with the relations between an expanding market of periodical literature and an increased interest in societal issues throughout the 19th century. I am especially interested in writings that scrutinized human behaviors and cultural routines – i. e. ethnographically or sociographically[7] oriented publications (such as the

4 On the influence of natural science approaches on early social thought at the end of the 18th century, see Heilbron 1995; Heilbron et al. 1998; Moravia 1973.

5 *Weekly Instructional Journal. Popular Journal for Natural Sciences and Useful Knowledge in All Fields of Knowledge*. It is interesting to note that the term "popular culture" can be traced back to around 1850 when it referred to developments in the literature market (Stein and Wiele 2013: 2).

6 Quotes from German and Spanish were translated by the author.

7 I use the term "sociographic" (admittedly in an asynchronous way) synonymously with "ethnographic" in the sense of a survey method and form of presentation based on empirical data gained from ob-

individual contributions of the *Comédie humaine)* – which were widely published in newspapers and magazines in many European regions, especially from the 1830s onward. Ramón de Mesonero Romanos, for example, launched his "escenas matritenses" ("Madrid scenes") in various newspapers in the Spanish capital between 1832 and 1835,[8] while Charles Dickens wrote his "street sketches" for *The Morning Chronicle* and *The Monthly Magazine*, among others, from 1833 to 1836. Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl's "Hessische Skizzen" ("Sketches from Hesse") appeared in the supplement of the *Frankfurter Konversationsblatt* between 1843 and 1844, and Eugène Sue published his serial novel *Les mystères de Paris* (1842–1843) in the *Journal des débats*, inspiring numerous authors in Europe to literarize the condition of underprivileged urban groups (Edler 1977). The author George Sand published her articles "Mœurs et coutumes du Berry" in the journal *L'illustration* from 1851 to 1852, and John Hollingshead wrote a series on the desolate situation in London tenements for the daily newspaper *The Morning Post* in 1861. The list of examples of the journalistic-literary fashion for capturing the contemporary social world in brief texts could be continued endlessly.[9] The writers inspected social types, behaviors, cultural routines, places, infrastructures and institutions of radically transforming societies, sometimes in an amusing tone, sometimes in a language close to science. While these sketches[10] first appeared individually and serially in newspapers and magazines, their commercial popularity ensured that they became distributed in collections and serials as early as the 1830s.[11]

servation. The term "ethnographic" is often associated with the description of "foreign" ways of life, especially in literary studies. This association can be largely avoided by using the term "sociography," which is borrowed from the context of early descriptive sociology and geography. On the development and use of sociography as a form of descriptive sociology, see Brunt (2002).

8 The articles appeared in *Cartas españolas* (1832), *La revista española* (1832–33,) and *Diario de Madrid* (1835) (de los Ángeles Ayala 1996).

9 See also the listing of sketches of manners in French, German, and English periodicals and volumes provided by Martina Lauster (2007: 329–337).

10 French and English sociographic journalism texts are often called "esquisses" or "sketches," while texts in German usually bear the term "Skizze" ("sketch") in their title. The use of the Spanish term "cuadros de costumbres" ("pictures of manners") similarly shows the allusion to a form of observation and representation that foregrounds the visual documentary and, thus, the sensually perceptible dimension of sociocultural phenomena.

11 Ramón de Mesonero Romanos' "escenas matritenses," for instance, were published in three volumes under the title *Panorama matritense: cuadros de costumbres de la capital, observados y descritos, por un curioso parlante* between 1835 and 1838. Numerous expanded editions followed. Charles Dickens' "street sketches" were published by John Macrone under the title *Sketches by Boz* (1836) and a further edition expanded with new sketches was published the same year, comprising a second volume. A seminal work that significantly influenced 19th-century sociographic sketch writing was the 15-volume serial *Paris, ou le livre des cent-et-un* (1831–1834). From this serial, connections can be made to not only Ramón de Mesonero Romanos' and Charles Dickens' sociographic texts, but also the collective sketch collections *Heads of the People; or, Portraits of the English* (1838–1841), *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes* (1839–1842) and *Los españoles pintados por sí mismos* (1843–1844). The journalistic-literary fashion of sociographic writing also gained influence in the Spanish (post-)colonies. See, for

A significant factor in the enhanced public desire for understanding the ways in which society works was a heightened awareness not only of the fragility but also the all-defining significance of social relations. "[W]e live in an age of transition," Edward Lytton Bulwer wrote in 1833, "of the removal of time-worn landmarks, and the breaking up of hereditary elements of society – old opinions, feelings – ancestral customs and institutions are crumbling away" (1833: 325). Political reforms and revolutions, technological innovations, such as the steam engine and the railway system, new forms of labor and the effects of industrial modes of production, the competition of new classes for power and social advancement, all these factors led to increased attention being paid to the conditions and the historicity of human existence.[12] This novel historical-sociological consciousness, this "spirit of examination and questioning" (Bulwer 1833: 236) has also been described by Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl (1851: n. p.) as the "triumph of the historical social Weltanschauung over the philosophically leveling" one. Riehl (who had himself written numerous sociographic sketches for the press) suggested in a commentary on the genre of the social novel published in the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung* in 1851 that the 8th century could not have known authors like Charles Dickens or Eugène Sue because it lacked the concept of society ("Gesellschaft").[13] Indeed, studies of conceptual history show that, in addition to the German term "Gesellschaft," the English and French terms "société", "society" and "social"/"social" did not become widely used until the late 18th century (Heilbron et al. 1998).[14] Sociologist Johan Heilbron (1995) points out that it was only in this period that a social sphere, which saw itself as separate from courtly and ecclesiastical structures, emerged. As the commercial press expanded in the 19th century, the idea of man as a historical being shaped by changing social conditions moved beyond the exclusive circles of learned societies and state institutions to be debated by a growing audience of newspapers, magazines and books (Burke 2014: 101–127; Osterhammel 2009: 63–73).

I will now trace the reciprocal relationships between epistemic and political shifts, new forms of media, and a systematizing social research in three sections. Firstly, I will discuss the moralistic tradition as a literary-philosophical current that decisively shaped 19th-century sociographic journalism. I will next discuss the two major narra-

example, the series on "national" ways of life and clothing customs, "*Costumbres y trages nacionales*" (1844), published in the journal *El museo mexicano*, or the Cuban collection *Los cubanos pintados por sí mismos* (1852), which contains sketches of "national" social types.

12 On the history of politics, knowledge, technology, and everyday life in the nineteenth century, see Evans (2016) and Osterhammel (2009). On an increased social sensitivity and its representational forms (from statistics to reportage to photography), specifically, see Osterhammel 2009: 25–82.

13 Norbert Bachleitner has pointed out that the quote taken from *Die Bürgerliche Gesellschaft* originally appeared in 1851 in an article under the title "*Der sociale Roman*" in a supplement to the *Augsburger Allgemeinen Zeitung* (Bachleitner 1993: 165).

14 This applies equally to the terms "ethnography," "folklore" and "ethnology" (Moravia 1973; Stagl 2002; Vermeulen 2015).

tive modes of sociographic (sketch) writing – description and contextualization – as distinct ways of social knowledge production. Thirdly, I will return to the empiricist-scientific paradigm, discussed at the outset of this article, and its contribution to the systematization of social research in both popular and academic contexts of social thought.

Sociographic journalism and moralistic writing

The literary and philosophical tradition of moralism acted as a crucial point of reference for 19th-century sociographic writers. Moralistic thought was best captured and transmitted in moral weeklies, periodical publications that began to take hold in the first half of the 18th century, which examined social and psychological life beyond theological and feudal premises for a mostly bourgeois[15] audience (Ertler 2012; Martens 1971). "The audience […] makes itself a subject in it," Jürgen Habermas (1990: 107) describes the journalistic phenomenon of the moral weeklies, which inspected old-established and novel forms of behavior, inquired into human individuality and autonomy, and contemplated social relationships and legal conditions, such as friendship, marriage and slavery. As a "training ground of public reasoning" (Habermas 1990: 88), the moral weeklies acted as a central field of engagement with Man as a social being and the production of social knowledge.[16]

19th-century sociographic journalism was closely related to this tradition of moral philosophy. Both forms analyzed and commented on human relationships, behaviors, beliefs and types with verbal finesse, and their publishing contexts demanded quickly reproducible texts that corresponded with the experiences and expectations of a growing readership. In terms of structure, the journalistic-sociographic sketch was modeled after the moralistic essay, displaying a fragmentary scheme and rapid changes between description, anecdote, example and socio-philosophical reflection. Moreover, numerous intertextual references point to the significance of moralistic literature for 19th-century sociographic writers: this is fundamentally evident in texts in French in the consistent use of the word *mœurs*, which derives from the Latin *mores* and was not yet related to the notion of normative ethics, but implied a descriptive perspective on social practices and associated mental and socio-structural conditions.[17] Another frequent reference to the moralistic tradition was the observing devil Asmodeus.[18] This

15 I use this term to describe a social context of rising urban groups, which were characterized by a new legal position compared to pre-modern positions of the nobility and the clergy as well as the civil servants (Mergel 2001). For further information on the category of the bourgeoisie, also in a comparative European perspective, see Kocka and Frevert (1988).

16 See Heilbron 1995; Koch-Schwarzer 1998.

17 This meaning is also reflected in the name *Académie des sciences morales et politiques*, founded in 1832.

18 This name is borrowed from Jewish mythology, where it denotes a demon with changing characteristics.

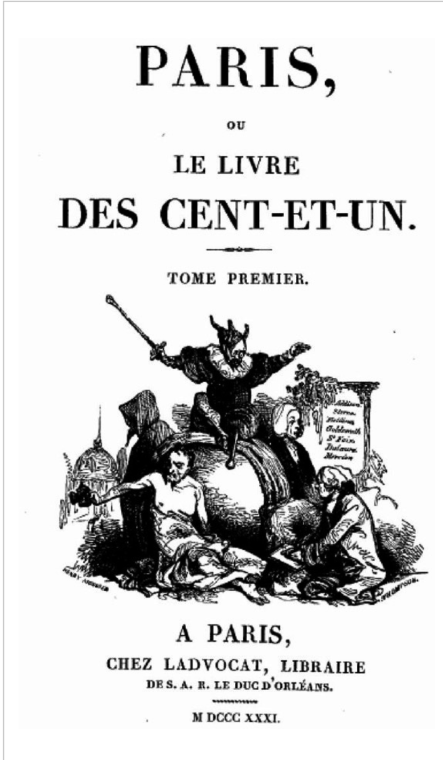
PARIS,
OU
LE LIVRE
DES CENT-ET-UN.
TOME PREMIER.
A PARIS,
CHEZ LADVOCAT, LIBRAIRE
DE S. A. R. LE DUC D'ORLÉANS.
M DCCC XXXI.

Fig. 1:
Henri Monnier,
title vignette in Paris ou Le Livre des Cent-et-un
(1831–1834)

motif had spread across Europe through translations and various prose imitations, beginning with the moralistic novel *Le diable boiteux* (*The Devil upon Two Sticks*) from 1707 (Lauster 2007: 129–173). This work, written by Alain-René Lesage (1694–1747), deals with the behaviors and types (and especially the piquant vices) of the population of Madrid, which the title character named Asmodeus observes from the rooftops of the city – taking a bird's-eye view, as it were – with an amused gaze. References to the devilish observer in the moralistic vein are particularly striking in the 15-volume serial *Paris, ou le livre des cent-et-un* (1831–1834),[19] which was originally intended to be called *Le diable boiteux à Paris* in reference to Lesage's Madrid-based novel.[20] The individual volumes of the *Livre des cent-et-un* contain about 20 sketches on social manners, institutions and types each, and soon made a big impact on the sociographic journalism and literature market.[21] This is reflected, among other things, in numerous translations

19 I have already discussed some of the following thoughts on this work in Schwab (2019).

20 On the first page of the introduction, "Au public, le libraire-éditeur", it states: "Ce livre fut précédemment annoncé sous le titre du Diable Boiteux à Paris, les auteurs ont décidé qui'il n'aurait d'autre titre que celui de PARIS OU LE LIVRE DES CENT-ET-UN." (Ladvocat 1831: v).

21 See Schwab (2019) for further details.

and international reviews of the serial, which the Spanish journalist Mariano José de Larra (1837: 173), in an introduction to a Spanish collection of sociographic sketches, called "the greatest work that men have built by means of small things." All 15 title pages of the French edition bear a vignette showing the observing devil sitting in an elevated position on a barrel (see fig. 1).[22] A plate in the background commemorates a number of (exclusively male) representatives of early sociographic literature in England and France. Among them are Joseph Addison, whose *Spectator* (1711–1712) is regarded as the first moral weekly,[23] and Louis-Sébastien Mercier, who became famous at the end of the 18th century with his work *Tableau de Paris*, consisting of over 1000 pieces.[24] Both authors appear once again – along with other sociographic authors – as characters on the engraving.

In addition to this visual allusion to Asmodeus and other representatives of the moralistic tradition, the first volume of the *Livre* also contains an entire contribution entitled "Asmodée" (Janin 1831). Here, in a kind of history of the art of observation, Jules Janin describes how the once privileged figure of the devilish observer has lost its monopoly in the last decades. The increasingly differentiated society of postrevolutionary France had produced such a diverse repertoire of social roles that the ability to observe human actions (including one's own) had become a social necessity. In this new era of (self-)censorship, Asmodeus lurks everywhere and behind every face: "In fact, Asmodeus is everywhere; he is no longer a single individual, but everybody. [...] every one studies to correct the morals of his age; there is no longer any single buffoon, but innumerable censurers" (Janin 1833: 17).[25] Janin's view that the art of observation had advanced to a democratized cultural technique, and that there was no longer a privileged position of the spectator, also fits the organizational form of the *Livre*, with contributions from over 160 authors who strove to inspect all the elements that the social world presented to them, from the Parisian bourgeois[26] and the aspiring journalist,[27] to the small theaters[28] and a church consecration in the surroundings of Paris.[29]

The description of the figure of the flâneur in the text "Le flâneur à Paris" (Le Flâneur 1832) similarly corresponds to the model of popularized observation.[30] The

22 For a detailed interpretation of this illustration, see Lauster (2007: 79).

23 The daily publication was co-edited with Richard Steele (1672–1729).

24 The *Tableau de Paris* appeared as a twelve-volume serial from 1781 to 1788, with much of this text having been published in advance in the *Journal des dames*.

25 This quote was taken from the English translation of the *Livre* published in 1833.

26 "Le bourgeois de Paris" (1831).

27 "L'apprenti journaliste" (1832).

28 "Les petits théâtres du boulevart" (1834).

29 "Une fête aux environs de Paris" (1831).

30 In contrast to "Asmodeus," this text has not been translated into English, therefore, I did the following translations myself.

flâneur of the *Livre* is not an exalted stranger, but "a man[31] like any other" (Le Flâneur 1832: 62) and resides as the Asmodeus of public space in each participant in the urban spectacle: "This world is a vast theater," the anonymous narrator-flâneur writes, "in which a thousand different actors, with different moods, costumes, characters, masked [...], varying in a hundred different ways, fight for the leading roles" (Le Flâneur 1832: 59). The flâneur of the 1820s and 1830s no longer epitomizes the privileged perspective of the mocking Asmodeus, nor is he yet the detached, elitist observer of a new capitalist world, as depicted by Walter Benjamin in reference to Charles Baudelaire's *Le Peintre de la vie moderne*[32] (Neumeyer 1999: 14–24). He does not yet complain about a consumerist society and sees no desire to merge with the masses. The flâneur of the *Livre des cent-et-un* is – much like the sociographic writers of his time – fascinated by the theatrical universe of an early modernity that unfolds ever-new facets before his eyes.

Knowledge schemes and narrative modes: description and contextualization

The secular spectacle, with its differentiating social roles, material settings and coexistence of disparate rationalities, represented the raw material to the sociographic (sketch) writers. Unlike the moralists, they did not inquire into what was desirable or possible, nor did they care about universal human vices or virtues.[33] Rather, they considered themselves chroniclers of an irreversible and unique political, social and technological transition – the introduction of new machines, means of transportation and hygienic measures, of parliamentary structures, billboards, newspaper advertisements, tenements, workers' associations – and wondered what these changes meant for human existence. This interest had already became apparent in the preface to the *Comédie humaine*, in which Balzac spoke of the various environments according to which the characteristics of social groups were shaped. Only a few years earlier, the Spanish journalist Mariano José de Larra wrote about the new literary form of documentary sketches that appeared in the French and Spanish press, claiming that these no longer regarded man as a being with universal characteristics, but as a changeable subject "in interplay with the new and specific forms of society ['sociedad']" (Larra 1837: 170). Similarly, Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl asked in his review of the social novel:

31 The figure of the flâneur has been almost exclusively connoted as male in literature up to the present day. On the rehabilitation of a female flânerie, see Nesci (2007).

32 Baudelaire's text first appeared in the newspaper *Le Figaro* between November 26 and December 3, 1863.

33 The sketches' positivistic-realistic approach to the social world widely corresponded with many artistic-literary genres of the time. On realism in 19th-century painting, photography and literature, and its critique, see Stockinger (2010).

> [i]s it not an important fact that our poets are no longer able to paint the individual in any other way than in the local tones of a certain social circle? That the general lover, hero, intriguer, etc., as he was drawn in former times, has given way to stereotyped figures of a completely different kind, socially individualized figures […]? (Riehl 1851: n. p.)

The journalistic observers intended to capture the interdependencies between social forces and the individual in descriptive text units or – as Larra put it – to interpret man in "interplay with the new and specific forms of society" (1837: 170). Accordingly, the sketches, not unlike ethnographic narratives of the 20th and 21st centuries, described and commented on human behaviors and attitudes and sociomaterial configurations as focal points of comprehensive circumstances, or "cultural constellations" (Lindner 2003: 184), in order to make visible and analyze how "social, cultural, and biographical components come together in a time-specific way" (Lindner 2003: 184). The sociographic sketches' focus on cultural constellations, in which social contexts emerge and are experienced by the human being, is evident in the individual contributions of the *Livre des cent-et-un*, for example, on the Parisian citizen or the church consecration. It is also visible in Ramón de Mesonero Romanos' "escenas matritenses," which study the bourgeois theatre scene,[34] short-term tenancies,[35] or the hustle and bustle in the city park[36] as new phenomena of the urban; as well as in Charles Dickens' "street sketches," which interpret cultural constellations such as the omnibus,[37] the pawnshop,[38] the gin store[39] and the Sunday trip on the excursion boat[40] as crystallization points of social transformations. Dickens' article "The streets – Morning" (1850a), for instance, describes the social composition of a particular street in central London in order to address broader sociocultural circumstances. The text begins by sketching the unsheltered people who shape the streetscape at dawn; soon after, the day laborers and workers appear; and later, those preparing the stores for the opening show themselves (Dickens 1850a). Finally, the journalist-narrator observes the "early clerk population" (Dickens 1850a: 31), which is wheeled in from the outskirts, rushing through the street, and connects his description with reflections on new forms of wage labor and urban anonymity:

> [m]iddle-aged men, whose salaries have by no means increased in the same proportion as their families, plod steadily along, apparently with no object in view but the counting-house; knowing by sight almost everybody they meet or overtake, for they have seen them every morning (Sundays excepted) during the last twenty years, but speaking to no one. If they do happen to overtake a personal acquaintance, they just

34 "Los cómicos en cuaresma" (1832).
35 "El alquiler de un cuarto" (1837).
36 "El Prado" (1832).
37 "The last cab-driver, and the first omnibus cad" (1836).
38 "The pawnbroker's shop" (1836).
39 "Gin shops" (1836).
40 "The steam excursion" (1834).

> exchange a hurried salutation [...]. As to stopping to shake hands, or to take the friend's arm, they seem to think that as it is not included in their salary, they have no right to do it. (Dickens 1850a: 31)

The sketch "The streets – Morning" combines descriptive elements with socio-analytical considerations. The street's architecture, the mingling of social classes, the diverse behaviors and ways of clothing shape the ensemble of a cultural constellation, in which social transformations, such as the emergence of new employment relations and the political subjectification of white-collar workers, the capitalization of time and the anonymization of relationships in urban spaces, turn into concrete human experiences. Charles Dickens does not engage in explicit social analysis, but by incorporating ironic sequences, encourages the reader to see his descriptions as crystallization points of comprehensive relationships ("salaries have by no means increased in the same proportion as their families"; "to shake hands [...] is not included in their salary"). This documentary and ironically contextualizing rhetoric is used in much of the sociographic sketch literature, which entertains its audience by inviting them to see themselves as subjects of contemporary constellations.

Scientific models

Sociographic journalism in the 19th century frequently draws on approaches and concepts of the emerging fields of natural science in order to describe and contextualize its subjects. Many texts, for example, refer to the art of physiognomy, which flourished at the beginning of the 19th century,[41] in order to refer to a person's social origins or certain character traits based on the description of facial and physical features and expressions. The *Livre des cent-et-un*, for example, deals with the physiognomies of prisoners,[42] members of Parisian singing societies[43] and passers-by around the *Pont Neuf* bridge.[44] Charles Dickens even uses physiognomic vocabulary to address the aesthetics of doorknobs. The narrator in the text "Our Next-Door Neighbour," first published in the *Morning Chronicle* in 1836, reveals that he is "very fond of speculating as we walk through a street, on the character and pursuits of the people who inhabit it; and nothing so materially assists us in these speculations as the appearance of the house doors" (Dickens 1850b: 24). Subsequently, not without a satirical undertone, he applies the physiognomic technique to the category of doorknobs in order to draw conclusions about the houses' inhabitants:

> The various expressions of the human countenance afford a beautiful and interesting study; but there is something in the physiognomy of street-door knockers, almost as characteristic, and nearly as infallible. Whenever we visit a man for the first time, we

41 On the close links between physiognomy and literature in the 19th century, see Tytler (1982).

42 "Les amours de la morgue" (1834).

43 "La chanson et les sociétés chantantes" (1832).

44 "Le Pont-Neuf et l'Isle-aux-Juifs" (1832).

> contemplate the features of his knocker with the greatest curiosity, for we well know, that between the man and his knocker, there will inevitably be a greater or less degree of resemblance and sympathy. (Dickens 1850b: 24)

Neither Dickens nor the authors of the *Livre* were stingy with references to other branches of scientific knowledge, for instance, when they drew on anatomical and physiological models in order to contextualize their subjects in a functional structure and classify them according to zoological or botanical schemes.[45] Dickens' physiognomy of doorknobs demonstrates, however, that such a scientific rhetoric represented, for the most part, a parody of the current euphoria about scientific discoveries rather than a serious mode of sociological thought. On the other hand, the adoption of concepts and schemes from physiognomy, physiology, anatomy or zoology for social analysis was not purely figurative. This is shown by the fact that scientific approaches also had a great influence on early social research, resulting in a significant push toward systematization since the last third of the 18th century. Sergio Moravia (1973), for example, has described how the members of the *Société des observateurs de l'homme*, founded in Paris in 1799, strove to banish speculation about human nature and history by orienting themselves toward empirically based procedures and scientific models.[46] Within this framework, the physician and philosopher Pierre-Jean-Georges Cabanis (1757–1808) attempted to establish a science of man based on physiology in his book *Rapports du physique et du moral de l'homme* (1802).[47] With the same concern, Henri de Saint-Simon (1760–1825), who incidentally was also a highly active journalist (Petermann 1979), emphasized the advantages of physiological thinking for a positive, non-speculative and useful social science in his programmatic text *De la physiologie appliquée à l'amélioration des institutions sociales* (1812)[48]:

> [P]hysiology [...] looks at individuals from a higher plane, as no more than organs of the social body, the organic functions of which it must study [...]. For society is by no means a simple conglomeration of living beings whose actions, independent of any final goal, are caused by nothing but the arbitrariness of individual will [...]. Society is primarily

45 Additionally, entire articles in the *Livre* deal with natural science topics. This is shown by an overview, incidentally, written by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, of the influence of French natural history on anatomical-medical research in German-speaking countries ("Les Naturalistes francais," 1832). On the occasion of his death in 1832, a text was dedicated to the naturalist George Cuvier, presenting some of his works and paying tribute to his contribution to the development of zoology and natural history ("Les Obsèques de M. Cuvier", 1832). Similarly, Charles Dickens participated in the direct transfer of scientific information into popular media. His journal *Household Words*, founded in 1850, and its successor *All the Year Round* (1859–1895) published decidedly science-related articles, such as "The Chemistry of a Candle" (Leigh 1850) and "Greenwich Weather-Wisdom" (Hunt 1850); in addition, Dickens published reviews of Charles Darwin's work *On the Origin of Species* (Anonymous 1860a, 1860b).

46 On the "empiricization" of proto-sociological thought in France and Scotland, see also Heilbron (1995: 98 ff.).

47 *On the Relations between the Physical and Moral Aspects of Man*.

48 *Physiology Applied to the Improvement of Social Institutions.*

> an organized machine whose every part contributes to the functioning of the whole. (Saint-Simon 1812; quoted after Lauster 2007: 90)

The organicist model adapted from physiology enabled Saint-Simon to think of "society" and its individual elements as a relational structure. Auguste Comte, who acted as Saint-Simon's secretary for several years, developed these ideas of a differentiating "social body" (Levine 1995), and borrowing from Comte, John Stuart Mill drafted a positive, science-inspired doctrine of the human being in *On the Logic of the Moral Sciences* (1843) (Stocking 1991: 39). Besides these examples, Herbert Spencer's[49] organicist theory of society shows how scientific models and concepts were used to recognize and interpret social and cultural orders, not only in market-oriented sociographic journalism but also in the debates of early sociology and anthropology.

Concluding remarks: cross-genre historiographies of social knowledge production

The industrialization of print and the increased interest in the manifestations and structures of radically changing societies in the 19th century allowed for the widespread circulation of sociographic writings (Osterhammel 2009: 25–82). The representation and argumentation styles of 19th-century sociographic journalism texts show how realistic-pragmatic and historicizing views on human behaviors and social relations supplanted previously dominant universalistic, psychologizing and ahistorical forms of thought. I have traced this process in three aspects – the creative reproduction of narrative modes and motifs of 18th-century moralism, the uses of description and contextualization as cognitive and representational modes of knowledge, and the adaptation of empiricist principles and a scientific terminology.

Sociographic journalism was not only a byproduct of the same epistemic transformations that gave rise to the writings of Auguste Comte, Karl Marx and Herbert Spencer. Sociographic journalism texts, in their widespread and transcultural dissemination, also acted as agents of social research oriented towards ethnographic principles, as they would increasingly gain strength in sociological, ethnological and folkloristic discourse around 1900. On this path, however, a break between literary and "scientific" forms of social research began to emerge in the 1850s, which Wolf Lepenies (1985) has described as a constitutive process for the development of sociology. Drawing on Norbert Elias' theory of civilization, Lepenies characterized, *mutatis mutandis*, the development of science in the 19th century as "the perfection of that modeling of affect which has asserted itself as an ideal of behavior since the seventeenth century" (1976: 207). Just as in other social domains, empirically oriented and standardized procedures had

49 Spencer's book *Social Statics* appeared in 1851, already showing his functional approach to social differentiation, which he elaborated in his multivolume work *The Principles of Sociology*, published between 1874 and 1896.

increasingly displaced affects, imaginations and feelings from a specializing (social) scientific domain (Lepenies 1976: 207). A separation between a scientific-empiricist and a literary-artistic tradition is also visible in the field of sociographic journalism from the 1850s onwards. In addition to the moment of affect regulation (leading to methodological systematization) described by Lepenies, this break can also be traced back to an increasing differentiation and specialization of media formats (Requate 2013), for example, toward social reportage, which used statistical and/or ethnographical approaches of social inquiry.[50] One manifestation of this development are the social reports by Henry Mayhew, whom Christopher Herbert (1991) and Rolf Lindner (2005) have studied as a forerunner of modern social research. Mayhew initially wrote sociographic sketches on various phenomena of urban life for the London satirical magazine *Punch* and the *Morning Chronicle* in the 1840s before recycling some of these writings – underpinned with methodological and theoretical considerations and classified thematically – in his three-volume work *London Labour and the London Poor* (1851).

The manifold references of sociographic journalism to early sociological and ethnological discourse reveal a number of starting points for the reformulation of narratives on the history of social knowledge production. Two aspects seem central to me from the perspective of sociocultural anthropology:[51] firstly, 19th-century sociographic journalism proves to be a formative genre in which the cultural techniques of ethnographic representation and cultural analysis were practiced and refined in a very specific way. Unlike the theory-oriented works of recognized representatives of early sociology, such as Auguste Comte or Herbert Spencer, who were primarily concerned with devising explanatory models for social transformation processes, sociographic sketches presented a detailed, visual-verbal documentation of social behaviors, cultural routines and sociomaterial environments as meaningful constellations of sociocultural conditions. In a way, the journalistic-commercial publication context itself promoted the literary production of recognizable "ethnographic fragments" (Hannerz 1995: 64),[52] as authors who aligned their texts with the public's social experience and reading habits were assured a favorable reception and regular commissions. The demand of the readership and the stipulations of the print market, hence, favored the advent of sociographic journalism as a heuristic format of ethnography at one's doorstep, which is why the view of

50 Stephen Donovan and Matthew Rubery state "that social investigations, despite their dismal and often distressing character, were by the 1880s a well-established and even popular feature of British journalism" (2012: 9). On parallel developments in the French- and German-language press, see Rieder (2009: 98–127).

51 See my comments on this in an earlier issue of this journal (Schwab 2016).

52 Ulf Hannerz (1995: 64) describes as "ethnographic fragments" those text parts that still form the basis of anthropological study even in globalized contexts, insofar as they enable – similar to the concept of "cultural constellation" – the "incorporation of the global, the political economy, the systemic into the local" (Lindner 2001: 13).

sociographic journalism invites one to look at the characteristics of social knowledge production "from below."[53]

Secondly, sociographic journalism, as a format between entertainment, art and science, leads us directly into the diffuse ramifications of pre-disciplinary configurations. A reassessment of this heterogeneous and transnational genre in the history of social knowledge and science challenges us to break down established historiographical traditions and tell cross-genre, transnational and interdisciplinary stories of social observation and thought. Such ways of storytelling may not only shed new light on historical configurations, but also have immediate relevance for the present. This is true for studies of modes of adaptation of sociographic journalism in (post-)colonial world regions, from which global histories of knowledge and science still have to be sketched, as well as for research on the cognitive role of scientific modes in early and contemporary social and cultural research. Additionally, the multilayered processes of knowledge transfer between different socio-medial contexts and the circulation of powerful political narratives and visions of the social are problem areas of historical as well as contemporary research. Furthermore, the current push for permanent digital self-representation gives us reason to rethink and historicize ethnographic self-observation as a public fashion. A curiously open view of historical constellations of social knowledge production, of epistemic as well as medial traditions and ruptures, thus, promises not only alternative narratives of the evolution of social thought but also new perspectives on current forms, conditions and responsibilities of today's social sciences.

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53 The aspect of reception is left out of this article; nevertheless, I would like to mention two things. The historian Judith Lyon-Caen analyzes in her study *La lecture et la vie: Les usages du roman au temps de Balzac* (2006) how Honoré de Balzac's and Eugène Sue's portrayals of the Parisian lower classes were perceived by the reading public as faithful representations. I show in an essay on a series of social reports by journalist John Hollingshead (1827–1904) in the *Morning Chronicle* how a letter to the editor confirms the depictions of conditions in London tenements and even presents another ethnographic fragment that clearly borrows from Hollingshead's documentary rhetoric (Schwab 2022).

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Economic change as cultural change?

The Economy for the Common Good as a possible enabler of a culture of mutual connectedness*

Abstract: The article analyzes the development of new postcapitalist practices with their possible effects on the transformation of self-images and -conceptions using the example of the Economy for the Common Good. Accordingly, the connection between the current subject order, the present social crises and the complex entanglement of the prevailing mode of production and life is explained. A socio-ecological transformation would, therefore, also have to be linked to the emergence of an alternative subject culture which is oriented towards cooperation and community. The Association of the Economy for the Common Good Berlin-Brandenburg and common good-oriented companies are used in this research as a space to observe sociocultural practices and new forms and conventions of cooperation in their acceptance and dissemination. On the one hand, it shows that these companies, with their values based on cooperation, social and global justice, and ecological responsibility, and with their participatory organizational structures, offer opportunities for countercultural practices and make utopias tangible, so that social change and self-change are being made possible on a small scale. On the other hand, utilizing detailed examples, the inconsistencies of sociocultural practices and the hybrid mixture of subject forms become clear and comprehensible in their specific context.

Keywords: post-growth, Economy for the Common Good/common good economy, sustainability, subjectification, cultural change

Introduction

It's strange: Even though values should constitute the basic orientation and the 'guiding stars' of our lives, it is very different values that count in our current economy than in our everyday interpersonal relationships. In our friendships and relationships, we feel well when we live human values: building trust, honesty, appreciation, respect, listening, empathy, cooperation, mutual help and sharing. The 'free' market economy is based on the systemic rules of profit-seeking and competition. […] This contradiction is not just a blemish in a complex and multivalent world, it is a cultural catastrophe; it divides us at our core – both as individuals and as a society.[1] (Felber 2012: 21).

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1 Translated from German.

This is how Christian Felber begins the presentation of his concept of the Economy for the Common Good (ECG). But how should this contradiction be resolved in his opinion, and above all – how is this proposed solution received by people? I have been ethnographically pursuing these topical questions in my research project[2] on the ECG between 2019 and 2021. In this text, I would like to analyze them in the context of broader debates on social and cultural theory in order to contribute to the reflections on postcapitalist economic models in a "world in/as crisis."[3]

The current "multiple crisis"[4] (Brand and Welzer 2019: 313) is described by Sighard Neckel in his research program "Die Gesellschaft der Nachhaltigkeit" ('The Society of Sustainability') (2018) as the depletion of fundamental resources necessary for society. He identifies the natural resources of the ecosystem, the economic resources of societal prosperity, the social resources of care, concern and solidarity, or the subjective resources of professional performance and private lifestyle (Neckel 2018: 11). The questions discussed in politics, business and the scientific community on how to solve the various problems often relate only to individual areas of the crises which are perceived as being topical.[5] Even visions of the future of sustainable development do not always include fundamental structural changes – as is the case, for example, with the considerations around a "Green Economy."[6] By contrast, there are scientific discussions on a social transformation that would have to overcome the compulsion for economic growth and establish a sustainable post-growth society that is perceived as structural in order to counter the multiple crises.[7] Activist movements and alternative projects are also rehearsing – so far, rather in a niche – alternative forms of working and living together. One of these alternatives is the ECG (Felber 2012) with its proposed path of

2 DFG research project: Nachhaltige Entwicklung von unten? Die Gemeinwohl-Ökonomie zwischen utopischen Visionen, zivilgesellschaftlichen Initiativen und basisdemokratischen Entscheidungen ('Bottom-up sustainable development? The economy of the common good between utopian visions, civil society initiatives and grassroots democracy'), May 2019 – February 2022. Ever since the start of the project, I have been regularly attending the plenary sessions of the Verein der Gemeinwohl-Ökonomie Berlin-Brandenburg ('Association of Common Good Economy Berlin-Brandenburg') as well as in the Summer Week of the Gemeinwohl-Ökonomie from July 22–27 in Mannheim, and have conducted interviews with companies with a common good balance sheet in Berlin.

3 For prior research on the ECG, cf. the joint research project Gemeinwohl-Ökonomie im Vergleich unternehmerischer Nachhaltigkeitsstrategien (GIVUN) ('The ECG in a comparison of corporate sustainability strategies') at the universities of Flensburg and Kiel (https://www.uni-flensburg.de/nec/forschung/givun/, accessed June 24, 2021) as well as a selection of publications from the GIVUN joint research project: Brink et al. 2019; Kny 2020; Sommer 2018; Wiefek and Heinitz 2018.

4 Often also referred to as "*Vielfachkrise*," cf. Demirović et al. 2011.

5 On the separate perception of the different crises, see Brand 2009: 4.

6 On the different imaginations of the futures of sustainability, see the DFG collaborative research group "Zukünfte der Nachhaltigkeit" ('Futures of Sustainability') at the University of Hamburg. Cf. Adloff and Neckel 2019: 167–93; Adloff/Neckel 2020: 7–22; Adloff et al. 2020.

7 As an introduction to this, cf. Dörre et al. 2019; Jackson 2013a; Kallis et al. 2015; Latouche 2015; Muraca 2014; Paech 2014; Schmelzer and Vetter 2019.

structural change towards a socially and globally just, ecologically responsible and solidary future. With the help of changed economic incentive mechanisms, the concept of the ECG envisages initiating a change of path, from the imperial way of life (Brand and Wissen 2017) of the current society of externalization (Lessenich 2019: 61 ff.) toward a society based on cooperation and participation, mutual appreciation and compassionate solidarity with each other and the environment, which can be described as a culture of mutual connectedness – of interbeing (Eisenstein 2017.)

In this paper, the cultural dimension of the socio-ecological transformation and the emergence of new postcapitalist discourses and practices will be examined using the example of the ECG. For this purpose, I begin with an explanation of the connection of the current subject order with the current social crises and the complex interconnection of the contemporary non-sustainable mode of production and life. A socio-ecological transformation would also be associated with an alternative subject culture with a changed self-image, which is, with the necessary brevity, sketched as an ideal-typical subject model.[8] The actors of the ECG strive to initiate social and cultural change by means of alternative values and participatory organizational structures. The Association of the Economy for the Common Good and companies oriented toward the common good, therefore, offer a fitting research space to observe alternative subject forms and the possible emergence of new cultural practices and new forms and conventions of coexistence in their acceptance and distribution. Our modern growth society, described as a society of externalization,[9] not only determines the economic conditions and the democratic institutions of the welfare state with its growth pressures, but also shapes the collective lifestyle patterns and constitutes itself through what Stephan Lessenich describes as a complex ensemble of mutually supporting social practices, forms of subjectivity and normativities (2019: 64) which continue to be taken for granted and are mostly unquestioned. In this context, the article also considers the limits of the spread of a new subject form, contradictions of sociocultural practices and what Ulrich Brand and Harald Welzer call cognitive dissonances (2019: 317) in order to highlight the difficulty of a rapid mainstreaming, i. e. a transition into changed practices recognized by society as a whole and through comprehensively accepted new cultural norms.[10] Based on my empirical research on common good-balanced companies in Berlin and the As-

8 On the terms subject form, subject cultures and subject order, see Reckwitz 2006: 15 ff., 34 ff., as well as Alkemeyer et al. 2013: 18 ff.

9 Externalization refers to the structural mechanism of capitalist growth societies in order to permanently maintain their mode of production. The six mechanisms of externalization are the appropriation of goods and resources, their economic exploitation, their material and symbolic devaluation, the outsourcing of collateral damage and consequential costs to external economic and social spaces, the closing off of one's own economic and social space, and the blanking out of the entire context of function and practice. Cf. Lessenich 2019: 61–5.

10 For a critical view of the hope for a rapid mainstreaming of change agents and the proliferation of niche actors, cf. Brand and Welzer 2019: 314 ff.

sociation of the Economy for the Common Good Berlin-Brandenburg, the performative formation of subjectivity will, therefore, be examined in its possibilities and limitations in order to trace the genesis of possible new subject forms in praxeological terms (Alkemeyer 2015: 27).

The neoliberal subject form and possibilities for change

In current thinking on post-growth and a socio-ecological transformation, the "*Steigerungszwänge*" ('compulsion to increase') (Rosa 2019: 37) in order to stabilize modern society dynamically is not only seen as causal for the economic and financial crisis, the ecological crisis, the increasing social and global injustice as well as social polarization.[11] It also interacts with the formation of the current subject form, described by Reckwitz as the consumtory creative subject of postmodernity (2006: 500 ff.). A subject form describes a culturally and historically produced general and collectively valid form of subjecthood that serves as a normatively valid ideal at a certain historical time. Subject forms are, thus, ideal-typical specific cultural forms that, as Reckwitz writes, individuals adopt in a particular historical and social context in order to become a full, competent, exemplary being (Reckwitz 2008: 9 f.). in the three primary areas of subjectivation: labor, intimacy and technologies of the self. Through a cultural change in society in the three spheres, the subject forms also change. While the subject form of the white-collar culture (Reckwitz 2006: 336 ff.) in Germany from the 1920s to the 1970s was oriented towards the guiding principle of social conformity, emotional skepticism, and the ideal of self-discipline and the fulfilment of duty, the 1970s saw the beginning of the liberation of subjects from the everyday culture that was perceived as petit bourgeois, with the guiding maxim becoming that of self-realization and -determination. Instead of adapting to fixed functions in work and family, one's own needs and ideas were now in the foreground of experience. At the latest by the 1990s, successful self-development became a new cultural norm of late-modern subjectivity – linked to the bourgeois concept of achievement and social status. In this way, the countercultural subject ideal of one's own life and the authentic self became linked to one's social position in society – from the unworldly hippies or anarchists to the cosmopolitan creatives and entrepreneurs (Reckwitz 2020: 2017).

Social recognition in late modern culture, thus, demands both successful social advancement and the singular, extraordinary and individual nature of one's own life (Reckwitz 2020: 214 ff.). Due to the increasing economization of the social (Reckwitz 2020: 222) and the associated institutionalized pressure to compare (from impact factors and elite universities to trendy city districts and hip jobs to spectacular holiday

11 Rosa writes of a quadruple crisis: economic, ecological, political and psychological, with this formative feature of society leading into an unavoidable logic of escalation and is unsustainable, cf. 2019: 37 f.

trips), the attractiveness of one's own lifestyle must now not only correspond to the subjective experience. It is also always part of a competitive comparison with others.[12] In addition, the pattern of increase, dynamization and effectiveness is transferred from the economy to self-development – to the ideal of what Reckwitz describes as the expansive and experimental ego (2020: 229). The compulsion towards the new and the extraordinary concerns both the urge for ever more and ever new material things and for ever increasing (professional and/or private) success and ever new experiences.[13]

This collective pattern of constant competitive self-optimization often leads to experiences of disappointment and states of exhaustion.[14] However, the consumerism associated with this is linked to social recognition, status and the creation of meaning: "If consumption plays such a vital role in the construction and maintenance of our social world, then asking people to give up material commodities is asking them to risk a kind of social suicide" (Jackson 2013b: 66). These consumption and growth orientations, which are deeply anchored in our modes of subjectivation, are described by Harald Welzer as mental infrastructures (2011: 30 ff.).[15] Accordingly, a socio-ecological transformation would also be associated with a cultural change in the subject form.

> [Degrowth is] a multi-faceted political project that aspires to mobilise support for a change of direction, at the macro-level of economic and political institutions and at the micro level of personal values and aspirations. Income and material comfort is to be reduced for many along the way, but the goal is that this is not experienced as welfare loss. (Kallis 2011: 878)

Predictions about future ways of life and possible countercultural alternative practices are only made cautiously in sociological and cultural studies considerations, since, on the one hand, one must consider the subjective stubbornness of the actors (Brand and Welzer 2019: 315) and that ecologically sustainable practices are adopted precisely when they primarily offer a different practical benefit (Brand and Welzer 2019: 318). On the other hand, subjectivations and self-understandings are formed from the close interplay of material conditions, values and ideas of society and social as well as cultural

12 Cf. also Lessenich, who writes that whether social actors operate on production or consumption markets, on labor or relationship markets, arenas of material competition and symbolic competition and spheres of social probation and interindividual comparison open up for them, always and everywhere (2019: 60).

13 In a critical stance towards a one-sided fixation of the critique of growth on the field of consumption, alternative ethics of consumption or transformative practices of renunciation of consumption which has become common, Lessenich refers to the production of needs, and writes that what one did not even know about yesterday, one may no longer renounce today (2019: 67).

14 Reckwitz names six sociocultural mechanisms of late-modern production of disappointment, cf. 2020: 221 ff.

15 Brand and Wissen also describe the subjectification of the imperial way of life, in which difference is marked through consumption to assure one's own social position, cf. 2017: 59.

practices.[16] Predictions about future social developments can, therefore, not be made independently of economic and political developments. Moreover, reference is made to the inherent dynamics of social developments (Sommer and Welzer 2014: 97–109). Nevertheless, initial outlooks are ventured in reflections on a post-growth society: thus, counter-hegemonic practices in civil society organizations and companies are observed as entry projects (Brand and Welzer 2019: 325), and ecological practices of nutrition and mobility among younger people are cited. Reference is also made to the effects of the society of growth and externalization which can no longer be outsourced, leading to changed discourses and a greater awareness of what Stephan Lessenich calls the social production of internalized systemic constraints (2019: 71), which can, thus, now be problematized. In Hartmut Rosa's reflections on the world relation of subjects in modern society as the striving for independence and sovereignty, a mutually constitutive relation (2019: 45) to nature, history, political institutions, fellow human beings and as a self-relation is proposed as a solution to the current crises (and those connected to the current world relation), which is captured by the concept of "resonance." This kind of 'being related' is described by the attitude of listening and responding and the aspect of caring, which neither dominates nor obeys, but exists in a resonant relationship with each other with the willingness to be touched and transformed (Rosa 2019: 46 f.). According to Rosa, such a resonant togetherness should also prevail in the political community, so that in acting together, something common can emerge (2019: 50).

Appreciation of cooperation and social justice, community spirit and the common good would presumably increase in the ideal-typical subject culture of a sustainable post-growth society, and social recognition would be associated with solidarity, a sense of connection, frugality and the assumption of responsibility for the community instead of being associated with individuality, consumption, material prosperity and social advancement based on competition.[17] However, this would mean abandoning the current imperial way of life (Brand and Wissen 2017) in Western societies and dissolving the, as Ulrich Brand terms them, accompanying forms of superordination and subordination of social groups as well as gender and ethnicized relations (2015: 16). By contrast, social mobility and gender justice as a current political response to social injustice are based, as Michael Sandel points out, on the promise of a possibility for escape, which does little to nurture the social bonds and civic connectedness that a democracy requires (2020: 356).[18]

16 Cf. the practice-theoretical considerations by Beck (1997: 339 ff.), Knecht (2005: 223 ff.) and Reckwitz (2017) and in terms of the analysis of the world relation as the root of social formation, cf. Rosa 2019: 40.

17 Cf. also Bender 2012: 213 f.; Dierksmeier 2016: 277–346; Eisenstein 2017.

18 Instead, according to Sandel, in a sustainable society, there should be the possibility of feeling like members of the communal project and having a dignified life – even without social advancement. The humility before all people and with nature that this would entail would lead society back from the brutal ethics of success that drive us apart and point beyond the tyranny of achievement to a less

Manifold tendencies in the direction of a change in values, self-understandings and social practices are evident not only in the expansion of alternative solidarity-based forms of economy, such as solidarity-based agriculture, cooperative house and housing projects and eco-villages, or new forms of commons, such as urban gardening, open-source hardware and software or repair cafés.[19] Fissures in the current ideal-typical subject form are also becoming more and more apparent. In addition to burnout and states of exhaustion, inner resignation or a joyless work to rule are increasingly spreading in professional life, which is being countered with motivational measures, proposals of staff development and the presentation of leadership qualities in management consultations.[20] In addition – or as a result of this – Tibetan temples with mindfulness and meditation courses are very popular in the big cities, as are introductory courses in nonviolent communication, resilience, deep ecology or in sociocratic organizational models for learning new techniques of the self, of dealing with each other and with nature, which can be understood as indicators of what Sighard Neckel calls a subjective sustainability (2018: 18 f.). However, cultural essentialist tendencies and fundamentalist currents that refer to a (backward-looking) collective identity of a community are also on the rise (Reckwitz 2020: 42 ff.).

These are only a few short examples that can show that different subject forms are currently emerging or gaining strength again as a counter-model to neoliberal hyper-individualism. According to Andreas Reckwitz, the outlined subject form of what he calls the consumerist creative subject(s) of postmodernism is only one order, albeit an increasingly dominant one since the 1990s. Subjects do not exist in the singular, however, but in changing and field-specific subject forms that unfold in a performative manner in practical accomplishment (Reckwitz 2006: 34–50). Following Thomas Alkemeyer and colleagues, subjectivity and practices are to be thought of as a co-constitutive context of reference (2015: 26). Economic-political structures and sociocultural practices, subjectivities, self-images and self-understandings are negotiated, (re)produced

rancorous, more generous public life (Sandel 2020: 362). Regarding a post-growth society, Friederike Habermann also calls for reciprocal, equal relationships and structural communality that promotes cooperation instead of competition and opens up other possibilities for people to develop (2014: 43). Cf. also the reflections on basic pillars of a post-growth society in Muraca (2014: 77–90), the various proposed paths to a growth-independent society in Adler and Schachtschneider (2017), as well as further reflections on structural and cultural changes in Akademie solidarische Ökonomie (2012); Brand and Wissen (2017: 165–185); Dallmer (2020: 140–143); Göpel (2020); Schneidewind (2018); Schneidewind and Zahrnt (2013); Sommer and Welzer (2014); WBGU (2011); and Weizsäcker and Wijkman et al. (2017).

19 Cf. for example Andreas 2015; Baier et al. 2016; Grewe 2017; Mohr et al. 2012; Müller 2012; Poehls et al. 2017; Scholze-Irrlitz 2019; Tauschek and Grewe 2015; Vetter 2021.

20 Cf. Sarah Jankowski: Die "innere Kündigung" vermeiden – Führungsaufgabe Motivation. Zentrum für Management- und Personalberatung (https://www.zfm-bonn.de/blog/die-innere-kuendigung-vermeiden-fuehrungsaufgabe-motivation/, accessed June 24, 2021).

or transformed in the specific interactions of sociopolitical discourses.[21] Subjectivity can, therefore, be newly formed or changed in different practices and with different participants. In this article, the ECG, with its alternative values, will be considered as a discursive framework and the common good companies, with their changed models of organization and recognition, will be examined as alternative economic structures in order to study the sociocultural practices taking place in them and the emerging forms of subjectivity in their contradictory nature. In the following analysis, the normative cultural guidelines of the ECG are considered in their subjectivizing dimension. For this purpose, the discourses and practices explicitly addressing the subjects in companies with a common good balance sheet and in the ECG association Berlin-Brandenburg will be examined. The concept of the ECG will be briefly described as an introduction.

Cooperation and connectedness as the basis of the Economy for the Common Good

The alternative economic model developed by Christian Felber strives for the increase of the common good instead of the increase of capital (2012: 35). The aim is to dissolve the incentive mechanisms that force competing companies in the current capitalist market economy to maximize profits at the expense of the environment and people, and transform economic structures in such a way that cooperative interaction is made possible in the pursuit of the greatest possible common good. The common good is understood to encompass the values of human dignity, solidarity and justice, ecological sustainability, as well as transparency and co-decision.

To implement the concept, companies are encouraged to draw up a common good balance sheet based on socio-ecological and ethical criteria. The common good matrix includes comprehensive social, ecological, democratic and cooperative aspects and evaluates not only the product or the service of the company, but also the company itself, such as the payment of or the participation opportunities for the employees, the ecological responsibility of the employees in the company, the socio-ecological standards of the supplier companies and the financial service provider, or the benefit of the company for future generations. The assessment of the different areas is normatively defined. Cooperative, participative and socio-ecologically responsible interaction with each other and the environment is valued more highly than hierarchical organizational and competitive forms of business. In the future, a change in taxation is intended to serve as an incentive for the changed commitment for the common good, so that a value-oriented corporate focus can develop. This change in tax law is to take place in a grassroots democratic process.[22] More than 2,000 companies have supported the model

21 Cf. Beck 1997: 339 ff.; Knecht 2005: 223 ff.; for an introduction to subject analysis, see Reckwitz 2008.
22 For more detail on this, see Giselbrecht and Ristig-Bresser 2017; Kühn 2019.

so far, of which around 500 are members of the ECG or have already prepared a common good balance sheet.[23]

The common good-balanced companies in Berlin which I studied in my research[24] had often already had a socio-ecological orientation before the balance sheet was drawn up, despite their different areas of activity. The concept of the ECG and the associated balance sheet for the common good were, nevertheless, seen by them as a long-desired means to map the meaning of their entrepreneurial actions and the associated guiding values of the company and be able to engage as cocreators of a new economic ethic and social change.[25] In addition, the common good balance sheet was used to continue to develop in a processual and mutual exchange towards a common good.[26] Even if the balance sheet results do not yet provide a financial or tax advantage, they still represent a symbolic value and distinguish the company for not only the entrepreneurs themselves, but also for customers, employees and other companies as one that is value-oriented, sustainable, climate-friendly and future-oriented.[27]

In their attempt to advance the path of a socio-ecological transformation and develop new forms and social practices of cooperative and ecological economic activity, both internally in the company and also in its external impact, the efforts of the companies often go far beyond the preparation of the common good balance sheet. On the one hand, they are available as discussion partners at information events on the ECG at environmental festivals, church or political events, at the *Wandelwoche* (an initiative for the presentation of companies and projects with an alternative economy) and the *Heldenmarkt* (a fair featuring ecological and social products and services) in order to report on their experiences and, thus, strengthen the discourse on the possibility of an alternative form of economy. On the other hand, new forms of communication and exchange are developed in the respective companies in order to achieve the desired increase in the common good in cooperation with other companies. *Märkisches Landbrot*,

23 Cf. https://web.ecogood.org/de/die-bewegung/, accessed February 3, 2021.

24 The companies I studied range from a dental practice and smaller consultancies for water management or sustainable tourism to a medium-sized organic bakery and a wholesaler of organic frozen food to a public health insurance company and a large building cleaning company.

25 See, for example, the introductions to the common good reports of Ökofrost & SinnBIOse 2019 (https://oekofrost.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/WEB_Oekofrost_GWOE_Bericht.pdf, accessed July 8, 2020) and BTE Tourismus- und Regionalberatung 2018 (https://www.bte-tourismus.de/2020/06/08/zweiter-gemeinwohlbericht/, accessed July 8, 2020).

26 See, for example, the common good report by the dental practice Zahnarztpraxis am Kreuzberg 2018, p. 9 (https://issuu.com/zahnarztpraxisamkreuzberg/docs/gemeinwohl-bericht-2018, accessed July 8, 2020).

27 Customers and employees of Sparda Bank Munich, for example, which has a common good balance sheet, chose this bank explicitly because it is an ECG enterprise. Cf. the interviews with common good-oriented companies in Scheffler and Lieber (2018: 103). This distinguishing feature was also used by some Berlin companies to acquire new customers, even if it was more of a side effect and not the main motivation for the companies' common good balance.

for example, a medium-sized organic bakery with a common good balance sheet, has set up an annual round table with its customers and suppliers at which transparent reports are given on the value chain and long-term supply contracts and fixed price commitments are negotiated. According to the company, this kind of transparent presentation of the supply chain and the negotiation of prices creates trust among customers, on the one hand, and gives grain suppliers the security of being able to operate independently of the daily market price, on the other hand.[28]

A partnership-based supplier relationship and fair pricing are also at the forefront of other common good-oriented companies, such as *Ökofrost*, a specialized wholesaler for organic frozen foods.[29] According to the company, the fact that the top priority is not profit but dealing with business partners in a spirit of cooperation as a "win-win situation" sometimes leads to irritations in the economic environment.[30] In order to ensure socio-ecological responsibility in the supply chains, some companies have to terminate their cooperation with existing suppliers if they are not willing to make the necessary changes.[31]

A similar cooperative approach is also sought within the companies, for example, at the dental practice *Zahnarztpraxis am Kreuzberg*. The manager of the dental practice had offered his employee the chance to participate in the business decisions as co-owners. However, the staff preferred to remain employed and not share in the business risk for the continued existence of the practice. In order to still be able to hear the staff's opinion on important decisions and promote their own initiative, the manager introduced a weekly breakfast as a team meeting in the practice at which he informs them about upcoming decisions and asks for the staff's wishes and concerns.[32] A similar format was also introduced by the managing director of the company F&P Stock Solution in the form of an interdepartmental monthly meeting at which the situation and

28 Interview with Christof Deinert, the CEO of Märkisches Landbrot GmbH, June 6, 2020. See also Aktionsgemeinschaft fair & regional Bio Berlin-Brandenburg (https://fair-regional.de/, accessed July 08, 2020) as well as Scheffler and Lieber (2018: 112 f.). The Demeter-certified organic bakery Märkisches Landbrot was ranked fifth among small and medium-sized companies in the ranking of the sustainability reports by the Institut für ökologische Wirtschaftsforschung and Future 2018.

29 Cf. the 2019 common good report of Ökofrost GmbH, p. 9 (https://oekofrost.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/WEB_Oekofrost_GWOE_Bericht.pdf, accessed July 8, 2020).

30 Interview with Katharina Gerull, assistant to the management board of Ökofrost GmbH, May 26, 2020.

31 Cf. Antje von Drewitz, managing director of the mountain sports outfitter Vaude, at the DBU online salon 30 years of DBU: "Nachhaltig in die Zukunft" – Nachhaltig Wirtschaften on February 1, 2021.

32 Interview with Matthias Eigenbrodt, managing director of Zahnarztpraxis am Kreuzberg, January 30, 2020. See also the common good report from Zahnarztpraxis am Kreuzberg, pp. 39–41 (https://issuu.com/zahnarztpraxisamkreuzberg/docs/gemeinwohl-bericht-2018, accessed July 8, 2020), as well as Matthias Eigenbrodt at the press conference of the Association of the Economy for the Common Good Berlin-Brandenburg on May 14, 2020. Martin Strele, managing director of Kairos gGmbH, also explains a similar experience in an interview, cf. Scheffler and Lieber 2018: 105.

concerns of the employees are discussed and possibilities for improvement can be discussed and developed.[33]

Other companies, such as *confideon*, a consultancy for water supply and wastewater disposal, work according to a sociocratic model with even flatter hierarchies. Although there are two managing directors of the company, a project manager is responsible for the individual consulting projects, even if the company's managing directors are involved in the individual project.[34] Cooperative and community-oriented approaches are being implemented even more strongly in newly founded young companies, for example, the Berlin-based beverage bottle manufacturer *soulbottles*[35] or the independent beer brand *Quartiermeister*.[36] Thus, *soulbottles* also works with a sociocratic organizational structure and, in addition, transferred the company to responsible ownership in June 2018. This means that *soulbottles* is no longer owned by the founders, but that *soulproducts GmbH* now belongs to the employees and can, therefore, be neither sold nor inherited.[37] The *Quartiermeister* company also operates with consensus decisions in the team and supports social projects in the neighborhood through its profits, with the selection of projects being controlled by a voluntary association in which everyone can participate.[38] *Quartiermeister* is also in the process of converting the company into a corporate purpose company and, thus, being owned by itself, so that it is safely and permanently removed from the free market and a sale of the company is rendered impossible. While the founders and directors of *Quartiermeister* will continue to hold voting rights, they will not have profit rights. Profits will be either reinvested or donated.[39] The two founders of the now well-established beer brand, thus, forgo profit in favor of a sustainable and sensible economy that benefits everyone in keeping with their motto "*Quartiermeister – Zum Wohle aller*" ('Quartiermeister – For the benefit of all').[40]

Structural challenges and cultural limits of cooperative and socio-ecological practices

However, the value-based and cooperative orientation of common good companies and the postcapitalist practices of their founders and employees are currently also coming

33 Julius Göllner, managing director at F&P Stock Solution, at the press conference of the Gemeinwohl-Ökonomie Berlin-Brandenburg, May 14, 2019.

34 Interview with Dirk Jakubczick, consultant and project leader at confideon Unternehmensberatung GmbH, February 3, 2020. See also https://www.confideon.de/start.html, accessed January 14, 2021.

35 https://www.soulbottles.de/, accessed January 12, 2021.

36 https://quartiermeister.org/de/, accessed January 12, 2021.

37 See https://www.soulbottles.de/soulblog/impact/purpose-economy-soulbottles-gehoert-sich-selbst, accessed January 12, 2021.

38 See https://quartiermeister.org/de/quartiermeister/, accessed January 12, 2021.

39 See https://www.lebensmittelzeitung.net/handel/Purpose-Unternehmen-Aufbruch-in-eine-neue-Wirtschaft-141594, accessed January 14, 2021.

40 See https://quartiermeister.org/de/quartiermeister/#unser-manifest, accessed January 14, 2021.

up against structural and cultural limits.[41] Consequently, the aim here is to examine how social recognition is achieved in common good-oriented companies and the movement of the ECG, and to what extent subjectivities can be newly formed or changed in the process. The contradictions and ambivalences which arise in practice out of the coexistence of different economic logics and different understandings of the world and the self will be particularly filtered out.

One project manager from the water management consultancy *confideon*, for example, laments the difficulty of steering customers "towards the common good" so that they take on more "responsibility for our society."[42] His company was able to provide highly competent advice on water cleanliness, but their knowledge about the possible reduction of energy consumption in the water companies was not being asked for, which made him, as an environmental engineer, doubt the meaningfulness of the consultancy work:

> For example, I would be really keen to motivate the companies in the water supply and wastewater disposal sector to contribute more to the energy transition – either through a common good report or through recognizing it. They are not doing that so far. They don't see it as their job. It's not in the statutes. […] But the challenge that I now see for us as a society is that it all has to be much more interconnected. You can't see all the systems individually. For example, in the past, the sewage treatment plant in a municipality was the biggest energy consumer in the municipality overall. Because […] this whole system with the pumps, etc. consumes an infinite amount of energy. And […] there is already a development in the industry towards energy-autonomous sewage treatment plants. But we can't offer that to our client companies. They'll chase us off the farm, so to speak.[43]

He names other possibilities for saving energy at the wastewater treatment plants, such as by not throwing cleaning wipes, which do not dissolve in the water, into the wastewater, or, even better, to not even produce them in the first place as they clump together in the wastewater and clog the pumps, which also causes a major energy burden.[44] In his view, a cooperative and participatory structure of cooperation between the different companies as well as a fundamental interest of all companies in the collective improvement of (in this case) ecological criteria in the sense of an improvement of the common good would be necessary to overcome the challenge of the ecological crisis mentioned above. He believes that state or communal regulatory frameworks would be necessary for this purpose, and companies like his could help to shape them. In conclusion, he expresses his hope for the future:

41 On the structural limits due to the efficiency requirement in public service companies as well as in public procurement, see Kühn 2020: 49.

42 Interview with Dirk Jakubczick, consultant and project leader at confideon Unternehmensberatung GmbH, February 3, 2020. Direct quotations from interviews have been translated from German.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid.

> The realization of these connections would perhaps be more effective if we were to go into this process via the ECG approach, if [the waterworks] were to go into this process [of a common good balance sheet]. Now that would give a very positive image of the future. I also believe that young people, […] when they realize that they are only administering long-established grievances – albeit at a high technical level and with well committed companies. But when they realize that they cannot develop anything for the better, they will not accept that. […] There is already a showcase report – that is the Stadtentwässerung Stuttgart ['Stuttgart wastewater disposal']. And for me, they are really a pioneer here, where I think: Yes, it is possible! […] And then Stadtentwässerung Stuttgart, their city-owned company, agreed: Yes, we'll do it! So it's not as though the Stadtentwässerung Stuttgart is an eco-pioneer company. But you can see that they have given it a lot of thought at a very deep level.[45]

In addition to such structural difficulties as the lack of networking and incentive mechanisms for joint (ecological) corporate accountability, contradictions in the transfer of changed socio-economic practices and new cultural norms in common good contexts also become apparent. In a similar way to now, the companies had mostly already had an ecological, social and participative orientation before their balancing, many of the employees are also ecologically reflective in their behavior, critical of consumption and more interested in employment that they perceive as meaningful than in high earnings.[46]

Several companies also report that employees and interns had explicitly applied to them because of their value-based orientation and participatory organizational structure.[47] Many companies also emphasize the satisfaction of the employees due to the respectful atmosphere in the team, the meaningfulness of the work and the possibility for working in a self-responsible manner.[48] Some customers also switch to the respective company because of the common good balance.[49] However, these decisions are made

45 Ibid.

46 One employee of a common good-oriented consulting company on water management said in the interview that he refrained from moving to another company in the aircraft industry, where he could have earned twice as much, as he did not want to work in aircraft development. Cf. interview with Dirk Jakubczick, consultant and project leader at confideon Unternehmensberatung GmbH, February 3, 2020.

47 For example, the sustainable tourism company BTE Tourismus. Interview with the managing director Hartmut Rein, July 7,2020.

48 However, there are also counter-examples where a change to a participatory organizational structure would meet with resistance from the previous "long-standing" department heads, where an interest in codetermination is limited among the employees overall, or the desired self-responsibility at work without external control does not take place in some cases. Cf. interview with a common good-balanced company, May 13, 2020. The information has been anonymized to protect the employees.

49 Matthias Eigenbrodt, for example, managing director of the dental practice Zahnarztpraxis am Kreuzberg, reports that about 20 % of patients have come to them because of the ECG balance sheet. Public health insurance company BKK ProVita, which has a common good balance sheet, has also seen an increase in customers in the Berlin-Brandenburg sales region because the sales manager has explicitly advertised the ECG at events such as the Heldenmarkt. The increase was significantly lower in

primarily by academics and young university graduates who combine their ecological behavior with their lifestyle and can, thus, also position themselves socially. Apprentices, for example, at the organic bakery *Märkisches Landbrot*,[50] have so far been less interested in the ECG, similar to some employees in large companies with more than 100 employees. This applies especially to companies that have existed for a long time and in which the managers have only become enthusiastic about the idea of the ECG in recent years. Although these companies were already socially oriented and appreciative towards their employees and customers, the ecological and participatory aspects have only been addressed more strongly in recent years and also through the common good balance sheet.

In order to also achieve a change in lifestyle among these employees, the managing directors create, as far as possible, the structural framework for such a socio-ecological and participatory transformation. Fresh organic fruit and fair trade coffee, for example, are usually available on the company's premises. Employees have the option of part-time work or a 30-hour work week. Meditation rooms to practice mindfulness exercises exist or the opportunity to participate in meditation sessions are offered in some companies. The companies often offer free training, workshops and lectures on vegan nutrition and healthy food, the company's guiding values or self-organization and holocratic forms of organization and explain them in the company newsletter. One important aspect of the common good and a climate-friendly and grandchild-friendly society is the issue of CO^2 emissions through meat consumption and mobility, which is also included in the balance sheet.[51] Companies, therefore, try and provide CO^2-reduced mobility to and at the workplace for employees and encourage them to change their driving and eating habits. Accordingly, they offer company bicycles, organize carpools and hold cooking events. The managing directors often lead by example. However, they do not bring out a "moral club" – as some managing directors emphasize.[52]

other sales regions (interview with Stephan Lampel, sales manager Berlin of BKK ProVita, May 20, 2020). However, a common good balance sheet is also an exclusion criterion for other customers. Martin Strele, one of the two managing directors of the Austrian Kairos Institute for Impact Research and Development, reports: "The classic economic actors in Vorarlberg are growth-oriented. For the state government and the chamber of commerce, the common good balance sheet is, therefore, a general indictment or threat to their economic model. We have also felt this, until today. Nevertheless, we have, of course, communicated the ECG balance, put it on the website" (Scheffler and Lieber 2018: 105).

50 Interview with Christof Deinert, the managing director of Märkisches Landbrot GmbH, June 12, 2020.

51 Point C3 of the common good matrix contains the "promotion of the ecological behavior of the employees."

52 "We talk about it, draw attention to things. But we don't give them a moral bashing. That's not the way to do it!" Interview with Hartmut Rein, managing director of BTE Tourismus, July 7, 2020. Cf. also the common good report by Quartiermeister, https://quartiermeister.org/media/filer_public/49/fd/49fd1ee6-f8da-49b0-910d-631d101c75f5/2015_-_quartiermeister_-_gemeinwohlbericht.pdf, p. 17, accessed January 15, 2021.

In some interviews, however, the challenge of "bringing the employees on board" is mentioned.[53] This also becomes evident in various misunderstandings. The employees of a company, for example, were irritated that their boss – as the owner of a prosperous company – used public transport to travel to the company premises. His intention was to use his behavior to influence the employees to use the train themselves. However, the employees' reaction was different. They were horrified: "You can't do that! Especially as management! That's just not right!"[54] Here, the social patterns of social recognition through consumption and status objects, known as mental infrastructures, become apparent.[55] His promotion of CO^2-free mobility, nevertheless, led to a change. An employee of the company came to his boss on his own initiative with the request for a bicycle as a company vehicle. As a caretaker, he now covers 10–15 km a day in all weathers on his company bicycle, a decision that – according to the company newsletter – is also well received by the customers.[56] Nevertheless, so far, the caretaker has not been willing to give up his company car altogether, even though he was offered 200 € additional earnings per month for it.[57]

The employees of another company with a common good balance sheet also reacted rather reservedly to the offer of using public transport or company bicycles similar to their employer. However, when municipal parking management was introduced in the area and the employees would have had to pay parking fees for their private cars, interest in a company bike changed and the willingness to change their mode of transport increased significantly from then on. Five new company bicycles were purchased for the dental practice *Zahnarztpraxis am Kreuzberg*.[58] However, the managing director was unable to answer in the interview to what extent the use of a bicycle during the employ-

53 For example, the interview with Matthias Eigenbrodt, managing director of the dental practice Zahnarztpraxis am Kreuzberg, January 30, 2020.

54 Mario Wodara, managing director of the Gebäudeservice Wodara, at his impulse talk on February 20, 2020, at the conference "Klimapositiv! Konferenz für Unternehmen der Gemeinwohl-Ökonomie in Berlin-Brandenburg" ('Climate positive! Conference for companies in the Economy for the Common Good Berlin-Brandenburg'), Berlin, February 19/20, 2020. As a compromise, the managing director has now purchased a hybrid car, however, he continues to frequently ride his bicycle or take public transport, cf. Interview with Sebastian Hemme, sustainability officer at Gebäudeservice Wodara GmbH, May 13, 2020.

55 Cf. Brand and Wissen who write that subjectivation also has a physical dimension through which governance becomes 'natural' and that it reproduces in the endeavor to mark difference through consumption, to reassure oneself of one's own social position and realize their inner selves. Mediated by consumption, it becomes a driver of the imperial lifestyle (2017: 59).

56 Der mit dem Fahrrad kommt ('Arrives by bike'). Article in the company newsletter Qualitrauen. Informationen für Interessierte, no. 13/2020: 4.

57 Interview with Sebastian Hemme, sustainability officer of Gebäudeservice Wodara GmbH, May 13, 2020.

58 Interview with Matthias Eigenbrodt, managing director of the dental practice Zahnarztpraxis am Kreuzberg, January 30, 2020. Cf. also Matthias Eigenbrodt at the press conference of the Association of the Economy for the Common Good Berlin-Brandenburg, May 14, 2019.

ees' free time has increased as a result. The example shows that sustainable practices, such as cycling or the use of public transport, are adopted when it becomes a cheaper mobility alternative.[59] This makes it possible to experience countercultural alternatives, which can also be incorporated into everyday life as routinized practices.

Similarly, converting to a meat-reduced diet is almost a matter of course in many young companies that are oriented at the ECG . Other, especially larger, companies also attempt to make this change "palatable" to their employees and to value it as a step toward an ecological future. In a company with a common good balance sheet with 255 employees which explicitly refers to a vegan diet in its mission statement, the common good report also shows that 79 % of the employees choose vegetarian or vegan meals for lunch (51 % vegetarian, 28 % vegan, 19 % meat, 2 % fish).[60] This above-average choice of vegetarian and vegan food can certainly be explained by the appreciation of and a social obligation toward the company's mission statement. However, a complete change of eating habits has not yet taken place, as the Berlin sales manager of the company reports somewhat resignedly:

> So this whole ECG story and the fact that we are the way we are, that we propagate a vegan diet and stand behind it, as I personally do, we have only been doing this since 2014. The employees, of course, should be taken along on this journey, and that is very, very difficult. […] For example, when we have a company party, we have a company meeting twice a year, there's also something to eat. There's a vegan buffet and a non-vegan buffet. And ten percent of the people go to the vegan buffet and when I stand there with people and say: Hey, you're vegan too? [They say:] No, no, I'm just going to get some appetizers here. So you can't push that on people. […] We keep trying to address this in our internal communication. We have an intranet where you can read about it. People are always kept up to date there. Then we have our members' newsletter, which, of course, the employees also read. And the topics of diet, ECG, sustainability – they always play a role […] Well, we are just a normal cross-section of society, both among the employees as well as the insured. And I can't say that people in our company are now voluntarily trying to do things better. I don't feel that's the case. No. No, no, not at all. […] For example, I am the only one in sales who eats vegan food, except for the head of internal sales. […] And, I have to say this critically: the sales colleagues, when we go out to eat somewhere, they don't even manage to go without meat on this one evening a year. […] Then they always say: Yes, I only eat very little. But even on that evening they can't do it. So that what [we] actually want to model has not reached everyone by a long shot. So we preach all day – we preach in lectures, at fairs and so on – what we want.

59 Cf. Brand and Welzer 2019: 318.

60 Common good balance 2018/19: 45. Details have been anonymized to protect the employees of the company.

> But as soon as the workday ends, people don't continue with it. That's the experience I've had.[61]

A vegan or vegetarian diet is also exemplified in another company. Twice a week, a communal lunch takes place on the company premises – once with meat, the second day is vegetarian. The company's administrative officer in charge of sustainability and the ECG says: "Every now and then there's a smile from individual people for this. But it is a tiny step in the right direction – well in what I believe is the right direction. This would be proof that meat consumption is not the be-all and end-all."[62]

These examples show that the habits and diets of the employees which are taken for granted are being challenged by changed discourses and appeals in the company as well as by the lived practice of some employees. The different ecological practices in the company, on the one hand, and in the private environment, on the other, point to the different self-understandings in the various social fields. The following anecdote, told by the managing director of the *Gebäudeservice Wodara GmbH* about his company, shows that the common good balancing does play a role in this: "I have a good example: We have residual chemicals and they had to go. Then one employee said: 'We can pour it down the toilet.' Then another one said: 'Have you thought about this? We are ECG balanced, so we can't just pour it down the toilet!'"[63]

The desire to achieve a "rethinking" among the employees through the ECG orientation with the changed values and constructions of meaning and, thus, to bring about a stronger consideration of their own social and cultural practices or sensitize them to make a conscious decision is also expressed by other entrepreneurs.[64] In this way, alternatives are made conceivable and achievable, and new offers of subjectivation are made.

In addition to the socio-ecological criteria, the concept of the ECG also emphasizes nonviolent communication, empathic, mindful and appreciative interaction with each other and with different needs, as well as democratic codetermination and codesign in all areas, and these are normatively defined and balanced in the common good matrix (Felber 2012: 114–118). Therefore, the ambivalences between previously familiar

61 Interview with the sales manager of a company with a common good balance sheet, May 20, 2020. The details have been anonymized to protect the employees of the company. The statements from the interview refer explicitly to the evening event and the employees' free time.

62 Interview with Sebastian Hemme, sustainability officer at Gebäudeservice Wodara GmbH, May 13, 2020.

63 Mario Wodara, managing director of Gebäudeservice Wodara GmbH, at the press conference of the Gemeinwohl-Ökonomie Berlin-Brandenburg, May 14, 2019. The majority of the cleaning chemicals used in the company have so far been replaced by more environmentally friendly and ecological cleaning agents. Cf. interview with Sebastian Hemme, sustainability officer of Gebäudeservice Wodara GmbH, May 13, 2020.

64 Cf. interview with Hartmut Rein, managing director of BTE Tourismus, July 7, 2020, as well as a written interview with Maximilian Begovic, sustainability officer at BKK ProVita, May 11, 2020.

and internalized mental structures of effectiveness, work ethics and hegemonic ideas of power, and the desired social and gender-just, (grassroots) democratic and appreciative interaction in the movement of the ECG will be exemplified here. This is because the contradictions are not only evident among the employees and staff of the common good companies. The transformation of hierarchically organized enterprises into a participatory organizational structure, the acceptance of the necessary duration of grassroots democratic decision-making processes or the introduction of gender-appropriate language and nonviolent communication are also met with incomprehension by some activists in the ECG movement, lead to misunderstandings in the cooperation between the common good-oriented companies or have been difficult to transform so far due to existing social hegemonic power structures.

Various examples of the conflicting value standards for dealing with time and effectiveness as well as the continued unquestioned use of habitual linguistic and patriarchal patterns were revealed at the Summer Week of the ECG from July 22 to 27, 2019, in Mannheim. More than 100 activists from Germany, Austria and Switzerland met there for five days to discuss strategies for advancing the common good movement, solve problems, share ideas, and draw courage and strength from each other. During the day, workshops and meetings of the various actor groups that had been founded in the ECG took place. Stakeholder groups included the working group of speakers, which offers lectures on the ECG, the working group on education, which develops free educational materials and workshops for schools, the working group on communication, which takes care of communication structures, such as a joint IT structure and newsletters, and the working group on matrix development, which further develops the ECG matrix for companies and regions based on prior experience in the preparation of the balance sheet.[65] This work is mostly done on a voluntary basis. During the Summer Week, the working group on advisory services also met, in which the certified advisors for the preparation of the ECG balance sheet exchange information and receive further training. In contrast to the other working groups, the advisors are obliged to take part in in two further training courses per year and are paid for their advisory work. They also often work for the ECG movement on a voluntary basis and support the idea of a value-based economy. Nevertheless, there were differences between the participants of the ECG Summer Week from the other working groups and the consultants, as the following example will illustrate.

The joint days in Mannheim started with a large plenary session where, after a morning impulse, the workshops of the day were presented and the rooms were assigned. The advisors also took part in the plenary, although they were all obliged to take part in the working group on consultancy for the entire rest of the day. One of the consultants felt that his participation in the morning plenary was quite a “waste of time”

65 On the different actor circles, see https://web.ecogood.org/de/die-bewegung/akteurinnen-kreise/, accessed February 2, 2021.

as he could not attend the other workshops. The idea of a mutual interest in the topics of the different workshops was apparently not particularly plausible for him, especially since time and effectiveness criteria play a major role in his "other" world as a freelance communication and HR consultant.[66] This discrepancy between the working group on consultancy and the other Summer Week participants was also noticed by the organizing team, and a temporal separation was made between the professional development of the working group on consultancy and the Summer Week for the following ECG event.

Gender-sensitive language was also demanded at times during the Summer Week, sometimes ironically, sometimes provocatively, for example, when the workshops were only offered for "*Teilnehmer*" ('participants'), "*Interessenten*" ('interested parties') or "*Mitarbeiter*" ('employees') – all of them generic masculine terms.[67] How difficult it is to introduce gender justice in language is also evident at ECG events in Berlin. The reaction to criticism varies. Some of the common good-balanced entrepreneurs apologize in advance if they slip into the masculine language in which they were socialized.[68] Other ECG activists are relatively ignorant of the desires for gender justice in language.[69] Other patriarchal structures also seem to be strongly internalized and are continued without question. At a workshop during the Summer Week, for example, I was critical of the draft for a common good balance sheet for private individuals that was put up for discussion in which the use of a private car is assessed with minus points.[70] Instead of this assessment, which I perceived as one-sided and moralizing, my suggestion was to additionally ask in the balance sheet for the necessary infrastructure change for possible alternative ecological practices – in this case, for example, the need for bicycle paths and train connections for weekend excursions with children into the surrounding countryside – in order to, thus, have the option of dealing constructively with infrastructural shortcomings. Perhaps my criticism was too sweeping or I did not make clear enough the conflict between the ambition of the common good balance for private individuals to change individual consumer behavior through the self-test and the structural change I favored to encourage alternative ecological practices. After the workshop, an older man approached me and told me he was a mental coach and had sensed an inner blockage in me. He gave me his business card in case I was interested in working on it.[71] This offer of the mental coach, undoubtedly meant in a caring and benevolent way for

66 Field notes, July 24, 2019.

67 Thus, the rap song and video "Being visible" were shown during a morning impulse – as a prompt for thought and a statement and without extensive critical or moralizing discussion. See: Pinkstinks Germany: Sichtbar sein, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4KQLwtgycM, accessed February 2, 2021.

68 Cf. Mario Wodara, managing director of Gebäudeservice Wodara, at his impulse talk, February 2, 2020 at the conference "Klimapositiv! Konferenz für Unternehmen der Gemeinwohl-Ökonomie in Berlin-Brandenburg," Berlin, February 19/20, 2020.

69 Observations during my fieldwork at the ECG association Berlin-Brandenburg.

70 See https://web.ecogood.org/de/unsere-arbeit/privatpersonen/, accessed February 3, 2021.

71 Field note, July 23, 2021.

my personal development, corresponds to patriarchal power structures, so that seemed rather uninviting and hierarchical to me.

Such contradictions can also be traced in the work of the ECG association Berlin-Brandenburg. Some decisions, for example, on the institutionalization of the ECG movement or participation in the requested events urgently had to be made or were considered particularly relevant by some activists and took place without any prior grassroots vote.[72] The offer of an ECG activist to conduct a mindfulness meditation half an hour before the plenary session was also accepted very gladly and with great applause. However, the volunteers often did not have the time to arrive half an hour beforehand or were initially absorbed in conversation so that the offer "lay dormant." Additionally, while the 30-hour work week favored in the ECG matrix is introduced in some companies,[73] most committed activists do not adhere to it – not even the initiator Christian Felber himself. In this context, the need for public engagement in economic and political change collides with the time allocated in post-growth theories for housework, gardening and care work. However, even in ECG contexts, social recognition is more likely to be awarded for dedicated volunteer work than for leisure, gardening or claiming time wealth.

A culture of mutual connectedness as a new subject culture in the Economy for the Common Good ?

The concept of the ECG and its application in the form of the common good balance sheet creates the structural framework for the stronger incorporation of ecological, social, participatory and democratic guiding principles as alternative value standards in business enterprises and to favor value-oriented social (everyday) practices described as "post-capitalist" (Neckel 2018: 20). The group of common good-balanced companies, thus, generates a space in which alternative logics of action are affirmed and value-oriented patterns of belief are reinforced. On the one hand, this makes sociocratic and holocratic organizational models in companies plausible, up to and including the transfer of ownership rights to a foundation and the transfer of the company to responsible ownership, allowing them to spread more widely. On the other hand, alternative value concepts such as "meaning instead of profit," the appreciation of cooperative, solidary and ecological interaction, and empathetic togetherness can stabilize countercultural practices and change understandings of the self and the world. In this way, a subject model that is oriented towards alternative value standards and logics of action becomes

72 The plenary of the ECG association Berlin-Brandenburg only convenes once a month in a limited time frame so that grassroots democratic decision-making processes on all topics and events requested are difficult in terms of time.

73 Matthias Eigenbrodt, managing director of the dental practice Zahnarztpraxis am Kreuzberg, has decided for himself to limit his work time to 30 h/week and is very content with this decision despite the lower income. Cf. Interview with Matthias Eigenbrodt, January 30, 2020.

possible as a normative-ideal pattern of successful subjecthood and can be experienced as a new form of subject.

The examples presented here show the (partly also productive) contradictory nature of practices. Many of the companies that want to foster alternative forms of economy also use the common good balance sheet to become more visible as a group. The ECG serves as a cultural code for potential customers or employees,[74] which – thought of in terms of capitalist market logic – also promises a competitive edge. The use of company bicycles after the introduction of parking regulations also proves to be an economic advantage, which is why this transformation of everyday practices took place. However, the alternative values and cooperative behaviors in the ECG also lead to irritations of familiar patterns of habitus and lifestyle which can break open mental structures and facilitate alternative practices – as shown by the vegetarian food in the company canteen or the introduction of gender-equitable language at the ECG Summer Week.

It becomes clear how much social practices change depending on the social field, the participants and the corresponding role requirements, a phenomenon referred to in subjectivation theory as hybridity (Reckwitz 2006: 19). Nevertheless, the question arises as to which subject culture emerges as dominant and collectively shared at a certain time and in a specific place, and, thus, effectively "inscribes" itself in the body. So far, the Western unsustainable lifestyle reproduces itself because, as Brand and Welzer put it, the relations of domination and the imperial way of life are so deeply embedded in it and are hardly noticed (2019: 317). In order to initiate a change of path, positive examples are proposed in post-growth considerations and activist movements as entry projects (Brand and Welzer 2019: 326) and peninsulas against the tide (Habermann 2009), which can demonstrate a counterculture and question cultural hegemony so that a utopia appears as a sensible possibility. In it, Brand and Wissen write, different political rules, social self-evident truths and guiding principles are to apply in order to facilitate a way of life based on solidarity (2017: 169). By making these alternatives experienceable, they can make social change and self-transformation possible at a microlevel and, thus, contribute to the constitution of new subject forms.

The common good companies I have studied, with their values based on cooperation, social and global justice as well as ecological responsibility, and their participatory organizational structures, represent such entry projects. Despite the reference to a joint concept and the balancing on the base of a shared common good matrix, there are also criticisms of various kinds within the ECG, and these are certainly desirable for internal further development.[75] It is noted, for example, that trust work is also necessary in the

74 Cf. Scheffler and Lieber 2018: 103 as well as the interview with Christof Deinert, managing director of Märkisches Landbrot GmbH, June 12, 2020, and the interview with Stephan Lampel, head of sales of BKK ProVita, May 20, 2020.

75 In order not to be detrimental to the movement and the concept, when criticism is voiced, it usually starts with a reference to the large followership with the ECG balance sheet; cf. Gerull 2014: 8.

ECG, one should approach people instead of lecturing them, and there should be an interest in finding out "how they are doing or what they need."[76] It is also reported from the experience of various companies that not everyone in the company wants to take on responsibility,[77] participation can be difficult and does not always lead to the desired result,[78] and making salaries transparent can also be associated with difficulties. With a view to the Spiral Dynamics value development model (Beck and Cowan 1996), the ECG balance sheet is also criticized for the normatively prescribed values and the development path that is fixed as a result, which would allow little room for individual paths and an individual context. The clear specification in the ECG matrix of "right" or "wrong," thus, feels more like, as Gerull puts it, an ecological corset (2014: 9). The examples show that there is also a space for discussion within the ECG to initiate a development process that is taken up by the matrix development team or the active members of the ECG association.[79]

The ambivalences both within the ECG and in its contact with non-sustainable mental structures and value standards reveal the dynamics of negotiation for social recognition and appreciation of alternative values and self-understandings and, thus, for alternative subject forms. It remains to be seen to what extent an empathic subject connected to nature and people can assert itself as a cultural subject model of a future sustainable society or whether it will remain as a niche in developed market capitalism.

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76 Davide Brocchi, Initiative Tag des guten Lebens, panel discussion at the online conference on the topic of "Nachhaltige Transformation – Gute Arbeit – Neue Wirtschaftsdemokratie: Wie geht das zusammen?," January 15, 20201.

77 Nikolaus Förster, managing director of the Impulse Medien GmbH, at the ECG salon "Mitarbeiten – Mitentscheiden? – Gelebte Transparenz und Teilhabe in Organisationen," January 28, 2021. Cf. also the interview with Katharina Gerull, assistant to the management of the Ökofrost GmbH, May 26, 2020.

78 There is a report, for example, from one company in which the sofa to be purchased for the hallway and its color were discussed for three months and, in the end, a four-colored couch was chosen that no one really liked. Cf. Ole Langbein, managing director of the inoio GmbH, at the ECG salon, January 28, 20201.

79 On the work of the working group on matrix development, see https://web.ecogood.org/de/die-bewegung/akteurinnen-kreise/entwicklung-der-matrix/, accessed February 5, 2021.

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Resilience through leisure?

Ethnographic findings on an ambivalent relationship*

Abstract: Resilience has recently become an expansive concept in political, economic and scientific fields. The normative and ideological dimensions underlying this concept and the resulting cultural effects have hardly been the subject of empirically grounded research in cultural studies so far, although resilience discourses have long been materializing in everyday and living environments. Using the example of courses that promise actors a life with more leisure, this article asks how ideas of resilience are communicated, made plausible and critically negotiated in this specific field. To what extent is the increased attractiveness of the concept of leisure as a specific form of the qualification of temporal experience related to ideas of a resilient self? How are ideas of a fundamentally deficient self in need of optimization expressed here, and what kind of solutions are being sought for which social problems? The article assumes that both the concept of leisure and that of resilience cocreate, on a discursive level, the problems, challenges and crises to which they respond.

Keywords: resilience, self-optimization, leisure, work-life balance, body concepts, mindfulness, blurring boundaries of work

A man jogs across a zebra crossing. We see him in his living room at home, with his wife and children at the breakfast table. A woman is trimming a plant in the garden with a chainsaw, another woman can be seen at a dance class. Someone is barbecuing, another person is at soccer practice. So far, these are very familiar situations. However, all those portrayed have one thing in common: their everyday life is depicted as disturbed. They are each wearing a desk around their hips, are fused with it, which results in all kinds of turbulence. A vase crashes against the desk, a football bangs against a head, a desk gets caught in the front door. The otherwise romantic scene of a couple on a park bench is seriously disrupted because the attached desk creates a bizarre distance, and the partner has to stretch out her hand a long way in order to create at least a little physical closeness across the desk.

This scene picks up on omnipresent lifeworld experiences that interdisciplinary work culture research has problematized with the keyword of *Entgrenzung*, the dissolution of boundaries (Gottschall and Voß 2003; Herlyn et al. 2009; Schönberger 2003;

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Schönberger and Springer 2003). It originates from a prevention campaign by the Swiss Insurance Association SVV.[1] A tremendously funny video joins all these scenes. With background music that prepares for slapstick, the main protagonist introduces himself in the video. He states that he has an important job. But he immediately qualifies it as "pretty important, more or less." Nothing works without him, so work is always with him. While he tapes his laptop to the mobile desk, he comments from the background that it is important to separate business and leisure. The cleverly made film takes up the motto "leisure is better without an office" in an extremely humorous way. Leisure time, it states, is increasingly work. And this is highly detrimental to our health.

The campaign works so well not only because it humorously draws attention to what is interpreted as a serious social problem. It also works because it picks up on a lifeworld experience in which predominantly medium and highly qualified people, first of all, increasingly interpret themselves as a project of their self (Glauser 2016) and in which, secondly, the problematized dissolution of work boundaries is becoming more and more effective. While the insurance association frames this dissolution of boundaries as a health risk, scientific analyses go many steps further. The corresponding social diagnoses (including Bude 2018; Han 2012; Illouz 2009) point to inescapable human arts of governance that transform us – as the sociologist Ulrich Bröckling (2016) has elaborated from the perspective of discourse analysis and governmental theory – into an entrepreneurial self, and which are inescapable because they have inscribed themselves deeply and mostly unreflectedly into our interpretations of self and world.

Against this backdrop, the insurance association evokes an extremely powerful concept that has been receiving enormous popularity in science and society in recent years – that of resilience. Admittedly, the insurance association's campaign does not explicitly use the term resilience. It is more about the health effects of the dissolution of boundaries of work with the aim of reducing possible costs for the treatment of resulting illnesses. However, one can argue that the underlying ideology of the campaign is based on ideas that are most closely associated with the concept of resilience. The campaign does not address the actors who could change political governance mechanisms and ensure a balance between work and leisure time. Instead, it addresses the resilience of individuals who have to deal with the challenges of the boundless world of work and are supposed to become resilient. The advertising campaign paints a powerful picture that, as the sociologist Stefanie Graefe puts it, negotiates resilience as a new ideal of personality and lifestyle (2019: 9). This image is powerful above all, because, out of a multitude of possible courses of action, such as reducing working hours or becoming involved in trade unions, it privileges a single one that focuses on the personality and lifestyle of the subject. The film is not just about a better balance between leisure and work: it is about motivating the individual to mobilize his or her own (defensive) powers

1 Prevention campaign of the Swiss Insurance Association (https://ausschalten-auftanken.ch/filme; accessed February 18, 2020).

or develop them in order to cope with various challenges better. Responsibility is, thus, situated in the respective acting subject, while, at the same time, there is no longer any question about the social conditions that cause the challenges in question in the first place – for example, the experience of the dissolution of boundaries or overload in the world of work. In this reading, resilience is downright reactionary, in that the existing social conditions (and, thus, always positions of power) are codified and perpetuated. It is about adaptation and not change.

Something similar can also be observed for a rapidly growing leisure industry, which the following article aims to examine from a micro-perspective. To a certain extent, this industry picks up on the social need for a better work-life balance noted by the Swiss Insurance Association and markets it cleverly. The empirical basis of the following contribution is provided by a cultural studies subproject conducted within the framework of the Freiburg Collaborative Research Centre 1015: "Otium. Boundaries, Chronotopes, Practices," which uses an ethnographic approach to examine various course offers that promise to restore the subjects' fitness for the challenges of the present by taking recourse to the concept of leisure.[2] The courses that were ethnographically studied took place in very different settings: from time-out in a monastery to courses on so-called forest bathing to mindfulness courses. Not all courses operated with the German term *Muße*, which evokes connotations of complete freedom from obligations and objectives, but all of them referred to the concept by wanting to generate self-determined action and a freedom from constraints that were supposed to lead to freedom for the self-purposeful use of temporal resources. In doing so, they all articulated a specific diagnosis of self and society in which ideas of resilience were always called upon. The connection between leisure and resilience is by no means obvious at first glance: leisure is the historically ever-changing qualification of a temporal experience. According to the definition proposed by the Freiburg CRC Otium, this is characterized by the fact that it enables experiences of freedom, allowing for self-determined action. If, on the other hand, it is used instrumentally, as in the courses mentioned above, it can become – whether intentionally or rather incidentally – a vehicle for conveying ideas of resilience. One could even argue that while the courses teach us how to have more leisure in our everyday lives, they also popularize notions of resilience. The courses promise, for instance, that one can learn to experience leisure in one's free time or even during work, but, at the same time, they convey that such perceived leisure can strengthen one's power of resistance in order to deal better with stress and all kinds of

2 Funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) – project number 197396619 – SFB 1015. The empirical research that forms the basis of this article was conducted by Inga Wilke M.A. The research project, excerpts of which are used for the analysis below, was not explicitly aimed at questions of research on resilience. Nevertheless, the question of the levels of meaning and ideologies associated with the concept of resilience proved to be indispensable in the course of the ethnographic research process because the concept and the ideas behind it were repeatedly and prominently articulated in the interviews.

everyday challenges. Simultaneously, such courses rarely and never radically criticize the causes that lead people to seek more leisure in everyday life in the first place. The leisure marketed and conveyed in the courses is understood as a suitable instrument or therapeutic agent; but ultimately, as with resilience, it is also about adaptation and not about a fundamental change (e.g. of working conditions). The idea that is popularized here is that leisure can only be achieved through corresponding work on the self. It is about adapting one's own lifestyle, which is supposed to lead to more leisure, and less about the question of why experiences of leisure are prevented these days. Indeed, one has to ask whether the diagnosis that we have largely forgotten how to experience or practice leisure is correct. Do people today no longer have leisure? In any case, this diagnosis seems to make leisure an attractive commodity. Leisure is also attractive because it articulates the promise of experiencing freedom. This distinguishes it structurally from resilience, which means less freedom for the actors than the continued good functioning of the subject against the backdrop of assumed crises. By contrast, it is difficult to imagine that courses could be marketed similarly well if they were to operate explicitly with the concept of resilience.

At first glance, leisure is a seemingly harmless matter. It is linked conceptually to the use of time by elites; it carries with it the ballast of the educated bourgeoisie insofar as in the history of the term, certain social groups were denied the right to leisure (Gimmel and Keiling 2016; Hasebrink and Riedl 2014; Soeffner 2014: 34). Leisure, however, is an immensely political topic (Dobler and Riedl 2017), as the concept of leisure is currently being used to negotiate fundamental social questions that also appear in political discourses (e.g. in current debates about the universal basic income). Arguing following Bourdieu, one could say that leisure has also been used to legitimize the time regimes of the elites. Historically, and continuing into the present, certain social groups have been explicitly excluded from experiences of leisure. This does not mean that these groups did not have these experiences, but rather that they were denied them on a discursive or programmatic level (e.g. in ancient Greece, where the slaves were not supposed to have leisure).

The following contribution asks about specifically situated understandings of resilience – and it does so on two levels: On the one hand, it asks how ideas of resilience are conveyed in the context of the ethnographically studied courses, and how they are also critically reflected upon. On the other hand, it works out from a cultural studies perspective how course participants themselves articulate ideas of resilience and negotiate them critically and autonomously. The aim is to show how leisure is used in an equally goal-oriented way to create a resilient self. So, what role do notions of resilience play for actors in this field? The article proposes that the goals of personality development and lifestyle associated with the concept of resilience are not conveyed unquestioningly or uncritically, at least in the field studied here, but that social actors also engage with them in a critical manner. It, thus, expands the scientific diagnoses on the concept of resilience that are oriented at discourse analysis by including an ethnographic and cultural studies perspective.

Resilience as an object of cultural and social studies

Social science literature has deconstructed the concept of resilience as a powerful instrument of control based on discourse analysis and governmental theory considerations (Bröckling 2017: 113; Hall and Lamont 2013). Following Ulrich Bröckling's work, the sociologist Stefanie Graefe, for example, also assumes that resilience is, on the one hand, a buzzword and, on the other hand, a key concept of the present. In her words, it is, thus, a figure of thought which – under certain circumstances even where there is no explicit mention of resilience (yet) – influences established perceptions of reality, problem-solving models, and instructions for managing oneself and others and suggests their revision. She emphasizes that resilience as a *transformative* paradigm not only prepares us for a present that is uncertain, inscrutable and, therefore, also threatening in principle, but also provides us with the means to cope with this situation (Graefe 2019: 21). This can also be applied to the subject of this article: there is no mention of resilience in the courses, yet they diagnose a crisis-ridden present in which experiences of leisure are hardly or no longer possible. Figuratively speaking, they popularize ideas of resilience, *inter alia*, because leisure is supposed to help in dealing with the challenges of the present. Experiences of leisure are supposed to make subjects more resilient.

The criticism here is obvious (Neocleous 2013): the concept of resilience argues with crises and social, ecological or other challenges which it simultaneously generates, at least on a discursive level. When orders are destabilized and this is subsequently interpreted as a crisis in social discourse (through the so-called financial crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, etc.), the calls for increasing the resilience of systems or individual actors become louder. In this respect, crises catalyze, accelerate or intensify discourses of resilience. Since one can obviously argue very plausibly for the necessity of resilience in such social contexts, calls for resilience confirm diagnoses of crises. From a social constructivist point of view, it can be argued that resilience produces diagnoses of crises on a discursive level. When applied in this way, the question is whether social reality is actually as crisis-ridden as it is interpreted in, for example, political (one example would be the so-called refugee crisis) or economic (the so-called financial crisis) discourse. This in no way denies that people perceive the present as crisis-like. But how – and this is an important scientific question – do diagnoses of crises originate in the first place? To what extent and for which actors is the diagnosis of a crisis also a powerful resource? Who benefits – economically, politically or socially – when certain social developments are perceived as crises?

The course offers discussed below also demonstrate the assumption that crises are not simply a given, but a discursive attribution: they diagnose a crisis of the self that can no longer cope with the challenges of the present and needs more leisure. This makes the demand for a resilient self plausible. Those who have more leisure in everyday life (e.g. mindfulness), it is assumed, can cope better with the demands of life. If, in this context, no sustainable solutions are sought to change these demands themselves, but only the individual way of dealing with them, then one must certainly ask whether the leisure conveyed in this way can be an adequate answer to the problems identified.

The concept of resilience inscribes responsibility in the subjects without consistently questioning the structures that make resilience appear necessary in the first place; the talk of resilience or the demand for a resilient self, therefore, powerfully stabilizes orders that can be characterized as neoliberal and address a new understanding of the subject – namely, one that differs from a preventive self by thinking of it in an even more radical and comprehensive way. As Bröckling puts it: resilience promotion can be understood both as a variant of and an alternative to preventive action. It is less negativistic and instead more defensive: if prevention should make negative futures more likely, resilience promotion should make it more likely that the feared negative futures will not turn out to be even more negative (2017: 115). If, for example, the leisure courses are to provide a remedy for experiences of overload and stress, then these experiences will by no means dissolve in the future; according to Bröckling, their effects will merely become less negative.

Resilience, similar to prevention, is always oriented towards the future. Following Bröckling, it is normative insofar as it privileges specific ideas of the future and, simultaneously, excludes others. In relation to the courses analyzed here, this means that a vision of the future is conveyed in which the course participants can cope better with the challenges of the world of work. It is precisely not a future in which actors are to be empowered to defend themselves against the structures that are interpreted as challenging by other (e.g. political) means.

Research in cultural studies has so far rarely engaged with the concept of resilience, although it would be reasonable to ask exactly how ideas of resilience take specific effect in everyday life: how does the concept change perceptions of reality or specific everyday action? How are instructions on how to manage oneself and others implemented – how does a resilient self emerge that does not appear as a social or cultural figure but as an actor who is differentiated (according to classic categories of difference, such as age, gender or class, and with individual biographical and lifeworld experiences), and who considers resilience relevant for themselves in specific lifeworld contexts? Briefly: what impact does the concept have on the way we organize our everyday lives – work, leisure, love, consumption, etc. – as well as on our interpretation of ourselves and the world?

Using the example of dealing with the consequences of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, the US folklorist and cultural studies scholar Dorothy Noyes has critically discussed resilience as a "slogan-concept" (2016: 413). She emphasizes that concepts such as resilience draw attention to themselves and distract from structural problems: "As the symptoms are treated, the disease is ignored or naturalized, such that the attendant suffering is just how things are. Slogan-concepts propose solutions for problems that have not been examined" (Noyes 2016: 413).

The concepts would continue to discipline behavior and rally supporters behind them who sometimes passionately advocated for them. Ulrich Bröckling (2017) has problematized these supporters with the figure of the resilient self, certainly thought of as an ideal type. This self also emerges in a central way in scholarly research. Psychological research on mindfulness, for example, which could be characterized as a paradigmatic field in the discussion of resilience, also constructs specific images of the human condition with the resilient self. According to Bröckling, a subject is called upon here that is a virtuoso manager of emotions and cognition. Only one thing, he writes, obviously did not occur to this subject: to resist what he has learned to endure and to override what he manages so sovereignly (Bröckling 2017: 136). Bröckling rightly concludes that one must see this as a strategy of depoliticization (2017: 137).

Other perspectives that are not oriented toward cultural or social studies are based on images of human beings that conceive of people as malleable and situate them in orders that are not critically questioned. But who exactly are resilience concepts aimed at? Bröckling writes that those who can be reached by the invocations of the resilient self are those who already fear the incalculable, disruptive and catastrophic futures for which they are supposed to prepare themselves, and that the affective resonance takes place less through argumentative plausibilization than through the unquestioning evidence of impressive images and stories (2017: 137). Participants in leisure courses, on the other hand, are less afraid of catastrophes or disruption; they have identified deficits in their own everyday worlds and, with the hope of more leisure and a form of time use that is staged and imagined as meaningful, are looking for a new attitude toward themselves or their world of work. Ideas are articulated here that are characteristic of the concept of resilience, as all the actors we interviewed are concerned with increasing their own powers of resistance.

The diagnosis of the self in the narrative interviews always includes a diagnosis of society. The interviewees, for example, consistently describe that a central motivation for taking part in the course was to achieve a better balance (e.g. between work and leisure) in their lives. They diagnose their own lives as unbalanced, sometimes deficient, which they ascribe, *inter alia*, to their attitude to their own bodies. At the same time, however, they also reflect on the social circumstances that lead to the diagnosis of an individual, lifeworld crisis.

Leisure as an analytical concept or an object?

Similar to resilience, the qualification of temporal experience that could be characterized as leisure seems to be gaining in attractiveness nowadays – at least in the countries of the Global North and for specific social and socioeconomic milieus. In any case, the courses examined here describe leisure as an attractive state and, thus, simultaneously convey goals that the term resilience also focuses on. Analogous to resilience, leisure courses look into the future. They promise a better way of coping with the challenging conditions of the present through a changed lifestyle – a more leisurely life. Leisure here is not a passive state that one simply enters in certain contexts, for instance, when going for a walk or during routinised activities; instead, it is described as a state that one can also achieve through appropriate work on the self with the corresponding tools (e.g. relaxation techniques, such as the so-called Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction). Similar to resilience, leisure in this field also requires permanent work on the self.

The fact that leisure has (re-)gained attractiveness is evident in very different fields, all of which have in common that leisure is not an end in itself but is linked to specific goals, just like resilience: In the context of gainful employment, companies set up spaces for employees to relax – but here, one could critically object, relaxation is not always the primary goal since the aim is to increase the attractiveness of the employer or the performance of the employees; it is not only trade unions that are increasingly discussing shorter working hours in terms of a work-life balance. Popular media, such as magazines and blogs, address the accelerated experience of time and contrast it with deceleration or leisure. In addition, an expansion of coaching and leisure offers can be observed which aim to help people find themselves through mindfulness training and other formats. In all of the areas mentioned above, the seemingly growing need for free and meaningful time is taken up, which goes hand in hand with the feeling of alienation through gainful employment and a continuously growing pressure to perform.

In the present, for example, the sociologist Hans Georg Soeffner points out that it is significant that in contemporary advice literature, the feeling of having lost something peculiar and, at the same time, important is expressed with the call to find this something again – to, as he emphasizes, *seek* leisure (2014: 36). The leisure that Soeffner describes here is highly purposeful. This is also related to the fact that it becomes a marketable commodity in corresponding course offers in which experiences of leisure are imparted, and sold with the promise of a successful life. In order to awaken the need for leisure in the first place, it is often linked in this context with a narrative of alienation, which Soeffner also points out: his narrative assumes that in a past that is not further specified, people would have led a more leisure-filled life. Historically, this is pure fiction and imagination, however, it leads to the present being perceived as even more deficient. At the same time, this narrative levels social differences because neither does the ideal-typical past that is invoked here exist, nor, as outlined briefly at the beginning, did all people have leisure in equal measure.

Leisure, on the other hand, is – when it is staged in this way – a well-functioning sales argument. Soeffner, who borrows from Adorno's critique of the culture industry, assumes for certain fields that are organized in the form of the market that leisure may be promised, however, it then cannot actually materialize. He, thus, distinguishes a highly instrumental and by no means purpose-free form of what he calls a health insurance and wellness center leisure (Soeffner 2014: 40) from a 'genuine,' purpose-free form of leisure, which, as mentioned above, is described by the German word *Muße*. The latter is characterized by autonomous, temporal-free spaces in which routine everyday and work processes are also stopped, making synesthetic and, above all, purpose-free experience possible.

From the point of view of cultural studies, leisure is, first and foremost, an interpretation. It qualifies temporal experience, interprets it as positive and distinguishes it from, for example, laziness or negatively interpreted boredom. In cultural studies, leisure is not an analytical concept but an object of research. More radically, one could even say that leisure does not exist in a social constructivist perspective. What is of interest for cultural studies is rather in which historical and cultural spaces has leisure been interpreted in which way, who invokes leisure and for what reasons (today, quite intensively, for example, in debates about a universal basic income), when and why leisure becomes socially relevant, and how leisure is produced in the first place through physical and discursive practices.

The Collaborative Research Centre 1015 attempts to define leisure conceptually: it conceives of leisure, for example, as a paradoxical relation of intentional purposelessness or productive unproductivity. Leisure is defined here, as Gimmel and Keiling put it, as a self-determined and self-realizing activity (2016: 52), which is characterized by negative and positive freedom. In their words, leisure offers human freedom the opportunity to realize itself, and practices of leisure are ultimately forms of the realization of freedom (Gimmel and Keiling 2016: 61). If one understands leisure in this way, then it seems obvious to interpret it as a characteristic of being human. In this ideal form, it is not oriented towards pure unproductivity; it acquires its form by putting productivity and unproductivity, activity and inactivity into a certain relationship. What needs to be emphasized here, however, is that this ideal form has been renegotiated and sometimes differently defined again and again in cultural history, and that leisure has also been ascribed different functions. In the context of the courses discussed here, it can indeed be understood as a counterreaction to the performance imperatives of the present. In any case, on a discursive level, the connection with performance requirements is repeatedly established. However, the connection is quite paradoxical. The historian Nina Verheyen, for example, explains the success of leisure guides by saying that they simultaneously serve the interests of performance critics and performance advocates (2018: 9).

The Collaborative Research Centre 1015 assumes that leisure is characterized particularly by its transgressive potential. Experiences of leisure, it postulates, enable people to think critically about themselves and their environment. This reflection, in turn, has the potential to change social conditions based on experiences of leisure. This transgressive potential is also expressed in the following analysis of the empirical material from the leisure courses. In this context, I am interested in asking how resilience is critically thought about in the context of leisure.

Leisure and resilience – discursivities and reflexive potential

A frequently articulated interpretation in the courses which we studied ethnographically is the letting go of everyday constraints.[3] This letting go is described by 58-year-old Simone,[4] who enrolled in a course in a monastery, as extremely attractive. It was precisely this pattern of action that she all too often misses in everyday life: "I simply can never just let it be,"[5] she says in the interview, expressing a deficit situated in her own self that she does not attribute to external structures or constraints. Simone works in the administration of an outpatient care service and has already tried out various courses – partly due to the overload she experiences there. Simone sees herself as a perfectionist. She derives a need for learning from her own experiences: "I should do even more, learn even more techniques." "I haven't gotten that far yet,"[6] argues another participant of the course entitled "Bringing balance to the inner self."

Not being ready yet, doing more, learning more techniques – these interpretations initially point to an identified need for learning. However, if we contextualize this with the reasons why people take part in the courses, much more comprehensive logics of optimization (Mayer and Thompson 2013) become apparent. It is usually not just about learning relaxation or mindfulness techniques, but about an optimized way of life overall.[7] In doing so, the demands of the meritocratic society are not fundamentally questioned, for example, by challenging alternative logics of action, as Stefan Groth (2020) has done in his work on the orientation toward mediocrity. Instead of attending courses, it would be conceivable to campaign for better working conditions; instead, the need for action is identified in changing one's lifestyle in such a way that one is better adapted to the structures criticized and, thus, becoming resilient.

3 Cf. also Tauschek and Wilke 2021. Some of the empirical material used for analysis here has already been used in this contribution, however, not with a focus on questions of resilience but on questions of work on the self and self-optimization.

4 Names and course titles have been pseudonymized. When pseudonymizing the course titles, care was taken to retain the mostly metaphorical content as far as possible.

5 Direct quotations from the interviews have been translated from German. Interview conducted October 11, 2017.

6 Interview conducted November 2, 2017.

7 In the field presented here, self-interpretations that motivate the desire for resilience in the lifeworld meet the imperative to work on oneself conveyed in the courses. Here, the courses can be placed in the broader field of a society of counselling and therapy as described by the social sciences (cf. Maasen 2011; Rose 1991, 1998).

The relationship between work and everyday constraints and personal freedom is articulated reflexively in all the interviews we conducted. Simone, who has already been quoted above, expresses this in an exemplary way:

> I now try to not be so fixated on work. In the seminar announcement it also said that we are very performance-oriented, right, in today's society anyway, and I include myself in that, for me, it's a lot about performance, I want to perform, I don't necessarily have to any more, but when the children were small, they don't ask you if you want to do something or not, or whether you felt like it or not, the children were there and things have to be done and sometimes I feel that I got out of the habit at some stage to ask myself whether I wanted to do something or not because I had to do it anyway. But now I'm in a completely different situation in life and I could turn it around a bit, but it's hard, I find it hard.[8]

What seems significant in these remarks is initially the biographical classification. Simone sees herself in a "completely different situation in life," which she also narratively conceives of as a turning point: Her children have moved out and started their own families. This turning point is characterized in her interpretation by a new understanding of the subject: While she interprets her life so far as thoroughly shaped by structures in which she imagines herself as a puppet ("they don't ask you if you want to do something or not"), the course offers her the opportunity to regain her own agency. What is relevant here is not only the embedding in traditionalized gender roles, but also the reflexive evaluation of the turning point, which is interpreted as a challenge. From a narrative-analytical perspective, it is certainly no coincidence that the initially depersonalized interpretation "but it's hard" is emphasized by the phrase "I find it hard," which more strongly underscores agency.

Agency is – admittedly on a completely different level – a central promise on the part of the providers. As a guiding concept, all of the providers we have studied so far claim that participants "carry the solutions within them," which can then be worked out in the course. It is precisely here that ideas of resilience are articulated which are then – as in the quote above – combined with specific lifeworld experiences.

The goal of providing course participants with solutions, on the other hand, is critically reflected in all the courses we dealt with ethnographically. Sandra, for example, a 50-year-old provider, Buddhist meditation teacher and author of a "leisure" guidebook, addresses the fundamental ambivalence of the course offers by referring to the danger of a "meditation and mindfulness performance behavior," i. e. the goal-oriented instrumentalization of mindfulness.[9] She interprets the appropriation of these techniques for self-management and self-optimization as a latent danger that always looms over the practice. Norbert, who is a pastor and offers courses on leisure and serenity, argues in a similar way by drawing attention to the structural social challenges:

8 Interview conducted October 11, 2017.

9 Interview conducted October 1, 2017.

> The danger is always that we, to put it bluntly, stabilize this system through our offers and whether it would not be more consistent, yes, not to engage with these levels. At the beginning, in the first announcement, we still very much tried to fit into the language use of this personal development course, and then I said: 'I have the impression that we need to do this radically differently.' And then this 'let it go' came out, where it is really about entering into a different attitude towards life. If I have the impression now, and I don't have it at this seminar, not from the participants and not from the way it went, that we are just serving a system here, so to speak, and giving it a bit more of a human face or sprinkling in some humanitarian things, sprinkling in some values or something, I don't want that.[10]

In his interpretation, Norbert explicitly recognizes that leisure fundamentally bears the potential of being appropriated for certain goals. If Norbert does not want to stabilize the system through his understanding of leisure and its mediation, this also contains a critique of society when he refers to a 'system' against which one can position oneself. He contrasts this with a specific understanding of leisure that is characterized by ideas of a successful life, of a – as he puts it – "different attitude towards life," which he characterizes in the same interview as a rejection of the imperative of constant self-optimization. It was not necessary to always function perfectly and chase after some ideals. At the same time, he distances himself from all the offers that, in his interpretation, use leisure merely as a distinguishing façade behind which powerful ideologies operate. This shows how ambivalent leisure is in the field we are studying. It is discussed reflexively and evaluated critically in its potential for ideologization and instrumentalization. This critical evaluation then manifests ideas of leisure that are understood and imagined as a real counter-model to the challenges of the present.

Based on the empirical findings outlined here as examples, it can be summarized that the actors we interviewed often conceive of themselves as deficient – in all the interviews, for instance, the feeling was articulated that they could not (or no longer) get through everyday life well, could no longer cope with the time compression or did not have enough tools at hand to relax better or faster. The courses sometimes cater to this feeling through their titles alone: if a course advertises "Let it be for once," then the deficit is already pointedly considered. Here, too, references can be made to resilience, which also – at least implicitly – sees subjects as deficient, otherwise they would not have to become (more) resilient in order to cope better with crisis-prone constellations.

It is telling that all our interview partners are between 40 and 60 years old and belong to the middle of society. The biographical findings are particularly revealing for the connection with resilience. It seems that in our field, thinking about strengthening one's potential, the desire to activate one's own powers of resistance, to take up a prominent term in the discourse on resilience, is stimulated mainly by the fact that one's own biographical situation (usually with the completion of starting a family and

10 Interview conducted September 17, 2017.

often also facing the start of retirement) prompted reflection and repositioning. The courses seemed to articulate promises here that were interpreted as valuable in this biographical phase. This raises questions that are beneficial for further research on resilience. After all, the discourse on resilience is also constituted in specific lifeworld and biographical contexts. What role, or example, do classic categories of difference, such as age or gender, play in the discussion of resilience or regarding specific understandings of resilience? What is the significance of biographical experiences, for example, those of overload in gainful employment?

The leisureful body as a project

The central object of change is one's own body, the thematization of which also articulates ideas of resilience. In the context of the courses we studied, the body is understood as a "project" in the sense of the sociologist Chris Shilling (1993), which can be shaped and formatted in a targeted way. In doing so, leisure is the target variable that is to be achieved not only through mental, cognitive work, but also particularly through specific body practices that ultimately also promise a different attitude towards the self and the world.

The anthropology of the body is largely in agreement with the sociology of the body in that the body in empirical research only becomes tangible in its representations: as a diagram in which, for example, blood pressure or cholesterol levels are recorded in translated abstractions, or as a narrativized and, thus, always reflexively turned self-image when people talk about bodily states and bodily experience. The strength of empirical research lies precisely in the fact that the body is not taken as a given, but instead, following the sociologists Bryan Turner (1996) or Sue Scott and David Morgan (1993), as the result and site of cultural and social processes. The historian Philipp Sarasin (1991) and the sociologist Gabriele Klein (2010) have also pointed out that historical processes and historical experiences are always inscribed in our individual bodies. This applies to certain postures and techniques, such as sitting or walking, and to discursivized concepts of the body. At the same time, recent studies have underlined that body knowledge also eludes reflexive attention (Keller and Meuser 2011: 10). Keller and Meuser argue that bodies function as independent carriers of knowledge that cannot be translated into cognitive processes (2011: 10). They rightly assume that the knowledge about the body is in a complex relationship to knowledge of the body. As an example, they cite the knowledge of a male body conveyed through socialization and enculturation, which they say could ultimately become incorporated into the habitus and, thus, become knowledge of the body. This perspective is also fruitful for an analysis of leisure courses, because it implies important research questions. Which bodies are up for consideration in each case? How is the body conceived of and interpreted? Is there only one imagined, almost deculturalized, at the center or are there differentiations?

One of the basic conditions of the courses is that physical experiences and the body in general are given central importance, both conceptually and practically. The providers see the body as the first place where stress and overload show themselves, which is why the courses should also take it as their starting point. The background of the courses is formed by ideas of the accelerated and rushed body, which, as Alain Ehrenberg (2004) puts it, is all too often overstrained and simultaneously forgotten in the 21st century performance society. Here, too, ideas of crisis are expressed and, vice versa, ideas of an ideal way of dealing with the body, which would be perceived more strongly without these situations of crisis and whose needs could then be responded to adequately. All the providers that we accompanied in our ethnography create the image of a better past that was not understood as being in crisis, in which people did not live so alienated from nature and, above all, from their own bodies; here, ideas of a 'natural' and, as it were, anthropological body are activated. Frank, who provides a meditation retreat lasting several days, sums it up like this: "[…] how it used to be, where people lived more in harmony with nature. In our time, with all these media and faster and faster and emails, and if you haven't replied two hours later, some already get restless, […] so this constant acceleration results in us rushing through life and not really being able to live and enjoy life at all anymore."[11]

This interview passage is an example of ideas of a body that is understood as destabilized and in crisis. The interpretations that are articulated here paint a picture of an idealized, supposedly natural past in which temporal orders are still interpreted as humane. A "real" life, as the interview partner himself puts it, is characterized by enjoyment and temporal freedom. Frank's diagnosis of life and society confirms Hartmut Rosa's (2016) sociologically attested acceleration of our everyday lives. At the same time, this interview passage can be related to discourses of resilience. Frank assumes a state of equilibrium in an imagined and idealized past in which resilience is not needed; it only becomes necessary because of the destabilization of this assumed ideal state.

The idea of body oblivion through constant hectic and increasing acceleration is a core element of this diagnosis of the present which the providers articulate and transfer to the respective course. From a cultural studies point of view, one could object that this is, of course, an extremely powerful positing that sees the actors as largely powerless subjects in overpowering and inescapable structures. The concept of the accelerated body, thus, focuses on the sociocultural and particularly the economic structures, whose negative bodily effects are seen to be reflected on an individual level in the 'problematic' body.

In many cases, the participants describe precisely such experiences of a body that is perceived as problematic because it is not without friction, a body that is simultaneously broken down into individual components and specific individual practices, all of

11 Interview conducted October 23, 2017.

which have a high degree of cultural-historical significance. The course participants we interviewed feel uncomfortable, they walk around "really very tense," especially around the stomach, the body is described as reacting to stress and causing pain, the "nervous system is a bit dented." These are experiences in which the equally dissected body becomes the focus of perception because it causes problems and is not functioning properly.

In this perspective, the everyday body that is inextricably entangled in acceleration is not a body of leisure, it is a body in need of care and learning, permeated by experiences of the dissolution of boundaries. The deficient self constructed in this way has to practice making contact with its own body again – this is how the actors see it. The goal here is to learn to understand the body – here, ideas of the human being as a deficient being are also called upon – and ultimately to regain agency and control over it.

Frank summarizes this paradigmatically, aligning scientific arguments and scientific knowledge:

> Our body is what is also called the somatic marker in psychology. So, when stress starts to accumulate, we actually feel it in our body much earlier than we might notice it in our head. And when we are more in touch with the body, we can also react much faster to it or take care of ourselves than if we don't feel ourselves at all, so to speak, and just somehow continue to function until we collapse or something.[12]

From this positing, which clearly privileges the body's knowledge and conceives of the body itself as having agency, follows two strategies that are pursued in parallel in the course and which can be grasped, speaking with Keller and Meuser (2011), as knowledge about the body and knowledge of the body. By conveying and acquiring knowledge about the body, providers and participants want to make bodily experiences explainable and, thus, manageable. Accordingly, the body is almost intellectualized in some statements. Fifty-year-old Beate, for example, who wants to learn how to take better care of herself because of a heart condition, paints a drastic picture: "And that's why it's so important to reduce this hectic pace or this whole firing of these survival hormones during leisure time, so that it can calm down, so that the brain can learn to think like a network again and only then can new ideas or, yes, regeneration take place in this calm phase, where no survival strategy has to be necessary."[13]

The terms chosen by Beate clearly refer to ideas of resilience, in that she understands the environment, which can only be mastered with a continuous "survival strategy," as crisis-ridden and unstable. In her interpretation, leisure and resilience are, as it were, two poles: leisure promises free space beyond the everyday, time-accelerated challenges; resilience, which I recognize in my interpretation in the term "survival strategy," in turn, secures the functioning in everyday life. Beate's interpretation is due to her professional background – she works in a hospital emergency team and is often

12 Interview conducted October 23, 2017.

13 Interview conducted October 26, 2017.

exposed to stressful situations there. In this passage, the interviewee separates her cognitive ability (the brain should "learn to think like a network again") from physical processes. This is precisely the differentiation that Keller and Meuser assume (2011). Beate herself articulates knowledge about the body and equally describes it as an independent actor that is difficult to control; which, for example, "fires off" survival hormones in an uncontrolled manner and, thus, reacts to social circumstances. She also describes the brain in such a detached way, as if it were detached from her self. This interpretation is based on the working conditions in the hospital, which are perceived as overload, yet Beate does not think about changing them, at least not in this interview passage. The solution here seems to be learning leisure through the activation of body knowledge, as research partner Sandra puts it: "Well, I am firmly convinced and can also say this based on my own experience that we can learn leisure. And that there are also really good ways to learn leisure, and that the best way that I know of is actually through a consciousness or mindfulness practice."[14]

For her, one element of this mindfulness practice is the nonjudgmental getting in touch with the body in the present moment. A reflective introspection, guided by the question "How does my body feel right now?" Frank adds: "The body is, of course, a good possibility for this because it is always in the here and now, it is neither in the future nor in the past, but always here. And that's why it is such a good landing place, where we can always reconnect with life as it is happening."[15]

It is particularly this last metaphorically charged quotation that picks up on a separation into body and mind that has long been mediated in cultural-historical contexts. The aspect of temporality is also clearly addressed here. While the mind is seen to reflect the past and the future, the body – and this is positively marked as the state to be achieved – is radically and exclusively in the immediate present. As an anchor of perception, the body is perceived as always present, always current, and, thus, makes it possible to experience the moment itself.

As a theoretical-conceptual basis of the courses, various concepts of the body are activated and integrated into a coherent narrative by providers and participants: the accelerated body, just like the call to permanently adapt it to the accelerated performance society, becomes a problem and, thus, in need of learning and care. The providers question their courses in a system-critical way, but they, just like the participants, consistently assume a deficient body, while the latter state that the deficits are also reflected in an individual feeling of suffering. Both groups of actors focus on the social circumstances that produce these deficits in the first place.

Countermeasures, as taught in the course, start with the body, i. e. make it the medium, and are simultaneously intended to have an effect on it. The aim of the courses is to no longer ignore or forget the body but rather to make it the focus of attention.

14 Interview conducted October 1, 2017.

15 Interview conducted October 23, 2017.

The body is to be better perceived, understood and taken seriously in its needs through a combination of acquired knowledge about the body and activated knowledge of the body. This is precisely where the social system is not criticized. The symptoms are treated but not their cause. The aim of the leisure courses is to facilitate freedom from acceleration, hectic pace and body oblivion and to offer freedom to relax and get in touch with the body. This experience of leisure time as a possibility to feel the body again goes hand in hand with the possibility of getting to know the body as an instrument for leisure experiences and 'training' it so that the experiences gained in the course can potentially be transferred to everyday life.

Conclusion: Leisure without/through/with resilience?

At first glance, the empirical findings briefly outlined here confirm discourse-analytical research on the entrepreneurial self and the concept of resilience: neither the courses nor the participating actors escape the idea that something must be held up against the present that is experienced as crisis-ridden by making the subjects and especially their own bodies fit and resilient again for the conditions that are perceived as challenges. First of all, this characterizes the subjects and their bodies as fundamentally deficient, and in this field, an undefined past is usually invoked in which there was once a stronger balance between work and recreation and in which there was more time for free development – at least this is what is imagined. The resilience paradigm is also not resolved by critically discussing and classifying it and by specifically not reproducing the logics of self-optimization. So what does a critique that is also grounded in cultural studies look like? The sociologist Stefanie Graefe (2019) assumes that the concept of resilience raises the right questions. If resilience is the wrong answer to the right question about the subject, she asks, then what could be a better answer? (Graefe 2019: 186).

Graefe concludes with the positive hope in the potential of human beings for change (2019). After all, she states, power relations and seemingly overpowering structures are by no means natural. This is precisely what the empirical findings outlined above point to. Although courses that focus on mindfulness, deceleration, work-life balance or leisure reproduce notions of resilience by shifting responsibility solely to the subjects and promising to call upon and activate their powers of resistance against current conditions that are interpreted as challenging, this is structurally based on the fact that the courses draw their economic benefit from the emphasis on deficits and the strengthening of the individual. They originate from the same logics for which they want to offer solutions and particularly successfully translate threatening notions of a deficient life into capital. Nevertheless, they can – whether intentionally or not – trigger reflexive moments that can hold potential for change. The decisive question is here whether specific actions are derived from the sometimes critical reflection of one's own circumstances of life which then do not only mean adaptation but also generate change. Or is the criticism of social structures more of a cosmetic nature because it initially relieves the burden and suggests that one could change something in one's own way of life without it then leading to further steps?

Whether the experiences of leisure that are intended in the courses can indeed have a transgressive effect, on the other hand, would need to be empirically examined further. The translation of the somewhat artificial course situation into everyday life, in which experiences of acceleration perhaps inextricably radiate their power, may be associated with challenges that make it difficult to overcome habitualized orders of time and concepts of self. In any case, quite a number of our interview partners reported that they had, after all, not succeeded in anchoring what they had learned in their everyday lives. The result is then not a resilient self at all but one that conceives of itself, even more strongly than before, as deficient and largely helpless in the face of social structures.

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Multiplicity of encounters

On the encounter capacity of public space using the example of HafenCity, Hamburg*

Abstract: The planning of urban districts involves ideas of how people in cities would like to and should best encounter each other. The term 'encounter capacity,' which denotes social and material dimensions of enabling a 'social mix,' has emerged in the reflexive planning practice of Hamburg's HafenCity to increase the realization of encounters through planned public space. This article explores the conception and reality of encounter capacity. It is based on commissioned research in the districts of the urban development area which were completed in 2015. The term "multiplicity of encounters," developed from ethnographic observation and inspired by the work of Doreen Massey, refers to the multiplication of encounters within specific horizons of meaning: neighborliness, eventfulness and trendiness. The high-priced housing and consumption possibilities, the image of an exclusive district and the group-specific rhythms of everyday life are selectively but never completely cancelled out by these factors.
Keywords: urban anthropology, urban planning, encounter, social mix, urbanity

Planning is a practice that links reality and imagination simultaneously as it reproduces their difference. The planning of urban districts is no exception. When we were tasked by the urban development company HafenCity GmbH[1] to study the encounter capacity of the built space of HafenCity that had been declared as public,[2] it had already been realized in some of its then still central and now western areas at Sandtorkai, Grasbrook and Überseequartier; however, large parts were still under construction or even in planning and remain so to this day. While the research assignment for us as employees of the university located in the district testifies to a selective interest in the scientific thematization and study of a planning goal and its realization, an event as unpredictable and far-reaching as the global COVID-19 pandemic does not only question the capacity

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1 Robert Hübner edited the research report and Jennifer Löwenstein illustrated the joint observation of encounters. We would like to thank both of them very much, as well as the anonymous reviewers for their constructive criticism of previous versions of this article.

2 The so-called public space in several districts of Hamburg is no longer owned by the city of Hamburg but belongs, for example, to investment communities, such as in the case of the Überseequartier of the HafenCity.

of concrete realizations of meeting spaces but, more fundamentally, the 'future capacity' of planning. Is what was considered a planned facilitation of encounters before the pandemic still sustained today? Can the encounter capacities of built public space be expanded to meet both the demands of dealing with the pandemic and the idea of a desired encounter?

In this article, the focus is not on the cultural-analytical examination of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the transformation of public space. Nor is the reflexive practice of urban development, on which our initial research is based, the central object of our reflections at this point. Instead, the perspective on the multiplicity of encounters proposed here, which emerged from the empirical study of observable encounters in 2015, provides the opportunity to sharpen the perception of which factors enable and reinforce encounters in cities. In the following, we emphasize the intertwining of elements, such as water or wind and built environments, planned interventions, everyday uses and largely normalized notions of 'encounter' and their relation to 'urbanity.'

The empirical perspective on 'encounter' has led to the observation that individual situations of encounter are 'multiplied' in everyday life by being translated into different media forms: an encounter between neighbors is retold in the neighborhood; a major event in which very different encounters take place is recorded for the purpose of information in the news, in images and sounds, and multiplied in this way. In our analysis, we draw on the term "multiplicity of places" used by the British geographer Doreen Massey with which she refers to the variety of experiences of places that occur simultaneously in everyday life (1994: 3). Conceptualizing encounters as fundamentally multidimensional opens up the possibility for a cultural analysis of the urban to explain the desired participation in and the randomness of encounters. Knowledge of the "multiplicity of encounters" can, in turn, be incorporated into matters of design.

How can this conceptual framework be transferred to HafenCity, Hamburg? On the one hand, we encountered Hamburg's HafenCity as a specific place where this "multiplicity of encounters" occurs, for example, because it has special material conditions (water, wind, or emerging flora). On the other hand, the planning area also points beyond itself because it has become a model for the planning of postindustrial land use in the urban areas of Northern Europe since the turn of the millennium. Both specificity and model character are reflected in the encounters observed and their multiplication.

In a first step, we present HafenCity, Hamburg, as an example of planned urban quarters that emerge from a reflexive planning practice that is rather common these days. We show the specific planning ideas of urbanity and the associated notions of desired encounters in the context of the relevant literature. We then elaborate on concise snapshots represented in a drawing and bring them together into four patterns. The potential of an urban-ethnographic approach lies in the socio-material perspective from which the encounter capacity does not depend solely on built conditions but, as we will show in the following, on the possibility of multiplying encounters.

Encounters as an attribute of planned urbanity

What can the preconditions for encounters be in a district in which, on the basis of a master plan (GHS 2000) and the subsequent development following the commissioning of a concept, a large number of buildings and associated outdoor areas have already been realized, while other sections are either in the process of being realized or have yet to be planned? The mix of functions in HafenCity, the former inner-city port area of Hamburg on the banks of the Elbe river,[3] which has been in planning and redevelopment since 1997, is enormous: uses as diverse as housing (subsidized, cooperative, private), education and culture (from day-care centers to schools and public and private universities to vocational training places, but also museums and exhibition spaces, as well as the lighthouse, the Elbphilharmonie concert hall, consumption and production, as well as company headquarters, nongovernmental organizations and spaces for religious gatherings) are unfolding on 157 hectares.

However, this diversity of uses does not mean that encounters take place in HafenCity between people who are quite different socially, culturally and in terms of their reasons for being there. During our 2015 survey, HafenCity was considered a "ghetto of the rich"[4]; a powerful image that was difficult to counteract at the time when the third construction phase with higher socially subsidized housing had not yet been completed, and the temporary accommodation for refugees at the outer end of the third construction phase had not yet been built.

The development company HafenCity GmbH was also aware of the discrepancy between encounters taking place, the planned and emerging diversity of use, and its perception, and they examined this in the form of their own (scientific) publications as well as commissioned studies. Under the programmatic heading "Social Mix and Encounter Capacity: A Pragmatic Social Model for a New Downtown," Jürgen Bruns-Berentelg, who has been a member of the management board since the beginning and was the public face of HafenCity GmbH at the time of our research, asks what kind of "social mix" is even possible in planning contexts generally dominated by the market (2012: 70). Bruns-Berentelg puts this skeptical initial question alongside the concept of "encounter capacity," which could make the foundations for encounters between strangers in public and semipublic spaces visible and, thus, plannable. In the eyes of the urban developer, encounter capacity encompasses an emancipatory potential: the possibility that it may not be individualistic ideas of a "NIMBY" public sphere that prevail

3 HafenCity Hamburg is a prominent example of "urban waterfront regeneration," i. e. for urban development projects that, in the course of building container ports, have opened up old harbor areas for other uses and, in doing so, rely heavily on iconic architecture, see, for example, Lorens (2014).

4 See, for example, Menzl (2010: 15). Regarding criticism directed at the high-priced segment in residential construction in HafenCity, see Füller et al. (2013) and the related discussion in Menzl et al. (2011: 35ff.).

here,[5] but that it produces social encounters between different people (Bruns-Berentelg 2012: 77). Therefore, in his view, it is precisely the public places that contribute to the development of encounter capacities in urban society, and the socially and physically determined encounter capacity constitutes the emancipatory quality of core inner cities (Bruns-Berentelg 2010: 426). In this sense, he refers to the places that generated such encounters and which should be the object of urban development: "Possibility of encounter can transform into the encounter capacity of a place, which makes it clear that, dependent on the social actors, spaces and time of day involved, these can be understood as relational potential spaces with at least ambiguous influence, but which can also be developed" (Bruns-Berentelg 2012: 78).

This idea of encounter capacity, generated here from the perspective of urban development, is closely linked to a certain idea of urbanity as an urban planning model (Lees 2010),[6] whose fundamentally metro- and Eurocentric tinge has been pointed out in recent years (Lanz 2015; Schmidt-Lauber 2018). Moreover, the planability of urbanity has often been criticized as an instrument of symbolic politics (Wüst 2007: 4) and wishful thinking or a marketing tool (Baum 2008: 49, 59; Diehlmann 2013; Hengartner and Schindler 2014). The term 'urbanity,' nevertheless, continues to resonate for (urban development) practice, and the question of the encounter capacity opens up a research perspective of everyday practices that may help to produce this capacity. We, therefore, do not understand urbanity as an analytical concept that we use normatively, but as a cipher for qualities that are described in urban development as planning goals to be achieved (Dirksmeier, Mackrodt, and Helbrecht 2011). Planned urbanity, seen in this way, participates in the design of, in Brigitta Schmidt-Lauber's words, landscapes of urbanity that reify an idea of the city and an expectation of urban life (2018: 20). The encounters we observed in HafenCity, on the other hand, structure the specific form of urbanity on-site as everyday cultural dimensions (Amin 2008: 9, 12; Amin and Thrift 2002: 17). They occur in HafenCity against, with or because of its planned development. In the following, we will elaborate eight snapshots in the form of graphic condensations from the diversity of encounters and their performativity.

5 The problem of NIMBY ('Not In My Back Yard') was studied in HafenCity by HafenCity GmbH, see Menzl (2010: 12–25).

6 Alongside sustainability and identity, urbanity is one of the three guiding principles that were decisive for the qualitative design of HafenCity (Bruns-Berentelg 2014: 23). "Urbanity," as a counter-design to the urban planning paradigm of functional separation, today combines ideas of centrality and density that are certainly also fed by sociology (e.g. from the works of Emile Durkheim and Louis Wirth, cf. Roskamm 2011: 19 ff., 40 ff., 299 ff.). For an introduction in terms of the history of ideas, see Baum (2008) or Häußermann and Siebel (1998).

Multiple interactions: snapshots

There are many different ways of encountering each other: by chance or intentionally, repeatedly or only once. Encounters can take place between many people or just two. They happen in one place, be it a shared physical place or, with the help of media of communication, in different places that are connected to each other via these media, either at different times (e.g. letters by mail) or simultaneously (e.g. the telephone or internet). Seen in this way, encounters create spaces – encounter spaces. In order to scientifically grasp this diversity of encounters, which we reduce here to encounters between people, two criteria of differentiation have become established in cultural and social anthropological, geographical and sociological urban research. Firstly, a distinction is made according to the degree of plannedness or randomness of the encounter. Random encounters[7] are particularly considered an expression of urbanity. The second essential differentiation is made by the degree of familiarity of the individuals: How well do the people who meet know each other, or how can they classify each other socially? The underlying assumption is that the classifications that are effective in everyday life, such as gender, ethnicity and class or milieu, are conveyed at first glance. In this way, identity can be reproduced and/or changed in encounters (Frers and Meier 2007: 1). In the urban context, in addition to the stranger introduced by Georg Simmel (1908) as typical of big cities, the "familiar stranger" is important as a social figure (Milgram 1992). People who use the same subway to commute to work every day, who, thus, know each other by sight and yet are strangers to each other, are a classic sociological example of this. They do not communicate verbally with each other, but can identify each other (Milgram 1992). The figure of the "known stranger" has led to further distinctions (e.g., Wehrheim 2009: 35) in which, for example, encounters in closer or more manageable relationships, such as networks or neighborhoods, have been examined (e.g. Kusenbach 2008).

Attention to different degrees of the randomness of encounters or acquaintance of the people who meet has been extended in recent years to include asking about the contexts that bring about "contact opportunities."[8] When fleeting encounters with their lasting consequences (Dirksmeier, Mackrodt, and Helbrecht 2011; Helbrecht and Dirksmeier 2011) become the focus of research, the social and material effects of "rubbing along" (Watson 2006) come into view. Seen in this light, situations of "unex-

7 The use of the term "chance encounter" in the discourse around the creative class, on the other hand, refers to something else: here, the chance meeting in a manageable context is understood as a prerequisite for innovation, for example, the informal chat at the coffee machine. Elisabeth Currid translates this assumption to the neighborhood level (2008). She explains New York City's high level of cultural innovation by the density of cultural actors and the opportunity the city provides for random meetings and exchange. The difference is that these actors are not fundamentally strangers to each other.

8 Beckmann (2015: 84), for example, on reducing prejudices; see also Fincher (2003), Menzl et al. (2011), Wehrheim (2009) and Wessendorf (2014).

pected encounter" contribute to the emergence of urban society in the first place (Amin 2008: 13).

This performative understanding of encounters also guided us in the observation and analysis of encounters in HafenCity. The encounters observed could not be categorized exclusively into one of the aforementioned graduations of randomness and familiarity, and yet the random encounter played a conspicuous performative role. The spectrum of encounters in Grasbrookpark, the starting point of the ethnographic observations, and beyond showed how in this area, for example, people meet indirectly by moving out of the way, meet unintentionally through eye contact and, therefore, try to avoid it (Kendon 1990: 52 f.). Traffic routes – especially when they are narrow and crowded – are predestined for this kind of encounter, which is not, as described by Erving Goffman, deepened through looking, smiling and greeting (2009). Mobile communication media also expand the forms of non-encounter: virtual encounters allow a simultaneous withdrawal from what is happening on-site. Deeper encounters based on existing social relationships (colleagues, networks, friends) also manifest in different ways: as brief encounters formed around a specific point of contact, as targeted encounters focused on a common interest that is to be represented, or as encounters anchored in an everyday place.

In this section, therefore, we have brought together the encounters observed and explain them from the respective everyday situation, practice and effect. Both the degree of randomness and plannedness plays a role, as does the nature of the social relations on which they are based or which produce them. We have distilled eight snapshots from the abundance of charted forms of encounter that are characteristic of HafenCity's public space:

- Encounter with a potential for deepening: such as accompanying children
- Indirect encounter: such as leaving fragile traces behind
- Unintentional and avoided encounters: such as passing through
- Virtual encounters: such as talking on the phone, reading, writing
- Brief encounters: such as waiting and taking a break
- Expected encounters: such as lunch
- Directed encounters: such as representing interests
- Unplanned regular encounters: such as spending time together

We present them in Figure 1 as visual sketches whose title condenses the character of the form of encounter.

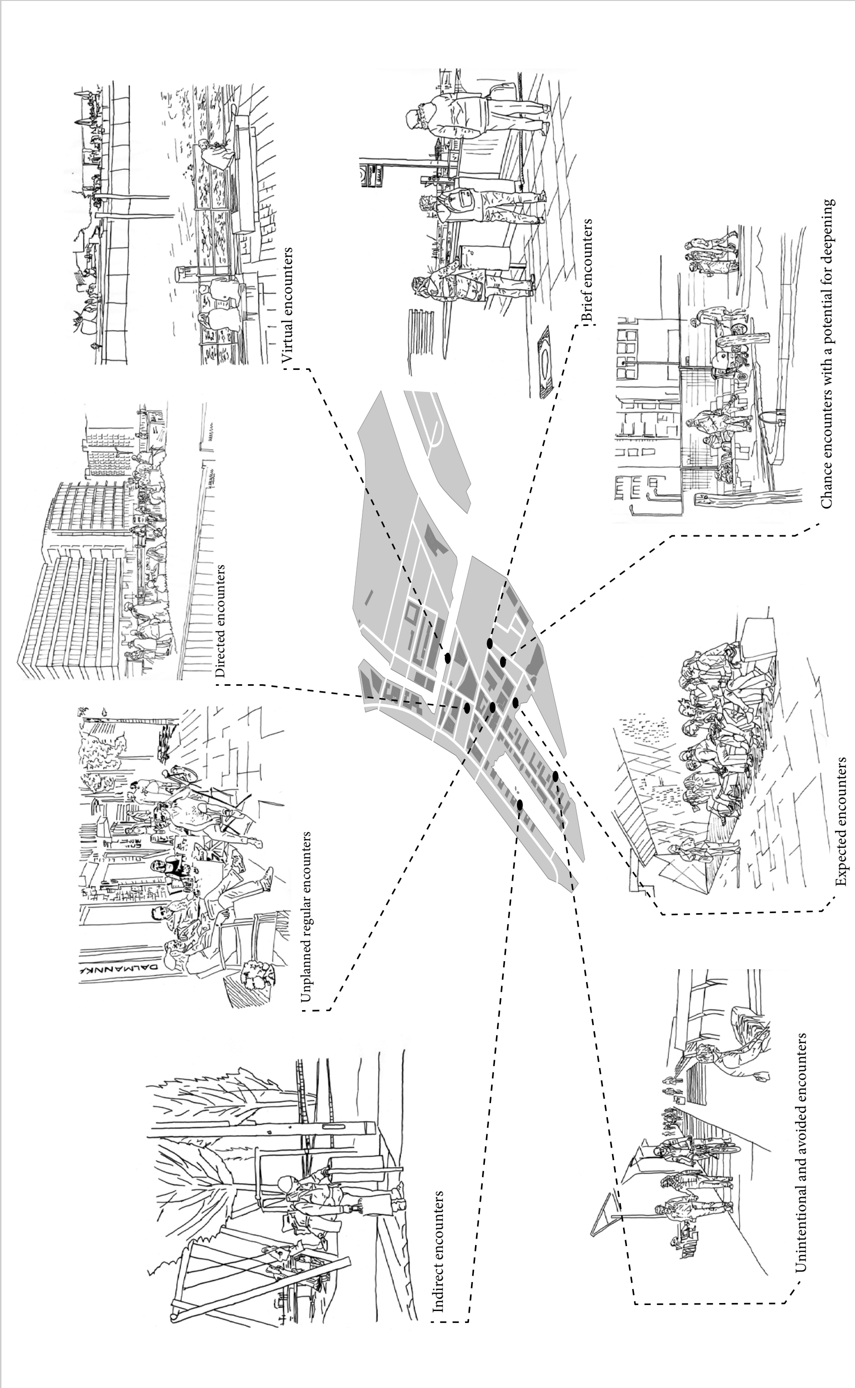

Fig. 1: Cartography of the described situations of encounter (Illustration: Jennifer Löwenstein)

The local starting point for our four-month survey was the heavily frequented Grasbrookpark. According to the urban anthropologist Setha Low, parks are particularly well suited for studying the cultural and social diversity of a neighborhood. They appeal to different senses, and allow for multiple uses and subjective attributions of meaning (Low 2000; Low, Taplin, and Scheld 2005). Accordingly, we have paid close attention to space and spatial perception through perceptual walks (Rolshoven 2001) and mappings (Ploch 1994; Wildner 2016; Wildner and Tamayo 2004; Ziervogel 2011). In addition to systematic observations (Beer 2007), we applied go-alongs as a space-exploring form of interview (Cuny, Färber, and Preißing 2020; Keding and Weith 2014; Kusenbach 2008), as well as interviews and participant observations as actor-centered approaches to evaluate the material collected in this way with a view to (spatial) practices and conceptions of social encounters. A total of 23 short interviews and informal conversations were conducted at all locations named with mostly middle-class residents (female) and users, such as employees or self-employed individuals in the field of marketing, landscape architecture, education and the service sector; in addition, a construction worker, a pastor, a homeless bottle collector and a pensioner were interviewed. In addition, four go-along interviews were conducted with five people, residents and employees (including HafenCity GmbH and Ökumenisches Forum) as well as three hang-out interviews with young people, employees and vendors.

The location of the encounters described in the map of HafenCity illustrates (Fig. 1) that they are not dependent on any specific design, as shown by the use of the wastelands or the sidewalk for sitting. Instead, the prerequisite for the diversity of encounters seems to be the inclusion into everyday and walkable pursuits and associated routes (Goffman 1982, Grannis 2009). This may be especially true for people with children, whose paths often converge in Grasbrookpark. It is primarily the public spaces produced and used collectively by networks or groups of friends (e.g. Grasbrookpark) that facilitate specific encounters (Kusenbach 2008). Less intensive encounters occur between *all* users of HafenCity – even if they are of an indirect nature, as in the case of the bottle collectors (Moser 2014; Rau 2014). The more intensive situations of encounter are experienced within individual groups: for example, residents, parents with children and tourists, but not all of them materialize for a longer period (e.g. in the form of appropriated seating). In other words, and with a view to the meeting places, when the relationships of the people who meet intensify, and they become increasingly familiar with each other and, thus, less of a stranger, the demands placed on the encounter spaces also change. Places that facilitate chance encounters turn out to be unsuitable for networks and circles of friends or are reinterpreted, shaped and occupied through more intensive appropriation. This can make them unsuitable for chance encounters – and, thus, exclude strangers. The deepening of our research has led us to five patterns of encounters that emerge from the analysis of the material conditions, their discursive description and the rhythms of encounters.

Materiality and rhythm: patterns of encounter

Four recurring topoi have emerged from the observations, conversations and interviews that address the materiality of the place. Seen in this light, these material characteristics of HafenCity are also discursively effective beyond their specific materiality. These are the structural development and the accompanying everyday experience that the surroundings are in constant "transformation" (1); the perceived omnipresence of water (2); the sometimes iconic architecture (3); and HafenCity's image as an exclusive residential area (4). These material environmental conditions are repeatedly invoked in everyday knowledge and play into the quality of HafenCity's encounter capacity. The following patterns of encounters can be crystallized from the snapshots that include the built environment. They also give an impression of the rhythm of the interactions.

1 Nodes for encounters

Who? The movements in the public space of HafenCity are shaped by specific rhythms of work: in the morning, the employees arrive, the residents leave; at midday, groups of employees move to the bakeries and the supermarket; in the afternoon, the employees leave HafenCity via the subway stations and the residents shape the public space.

How? Nodes emerge on the routes between transport infrastructure and supply that generate encounters between 'known strangers' or acquaintances in particular.

2 Group movements and spatial behavior

Who? Employees and residents in particular move through HafenCity in fixed rhythms and a directed manner, for example, to look after children, play with them or take a break together (including skaters, park tourists and personal trainers). In doing so, they form groups.

How? Groups take up more space and are slower in their decisions, reactions and movements than individuals. Many places in HafenCity are designed as meeting places: benches that can accommodate four mothers with prams and small children; seating and reclining furniture on which an entire group of students can eat and relax.

3 Consolidation of encounters

Who? Residents have created everyday forums through which communication channels and encounters become permanent utilizing meetings spaces, such as an enoteca or a bar, or communication media, such as the HafenCity newspaper.

How? The initiators moderate social processes and strengthen the sense of belonging. Different places of gathering have emerged for different interest groups.

4 Encounters with spatial experts

Who? In addition to the ice cream, coffee or strawberry vendors, tourist and Segway guides, people come to collect bottles, to sell the street newspaper Hinz&Kunzt or play street music. People come to HafenCity at night and weekends to do training and sports.

How? These groups of people help shape the place through their independent or leisure-oriented activities. They remain exclusively in the public space and sometimes communicate intensively (with the exception of the 'invisible' bottle collectors). Apart from the coffee vendors in Grasbrookpark, they usually remain anonymous, but they are contact people with local knowledge, especially for tourists.

5 Separation of place of work and of residence

Who? Employees and students routinely use the public space as a transit space to the subway or to bakeries in their rhythms of work and breaks.

How? They move within windows of time on purposeful connecting lines and, thus, between rather inflexible meeting points. Their use of HafenCity is planned and usually only allows encounters in the form of arranged meetings.

These patterns of encounter are specific to the areas of HafenCity we studied. This is especially true for the material dimension of the meeting places. At the same time, the actors and uses can be found in many other (urban) places as well. Therefore, these patterns are not suitable as a model for each and every other pace of urban development. However, they are transferable as an analytical approach. This also applies to the far-reaching spatiotemporal dimensions of encounter capacity, as we would like to show in the following.

Representations and imaginations as horizons of encounter

A pleasant but coincidental situation of encounter can be remembered or retold and lead to trying to bring it about again. It becomes a topic of conversation and results in action. It becomes embedded into contexts of meaning and practices that we would like to call *horizons of encounter*. Since these are translations and, thus, multiplications of situations once experienced, we speak in this case, following Doreen Massey's understanding of "multiplicity of places" – opposing, evading or overlapping worlds lived simultaneously (1994: 3) – of the "multiplicity of encounters." Ultimately, the encounter capacity of a space also consists of this multiplicity of possibilities.

Guided tours through HafenCity, for example, connect the space with narratives and images. They also facilitate a number of the encounters described above and are remembered through subsequent narrations and documents, such as photographs.[9] The following field notes convey an impression of this. They begin with a description of the work of a city tour guide.

> On the Magellan Terraces, she explained to her group that they are standing in front of a music stand with a sheet of music on it. She asked them to squint a little, look towards the Elbphilharmonie and they would be able to see the dancing notes on the façade. Then she led the groups to Meßmer Momentum for a tea tasting (field research diary HD, April 4 and 20, 2015). She was one of the few city tour guides who tried to convey the character of the district through points of contact that could be experienced directly and did not allude to the image of the (newly) rich HafenCity residents with sensational figures on rent and housing prices or names of HSV football club players, the Klitschkos or Helene Fischer (field research diary HD, June 23, 2015). Nevertheless, these celebrities are important virtual actors in HafenCity who make it an attractive encounter space.[10]

On the one hand, these projections and expectations are transported by prior knowledge from the media and the information provided by the guides; they steer perception, while the guides lead through the district. Fourteen different tour providers were known to HafenCity GmbH at the time of our research; 210 groups were guided by these providers in May 2014 and 2015 alone.[11] The visits encourage people to document and tell others about them and multiply in this way. Pictorial motifs of the new buildings and harbor views or surprising events support this capacity for encounter.

Three horizons of encounter seemed particularly important to us for the possibility of multiplying encounters and, thus, for characterizing the encounter capacity in HafenCity: neighborliness, eventfulness and trendiness.

Neighborhood

The following sequence contains a series of different social encounters that were differentiated into individual situations of encounter in the previous chapter. The sequence shows how an encounter between strangers translates into various other encounters in the neighborhood and thus multiplies.

> A private argument between a couple is taking place on the side of the road on Saturday afternoon. While waiting and looking at the couple, my interlocutor talks about an unknown neighbor and their encounter in the lift. He did not introduce himself and yet he had been living in her house for half a year. In the case of the argument on the street in HafenCity, the staring caught the attention of the arguing couple and initiated an interaction between the observers and the couple.

9 On the communicative potential of urban tourism, city marketing and collective memory politics, see Farías (2008).

10 Direct quotations from field notes have been translated from German.

11 All statistical information from HafenCity Hamburg GmbH, as of July 2015.

> Later, at a meeting with neighbors she knows and has befriended, she talks about the dispute and her intervention. In this narrative, the encounter becomes an emblem of what the neighborhood as a place of encounter is actually supposed to be and what it can do. Later during our interview, she says: 'They always say that HafenCity is always so cold and full of rich people. But this is just a brilliant neighborhood.'
> (AI2, interview HD, May 7, 2015).

Four different encounters take place in this episode. Firstly, the ethnographer and her interlocutor exchange their understanding of the situation via eye contact with each other: they find it threatening. They decide verbally that they will remain standing there. Secondly, they both direct their gazes at the couple, who legitimately feel that they are being stared at. Staring for the interaction sociologist Erving Goffman (2009), as a means of negative sanction, has the function of social control of a range of inappropriate behavior in public. Goffman states that staring is often a first warning to the individual when he or she is in danger of stepping out of line and the last one that one is obliged to give (2009: 101). Strangeness is articulated by emphasizing (staring at) the inappropriateness of the behavior. An idea of neighborliness and neighborly concern is expressed in both encounters, the one just experienced and the one recounted. Finally, the last direct encounter is the later meeting of the interlocutor with her friends and acquaintances in which she again combines the encounter she has just witnessed with the couple and the conflict situation she remembers in order to articulate her idea of neighborhood.

The entire sequence illustrates that encounters have to be interpreted based on more than a snapshot of the situation. They contain not only components from past encounters and experiences but also images that form the context of what the encounter means for the actors – and become effective in potential encounters. The encounters described are embedded in a horizon of experiences of encounter and, simultaneously, have an effect on it.

Eventfulness

The following sequences originate from situations whose eventfulness leads to the individual encounters experienced and, moreover, makes them multipliable. In our understanding, this is where their encounter capacity lies. The encounter in the previous section could also be interpreted as an event. It represents an extraordinary occasion for the resident that is now regulated by her understanding of neighborhood and multiplied in different narratives. The situations discussed in the following section do not derive their encounter capacity from a random occasion but from the fact that the eventfulness is predictable and planned and brought about by different actors. However, it is not only tourists who visit HafenCity. It is also an important place of excursion for residents of Hamburg who visit it, for example, in the context of a cultural or sporting event or another special occasion, such as the flea market.

The image of HafenCity as a "strolling city" with little life on the streets, offering few points of contact where one could "get stuck" (field research diary HD, August 2, 2015), is counteracted by a dense "event calendar." In the 2015 research period, these are, on the one hand, high culture events such as the Elbjazz Festival or Thalia Theatre and, on the other hand, the popular culture Duckstein Festival or the Harbor Birthday. A middle-class spectrum is also covered in the field of visual arts, from gallery presentations to live sand painting. A number of events take place on vacant lots and, thus, in the form of temporary uses. However, people from rather similar milieus meet here since participation is not only based on financial means but, above all, on habitualized preferences of taste.

This social homogeneity also applies to the flea market that has been taking place in HafenCity since August 2014. The "late riser flea market" has moved from the Grindel district to HafenCity and, unlike the more local flea market for residents, offers opportunities for Hamburg residents from other districts to meet. The following field note captures the atmosphere of the market on the Überseeboulevard on a rainy Saturday afternoon:

> None of the traders I interviewed (including only one man) is from HafenCity. I ask them if they have already met people from HafenCity, and they deny it. But they think it is great here because it is not as crowded as at the flea market '*Flohschanze*' and because there are no professional traders. The vendors at the four stalls to whom I talk are here for the first time and have found out about it via Facebook (3), the man came along from the Grindel flea market. (...)
> Everyone I talk to tells me that it was worth it for them. Except for the vendor at Störtebeker-Ufer. He says that the flea market at Turmstraße also takes place today. Obviously, he is already experienced. He almost exclusively sells women's clothing. (...)
> One female and one male employee of the media agency walk up and down with flyers and talk to people to recruit them for the next flea market. The flyer distributor tells me that I should book a stand under the roof for next time. I could pay right away. The media agency is from HafenCity and works for the company that looks after Überseeboulevard. (Field research diary HD, April 25, 2015)

In the interview, the vendors emphasize the social difference between their own milieu and that of HafenCity, or what they imagine HafenCity residents to be like. Most of them are between 30 and 40 years old, mostly residents of Eimsbüttel and Eppendorf, and are not financially dependent on the sale of the goods they offer. However, they consider HafenCity to be an expensive, exclusive location. This image is noted with annoyance by HafenCity residents, and it is a recurring theme at the stands of Hamburg residents from other parts of the city.

In the mutual perception, the assumed degree of social strangeness, thus, differs. It is precisely this (variously staged) difference that residents and buying and selling visitors encounter, and they correct or confirm these images. The flea market as an event enables all participants to multiply encounters: the bought items themselves can also be understood as traces. The resulting ironic atmosphere becomes the subject of documents, such as photos, or of stories about the joint action and the joy of selling. Finally, the people responsible for marketing the Überseeboulevard are interested in perpetuating the event, providing the infrastructure for it and advertising it. The buying and selling of objects at the flea market proves to be an infrastructurally supported cultural practice through which one shares an experience with acquaintances and gets to know strangers. This eventfulness generates different forms of direct and mediated encounters, which are, furthermore, projected into the future due to the local interest in this kind of revitalization of the district.

Translocal scenes

HafenCity is used for many urban sports, such as BMX riding, parkour, dance and workouts with personal trainers. It is mainly boys or male youths that are likely to participate. They are to be found in the sports facilities, the basketball courts on Vasco-da-Gama-Platz and in Lohse Park, the skate park on Strandkai, the small sports equipment park in Grasbrookpark and the football field on Stockmeyerstraße (field research diary HD, May 11, 2015). The prerequisite for many of the urban sports is the repurposing of existing street furniture (Fig. 2). At the same time, the size of the public spaces, their cleanliness and the relative emptiness in the evening hours seem to lend themselves particularly well to these appropriations through sport.

As a third significant everyday horizon in which encounters in HafenCity take place or into which they are woven and then multiply, we present the example of fishing. According to our observations, fishing in this inner-city location is perceived as a surprise by non-anglers and is, therefore, an occasion for direct encounters. Fishing, thus, has the potential to be considered particularly characteristic for HafenCity and to become the subject of self-documentation and narratives.

> More and more tourists stop, a crowd forms around the anglers. Cyclists and a Segway group slowly make their way through the groups along the pavements. When it is already very crowded, a rickshaw driver with his passengers winds his way through the crowd and stops briefly next to the angler. He greets him with a 'Moin' and briefly explains to his passengers something about fishing in this place. There is a lot going on, the Saturday excursion to HafenCity now takes on an excited mood.
> A few meters behind him on Sandtorkai, a group of young people are fishing. They document their catch with mobile phone photos and a video camera. They are also happy to tell us that Hamburg is a very good zander fishing area and that the harbor basins in particular are the habitat for predatory fish such as catfish, cod, eel and zander.
> (Field research diary HD, April 3, 2015).

In these short talks, the anglers prove to be experts in their sport and also contribute to the listeners' image of Hamburg with their specialist knowledge: Hamburg has many bodies of water and is considered an established place for sport fishing. Teenagers or

Fig. 2: Sports in HafenCity: From individual sports to personal training, sports in clubs, and privately organized groups (photos: Heike Derwanz)

young men who describe themselves as street fishermen are particularly willing to communicate. Some of them wear clothes with "Street Fishing Hamburg" printed on them and present themselves proudly and openly on the quay. They themselves document their catch with their phones or larger digital cameras and 'post' them on social media (field research diary HD, April 2, 3, 20 and 24, 2015).

Although HafenCity has many kilometers of water access such as this, it is particularly the Sandtorkai that is used by different groups of anglers. It serves as a fixed meeting point for older male anglers, young street fishermen, families or individuals. They are, thus, also one of the first groups of people that visitors encounter in HafenCity on this thoroughfare that is frequently used during the day. Their equipment, such as boxes with colorful bait, nets or fishing rods, which lie on the benches or are propped up on the railings, provide a direct conversation starter as one passes by. They are greeted by tour guides, rickshaw drivers and Segway guides and staged as an attraction. This facilitates low-threshold communication that is already rehearsed and repeatable. Indeed, many anglers willingly answer questions, explain their practices, show photos and their catches. Like the tourists, they also spend their free time here, coming from other parts of Hamburg.[12] So-called street fishing, which is also practiced in other big cities, has a special significance for the encounter capacity in the sense of multiplying individual encounters: similar to other urban sports, the actors use the city as a stage. Accompanied by the commercial interests of the fishing tackle shops, the interactions that the urban and mediatized space entails are an elementary part of the sport.

Multiplication potential

In this last step of analysis, the snapshots described above were examined in terms of their integration into horizons of meaning. Three horizons were singled out that are particularly characteristic of the encounter capacity in HafenCity: neighborliness, eventfulness and trendiness. The following characteristics of encounters in HafenCity were, thus, described in more detail:

1. Ideas about and desires for collective interests are expressed in encounters: some of these ideas and desires are bundled in the horizons of meaning of neighborliness. They are sometimes negotiated under the topos 'village,' express themselves in anger about a lack of commitment or quite specifically in the assertion of interests, such as a football pitch.
2. Encounters have an effect on the future: through the structuring effect of images, such as exclusivity, as well as the ideas and wishes of the users, selective events in the horizon of meaning of eventfulness also contribute to projecting encounters into the future. By being disseminated privately and publicly

12 The anglers come by bicycle, train or their own car from surrounding districts or more distant areas, such as Rahlstedt; for more on the urban leisure activity "hanging out," see Schwanhäußer (2015).

through the media, they create points of contact for further encounters; in the context of translocal scenes, they can become points of contact.

3. Encounters are multiplied when they are surprising: encountering a quarreling couple in the street is surprising because for some, it does not correspond to the expectations of neighborliness. Encountering people fishing in the inner-city location of HafenCity, between new buildings that house offices, apartments and public facilities, is surprising because for others it does not fit with a place that is perceived as exclusive or because the water quality is considered questionable. Within the horizons of meaning of neighborliness, eventfulness and trendiness, these surprises unfold their further capacity for encounter by being retold or digitally mediated and, thus multiplied.

The three characteristics can be summarized by the term "multiplicity of encounters." The "multiplicity" indicates that these characteristics are not mutually exclusive, but do not always complement each other either. They do, however, contribute to the fact that different social milieus congregate in HafenCity. It became clear that each of the three horizons of meaning of encounters described, be it neighborliness, eventfulness or trendiness, is not limited to one social milieu. Here, either residents and service providers meet, or other residents and tourists, or visitors and members of the scene. Nevertheless, the encounters made possible by this do not cover all possible social milieus if they are not encounters mediated by traces, as in the case of the bottle collectors.[13]

The multiplicity and multiplication of encounters

From an urban development perspective, we have initially defined encounter capacity as the quality of a space that results from the possibilities of constructed places for multiple social encounters, while remaining an ambiguous property of public space (Bruns-Berentelg 2012: 78). The fanning out of the observable situation of encounter and the connection of this interaction with the material conditions have revealed patterns of encounter. Their rhythm can be considered to be the structuring dimension of the urbanity planned here and the materiality of its environment. This revealed when and how encounter capacity comes into play, for whom and what boundaries it produces. In our view, the horizons of encounter that result from different forms of meaning production complement the characterization of encounter capacity.

Without trying to make the spectrum of possible encounters in HafenCity uniform, it is, nevertheless, possible to name a few characteristics, some of which can also apply to other urban development areas, and some of which are unique selling points. In addition to the usual transformations of a district through generational change, influx

13 The detailed ethnographic case studies (original title: *Soziale Begegnungen in der HafenCity. Eine qualitative Studie zur Begegnungskapazität)* are recorded in the final report to HafenCity Hamburg and can be accessed there.

and gentrification, on the one hand, and structural measures such as a new street, or a demolition or the construction of a new building, on the other, in HafenCity, there is also the large-scale further development and the constant growth of the district to consider. On the one hand, this means one suddenly no longer works or lives on the edge of a built-up area, but right in the middle of it; on the other hand, vacant spaces are constantly disappearing and uses that have just been created have to be abandoned. As a result of these transformations, new encounters on the eastern edge of HafenCity were expected in spring 2015. Encounters with visitors have also become a habit for employees and residents. However, if we compare the mapping of events with the mapping of the paths of people engaged in HafenCity, we see that their places of encounter do not necessarily overlap. One place with a particularly high multiplicity of encounters, as has already become clear, is Grasbrookpark.

However, the opportunity for encounters is also shaped by the group-specific everyday rhythms: during the day, employees will miss the residents and vice versa. But their paths cross in the mornings and evenings. Tourists arrive at the weekend when residents depart. Employees have little time for breaks, and in the evening, they usually take the train home straight away. We were able to show in the five rhythms and patterns that emerged that it is by no means only active residents, members of subculture scenes or institutions located in HafenCity that shape the encounter capacity. However, they have a much stronger power to articulate horizons of meaning in such a way that they are spatially effective as a friendly neighborhood (HafenCity newspaper, enoteca) or a 'playground' (e.g. football pitch, fishing area).

If we look at the more pointed types of encounter and compare them with the claim to social diversity formulated by HafenCity GmbH, the encounters in places such as Grasbrookpark result from the meeting of residents and employees. Both belong to a milieu with high purchasing power and correspond to the target audience of the surrounding upscale restaurants. The service staff, who facilitate these places of consumption, come into contact in a service capacity; beyond that, there are no chance encounters, for example, due to the specific rhythms. The guided tours of the district, which are oriented at precisely this middle class, slightly broaden the spectrum of different social backgrounds, as do the events with a high encounter capacity. The rhythms that facilitate encounters on weekdays are primarily based on working hours in offices and the related services. In this part of the week, the lunch break, which can be seen as an emblem for the encounter capacity in HafenCity, amasses the greatest heterogeneity of HafenCity users. While the employees exploit this potential in predictable and planned encounters for 45 minutes and meet on the street furniture to eat together, the service workers and the sales, cleaning and kitchen staff remain at their workplaces at precisely that time and spend their break time in less visible places.

The encounter capacity that arises beyond the places designed for this purpose from the multiplication of encounters within the horizons of neighborliness, eventfulness and trendiness only selectively and not completely outweighs the separating factors resulting from high-priced living and consumption possibilities, the image of an exclusive district and group-specific everyday rhythms. It remains to be seen whether social heterogeneity will also increase over time as a result of the high potential for multiplication here and how this will affect the horizons of meaning of neighborliness and trendiness. Seen from the perspective of encounter capacity, the form of urbanity that can be observed in HafenCity is not characterized by the chance encounter of complete social strangers, but is, above all, shaped by chance encounters between known strangers.

Moreover, the encounter capacity does not only depend on the conditions existing on-site but also on continuing, for example, translocal narratives, image archives or other media representations. Against this background, in conclusion, we understand encounter capacity as a capacity emerging from interaction, materializations and imaginaries, which translates and, thus, multiplies encounter as experience in this multifaceted way. This capacity for multiplication is made tangible by the term "multiplicity of encounters." With this perspective, the ambiguity of encounter spaces can be emphasized by tracing them in the different dimensions that produce them.

The latter two aspects particularly allow for concluding reflections on the relationship to encounter capacity and encounters under the impression of the COVID-19 pandemic: the relationship between the randomness of encounters and the degree of familiarity of the people encountering each other underwent a serious change during the pandemic. While chance encounters between complete strangers or 'known strangers' in public spaces could hardly be prevented, it was precisely the nonrandom encounters between several acquaintances that were made impossible. The performative appropriation of places of encounter through these recurring encounters could not occur. On the other hand, it can be assumed that the media representation of (a few) encounters took on a greater intensity. The fact that the translocal dimension of encounters had increased in events that took place online indicates, at least, the diversity of the places in which people participated in them. A fanning out of encounters in urban public space now allows us to identify and name the effects of the pandemic more precisely. A starting point for new research is emerging here, which should support urban planners in the future in designing specific areas as meeting places.

Against this background, considerations of controlled distance will certainly play a role in the planning of encounter capacity and become the subject of persistent debates. The broad understanding of an encounter as a social practice that can be shaped by the (built) environment and a feature of urbanity, which was a commonsense starting point for the study commissioned by HafenCity GmbH, might not be affected by this; however, the question about the consequences that a regulatory influence on the site-specific characteristics of the situations of encounter in HafenCity may have would be affected. Years after our commissioned research, this article, therefore, not only allows the material collected at the time to be published for the first time in a scientific context. From today's perspective, the results are also of empirical interest for urban cultural studies, not because the encounters fanned out here in their everyday cultural form make a world tangible that is less permeated by ideas of order and regulation than the one we are heading towards. Rather, they offer other studies on social interaction and urban space production a suggestion of how the associated temporalities and conditions of elemental and built environments and imaginaries can be explored and compared. The article published here also translated the interest in encounter capacity into a conceptual proposal of the "multiplicity of encounters" for urban cultural studies research. The accompanying reflection on commissioned research shows that the interlocking of expertise, conceptual reflection and empirical survey is quite common in longstanding urban development processes (Lees 2010; Menzl 2010, 2011). In our case, this has led to repeated exchanges and follow-up commissions. With this way of working, HafenCity GmbH has not only *demonstrated* the seriousness of its concern to achieve a 'social mix' and promote encounters. At the same time, a partly symbolic function of scientific research in the context of urban development processes does not prevent the emerging HafenCity from becoming a research field in which planning practice is reflective. Seen from the perspective of research on knowledge work (Färber, Cuny, and Preißing 2019), the commission and research project converge for the duration of the cooperation and, subsequently, allow knowledge to be produced that, ideally, is relevant in the respective field.

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Egon Freitag

"On living on in the memory of posterity" or "On a new scientific definition of the subject – beyond folklore studies"

With and in memoriam of Wolfgang Jacobeit (1921–2018)*

The poet Christoph Martin Wieland gave a speech "On living on in the memory of posterity"[1] in the Weimar Lodge "Anna Amalia" on October 24, 1812. In it, he expressed that the memory of a loved one was "the most natural consequence of excellent and everlasting merits" that they had acquired. Wolfgang Jacobeit's life, in this sense, consisted of "uninterrupted exercise and application of the noblest powers of [his] mind and the most beautiful sentiments and feelings of [his] heart" (Wieland 1967: 160). As one of his students, I particularly like to think of the numerous inspiring and personally highly valuable encounters with him.

After Paul Nedo, together with Wolfgang Jacobeit, founded the correspondence course in ethnography at the Humboldt University in Berlin in 1966, it was mainly museologists with professional experience who were given the opportunity to study ethnography alongside their work in museums. After graduating from the "Fachschule für Museologen" ('Polytechnical Institute for Museologists'), I worked at the "Agrarhistorisches Freilichtmuseum Alt Schwerin" ('Open Air Museum for Agricultural History in Alt Schwerin') and applied for one of the coveted places in the degree course. To my great delight, I was accepted and studied at the Humboldt University in Berlin from 1971 to 1977. The ethnography department was located at Friedenstraße 3 in the Friedrichshain district. The lecturers who left a lasting impression on me were Wolfgang Jacobeit, Ute Mohrmann and Waltraud Woeller. After my studies, I was given the opportunity to join the "Museum für Volkskunde" ('Folklore Museum') in Berlin, which was directed by Wolfgang Jacobeit from 1972 to 1980. It was located on the Museum Island in Berlin. Under Jacobeit's leadership, the exhibition and collection concept were reoriented to include more everyday history and contemporary folklore research. The exhibition "*Großstadtproletariat. Zur Lebensweise einer Klasse*" ('Metropolitan Proletariat. On the Way of Life of a Class'), which showed the social situation, and living and

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1 Quotations from original sources have been translated from German by the author.

working conditions of the working class, based particularly on the example of Berlin between 1900 and 1914, is particularly noteworthy.

The Museum für Volkskunde's exhibition space was essentially in the souterrain, under the Pergamon Altar, but our office, work and storage rooms were in the attic. There was no lift, so we had to go up and down 94 steps several times a day. Even in 2011, Wolfgang Jacobeit still mentioned this arduous climb in a letter and wrote: "I am really proud that despite the terribly long staircase [...], we were able to present so much that was new and good" (Wolfgang Jacobeit to Egon Freitag, February 17, 2011). The historian Jürgen Kuczynski also came up these stairs several times to exchange ideas with Wolfgang Jacobeit about his book project "Geschichte des Alltags des deutschen Volkes" ('History of the Everyday Life of the German People'), which was to comprise five volumes. For this purpose, Kuczynski used the profound knowledge of the folklorist Jacobeit, who became an essential source of inspiration for him. Kuczynski writes in acknowledgement of this:

> "And if my efforts resulted in a publication at all, it was only because I had the constant support of Wolfgang Jacobeit, Director of the Folklore Museum, who is both entirely committed to the idea of the history of everyday life and has an excellent knowledge of the literature, as well as dealing with individual areas of everyday life of the German people in his lectures, and who has taken on such an important chapter in this book". (Kuczynski 1980: 33)

The chapter that Kuczynski refers to here is the contribution on "Arbeit und Arbeitswerkzeuge" ('Work and Tools'). Independently of this, Jacobeit and his wife Sigrid later jointly wrote their own three-volume "Illustrierte Alltagsgeschichte des deutschen Volkes" ('Illustrated Everyday History of the German People') (Jacobeit and Jacobeit 1985/1987 and 1995).

Wolfgang Jacobeit maintained international contacts with numerous museums and institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany, Austria, Hungary, France, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and Switzerland. He was a subject representative at the Societé Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore (SIEF), president and vice-president of the International Organization of Agricultural Museums (AIMA) and numerous other bodies. Thanks to these connections, the specialized library of the Folklore Museum was very well stocked. Reflecting on the further effects of his international exchange on our work in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) at the time, Jacobeit wrote to me in 1982: "It is high time for a critical view, also from our side about the folklore romanticism: new insights from Schenda, Brückner and Moser!" (Wolfgang Jacobeit to Egon Freitag, 1982).

As my "Doktor-Vater,"[2] Jacobeit supervised my dissertation on "Volkskundliche Bestrebungen in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts, dargestellt am Schaffen Wie-

2 Literally: PhD Father, the German term for a PhD supervisor.

lands, Herders, Goethes und Schillers" ('Folklore Efforts in the Second Half of the 18th Century, Presented on the Example of the Works of Wieland, Herder, Goethe and Schiller'), which I was able to defend on June 25, 1987, with the distinction "summa cum laude."[3] On that day, he presented me with his famous book "Schafhaltung und Schäfer in Zentraleuropa bis zum Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts" ('Sheep Farming and Shepherds in Central Europe up to the Beginning of the 20th Century'), which had been published in a second edition in the same year.

After the end of the GDR, the ethnography department was dissolved. The students and alumni of ethnography were very bitter about this. Wolfgang Jacobeit informed me about this and wrote to me on November 8, 1992:

> "You will no doubt have heard by now that the area of the Friedenstraße has been liquidated of everything that was once social and cultural historical folklore, and which was taught with great success for many years. Ms Wagner is the last of the old crew. [...] You can imagine how we feel. – But the 3rd volume [of the Illustrated Everyday and Social History] is ready. We recently sent the ms. to a Munich publisher. Keep your fingers crossed for us!"
> (Wolfgang Jacobeit to Egon Freitag, November 8, 1992)

Despite the difficult experiences of the liquidation of the GDR institutions in his life, Jacobeit remained a creative spirit, actively involved in the development of the discipline. Among other things, his autobiography (Jacobeit 2000) with a sequel (Jacobeit 2016) bears witness to this.

In the last few years, Sigrid and Wolfgang Jacobeit regularly came to Weimar, my place of work. We visited numerous exhibitions and museums together, saw Goethe's "Faust" at the German National Theater, visited the Goethe Park, the grounds at Tierfurt and Belvedere, and so on. The personal encounters and conversations were continued in Sigrid and Wolfgang's adopted home of Fürstenberg. It was also a very special honor for me when Jacobeit attended my lecturers for the "International Summer School" in Neustrelitz, the last time being on September 5, 2017. In 2018, Sigrid and Wolfgang came to Weimar twice more, in January and in June. This was his last visit. Wolfgang was interested in the new "Bauhaus Museum," which opened the following year, and in the planned "Museum of the Weimar Republic."

He was restless to the end. As late as January 2018, he was planning a meeting with some of his students to rethink and reassess the subject definition of our discipline. Four months before his 97th birthday, on January 11, 2018, he wrote me a very significant letter because in it, he also comments on the subject definition of folklore studies. It reads:

> "Dearest friend, colleague etc. When I write to you this evening, it is at last to continue my Stegemann biography, which has cost me a lot of effort. [...] I am sitting at my desk

3 The dissertation was published in parts in Freitag 1994 and 1999.

> and computer at home and have to do everything I wanted to do. – The main thing will be to find a new scientific definition of the subject – beyond folklore, to which we have to say goodbye, as H. Bausinger successfully did years before us by calling his work 'Empirical Cultural Studies'. I will stick to this, but phrase it differently, as a former student of W.-E. Peuckert, W. Steinitz, J. Kuczynski and thus also of Marxist thought. Do you know that the son of J. K. – Thomas, has recently published a new version of 'Capital' with almost 800 printed pages? Splendid!" (Wolfgang Jacobeit to Egon Freitag, January 11, 2018)

It is highly regrettable that Wolfgang Jacobeit was unable to elaborate the new formulation of "Empirical Cultural Studies" which he announced here in order to pass on his conceptual thoughts and drafts on the current identification of the subject matter. Wolfgang Jacobeit has had a lasting influence on modern ethnography, the basis of which, in his view, was marked by Karl Weinhold, Karl Lamprecht, Will-Erich Peuckert, Paul Nedo and others, and has thereby gained international esteem. We should also not forget his other highly diverse fields of activity in the areas of agricultural history and the history of tools, on work and economy, culture and the way of life, on sheep farming and shepherds, the history of everyday life, museology, the scientific theory of our discipline and many more. Who knows – perhaps a review of his unpublished manuscripts would reveal new impulses, pointing to a further way for our discipline into the future, enriching the debate around the name in an unforeseen way; all the while, mindful of the traditions into which Wolfgang Jacobeit was embedded – and which he himself, like hardly anyone else, helped to shape through research, teaching and museum work.

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Modeling (in) Cultural Studies

Creating as a practice of teaching and learning in empirical cultural studies*

Abstract: This paper reflects on modeling as a practice of teaching and learning in empirical cultural studies. Theoretical concepts, the discipline and its perspectives can be made tangible through active modeling in an experiential and vivid way, the conditions of the situational knowledge production can be reflected upon, and competences can be acquired that facilitate power-critical intervention.

Keywords: Knowledge practice in teaching and learning, modeling, empirical cultural studies as education

Modeling in cultural studies conceptually intertwines three fields: knowledge practices, teaching/learning and creative work. To begin with, I will show that knowledge practices are always materially formed and can be actively shaped. Cultural studies perspectives can be discussed, reflected and understood not only in a text-based way but also through shaping, the scenographies of learning (Göhlich and Zirfas 2014), body performances, and changing constellations of human and material actors. Subsequently, the focus is, therefore, directed to the practice of teaching and learning, in which the discipline and its perspectives are produced in a praxeological way. A reflexive disciplinary didactics – not as a strictly formalized specification but as an open process of "participatory practice" (Ingold 2018: 17) – recognizes that the content to be learned is not simply "transmitted" in a neutral way. Teaching and learning settings are, in turn, sites of situationally conditioned knowledge construction, as described in science and technology studies for research collectives and environments. These constructions would not only have to be analyzed in more detail, but could also be shaped in a more active, diverse and dynamic way. The material settings, for their part, shape knowledge and, conversely, knowledge can be negotiated and changed through them, for example, by the actual movement of physical things. Impulses for such a shaping can be found, for example, in transdisciplinary artistic research that has received a lot of attention in recent years. However, I argue that this concept of art should be detached from the research context and integrated more strongly as a creative in settings of teaching and learning. It becomes clear with this change from research to settings of teaching and

* German version in *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde/Archives Suisses des Traditions Populaires* 2021, 117/2: 7–25. The text and quotations in German have been translated by Dr. Stefanie Everke Buchanan.

learning that artistic or creative work can be used in very different ways: oriented at either the (final) product or the process (Bästlein and Gloor 2015).[2] The circulation of knowledge in teaching and learning remains in motion and open-ended. What has been created maintains the character of a temporary, sometimes quickly produced intermediate product – and, in the end, the flipchart drawing usually ends up in the trash can, and the wet sponge wipes the blackboard clean again. The potential of creative work in teaching and learning settings should be more strongly reflected and tapped in empirical cultural studies in the coming years.

In this context, modeling will be considered in more detail here. I take the term and approach from the laboratory *Aufstand der Dinge* ('the uprising of things') conceived by Colette Baumgartner, a scenographic training in which spaces and things are given a say. Modeling, in contrast to and as an extension of perception, is a step in the work that particularly inspired me during the research on her course. Therefore, modeling will be conceptually traced and made productive for empirical cultural studies. Finally, the three fields will be brought together and possible potentials of cultural studies modeling for the practice of teaching and learning will be pointed out: as an active, playful and (rather cautiously) intervening practice of perception, action and thought, in which material, nonhuman actors are given more of a voice; it can be used as a tool for vividly reflecting on implicit conditions of shared knowledge construction, for recognizing urgencies and learning to intervene when necessary.

Knowledge practices

> *Lying in the hammock, I let thoughts come and go as they will. I feel as if I can hear them roaring around, but only the cicadas chirp. Boredom is necessary. At some point, almost half a hot Provençal afternoon later, a new thought unfolds as if by itself, a thought I would not have come up with myself. A rocking thought about new teaching and learning formats. This is hammock knowledge creation.*[3]

This vignette from my research diary is meant to illustrate how lived arrangements, spatial environments, material and human actors help to shape one's own cognitive processes. Knowledge is produced, negotiated and circulated through assembled arrangements, which, in turn, are produced, actualized or transformed in the act of knowledge production. Knowledge shows itself in action, in "doing" (Hörning and Reuter 2004), in the lived practice. Thus, as Stefan Beck et al. point out, knowledge is always knowledge practice and, as such, is situated, embedded, located, embodied and inscribed (Beck, Niewöhner, and Sørensen 2012b: 40), it is processual, situated and coincidental (Künzler 2017). Contributions in the theory and history of science as well as research from science and technology studies and actor-network theory (ANT) have

2 The authors, in turn, point out the difference between song (product) and singing (process).

3 From the research diary. Cf. Lucie Tuma and Jens Badura (2015) on the question of letting things happen.

Fig. 1: In the hammock. Photo: Sibylle Künzler, July 13, 2018.

repeatedly shown that knowledge is sociotechnically created, and knowledge practices, in turn, order the material and social associations on site – how, for example, office spaces are set up, technical infrastructure is designed, and much more. However, while these associations often seem to take place in a rather passive mode or are described as such, one can, on the other hand, also *actively* relate to all these actors. They can be invited to model the knowledge processes and participate the production of knowledge. If desired, a conscious choice can be made as to which associations are made. Such a view is linked to the basic features of a post-ANT, as described, for instance, by Annemarie Mol. Mol demonstrates in *Ontological Politics* (1999) that there are moments when active choices are made on the part of researchers regarding which chains of association they follow. In a sense, then, modeling as a material knowledge practice is an actively applied ANT, a reflexive and changing interplay between different actors that can be intervened in by changing the particular arrangement or consciously allowing oneself to be changed by that arrangement, by consciously associating oneself with it. To intervene in a cultural-scientific manner means to be able to do so with a very high sensitivity and differentiation. This requires training – something that should be paid more attention in cultural studies education. Strictly speaking, with every mode of practice, every choice of associations that enters into the joint production of knowledge, a political statement is also made that positions itself in the context of hegemonically negotiated legitimate practices. The example of hammock knowledge creation may seem a little obvious in this context, such as the way that walking is described as a practice that stimulates thinking.[4] Perhaps there may indeed often be moments of relaxation and pause in which it is possible to think "better." However, upon closer inspection, all practices form knowledge: it happens in specific ways such as cooking, texting, going to the movies, swimming, doing DIY with a drill in hand, in a yodeling class, attending a lecture, conversing with a friend, daydreaming, and many more. Researchers of everyday culture should also make these practices fruitful as processes that produce scientific knowledge. Here, however, it becomes apparent that not all practices are equally recognized as valid modes of scholarship: writing on the computer in the office seems to be a more legitimate practice to validate that one is working than dozing in the hammock, even though more effective and intense reflections took place in the Provençal afternoon heat than – admittedly – not infrequently in the office. However, I do not aim to devalue working in the office. This knowledge practice also has its special qualities and can be used for modeling. However, my years of experience working in the academic world have changed the way I look at what I do, and a sense of urgency has emerged: increasingly – similar to armchair ethnology – the office became the main place of work, and reading, sitting and writing on the computer became the dominant practices. The pressure to perform in the competitive system of academia spread through me as a physical sensation I experienced daily. At the same time, I preached to students on the basis of John Rajchman's essay *Foucaults Kunst des Sehens* ('Foucault's Art of Seeing') on the importance of a "*rupture d'évidence*" (2000: 44) for the work of knowledge creation and an "aesthetics of existence" (2000: 61) which was required to become or remain a seeing thinker, a "*voyant*" (Gille Deleuze, quoted in Rajchman 2000: 40).[5] Somehow, my daily office life and such a "*façon de vivre*" described in the text, which I wanted to pass on to the students in the seminars, seemed to get in each other's way.[6] Institutionalized scientific practices – such as writing and lecturing – are embedded in an educational architecture with explicit and implicit goals and ideals. This calls for critical self-reflexivity in cultural studies in order to uncover the self-evidences that

4 In Max Weber's words: "*Es ist in der Tat richtig, daß die besten Dinge einem so, wie Jhering es schildert: bei der Zigarre auf dem Kanapee, oder wie Helmholtz mit naturwissenschaftlicher Genauigkeit für sich angibt: beim Spaziergang auf langsam steigender Straße, oder ähnlich, jedenfalls aber dann, wenn man sie nicht erwartet, einfallen, und nicht während des Grübelns und Suchens am Schreibtisch*." ('It is indeed true that the best things occur to one as Jhering describes them: while having a cigar on the sofa, or as Helmholtz states for himself with scientific accuracy: while walking on a slowly rising road, or similar, but, in any case, when one does not expect them, and not while brooding and searching at one's desk.' Translation from German: Dr. Stefanie Everke Buchanan.) (1930: 13).

5 The practice of seeing could be exchanged, for example, a smelling thinker.

6 These questions seem to have become more pressing in recent years due to socio-economic conditions. Cf. Values of Humanities, www.valhuman.org, August 29, 2020; the expression "façon de vivre" is my own.

powerfully shape knowledge production and practices. Would it not be important to think more about the – *faute de mieux* – "neoliberal" conditions at universities, which affect the production of knowledge in cultural studies, the dominant activities, the teaching, the ideal types of successful researchers and careers or convincing lecturers, the choice of fields and the processing of results, even reaching into the private sphere, affecting concepts of self and lifestyle? Would cultural studies not be called upon more strongly here to position itself, even to take a deliberate stand against it or, at least, sensitize more actively to it and facilitate other working environments, other settings for teaching and learning? The US anthropologists Boone W. Shear, Susan Brin Hyatt and Susan Wright examine *Learning Under Neoliberalism* (2015) and recognize precisely the practice of teaching and learning as a possible place for questioning the neoliberal framing of knowledge production. They see

> teaching and learning at university itself as a space of radical possibility. The classroom is an opportunity to help us – as teachers, students and workers – realise ourselves as political subjects through theoretical investigation and discussion, but also through projects that forge collaborative relationships […]. If, indeed, the university has become a more integral, more central site of social and economic and social reproduction [sic], then learning and teaching about these conditions opens onto a horizon in which faculty and students can more clearly realize their everyday practices as part of a broader hegemonic struggle." (Shear et al. 2015: 13)

I recognize the potential to reflect and transform such conditions in an active, multifaceted modeling of teaching and learning settings: in addition to the office, the seminar room or the excursion (Rolshoven 2016), it would also mean – and, thus, not as a substitute – to take knowledge production, such as hammock knowledge creation, seriously, to understand it in the context of dominant knowledge practices, and to use it, nevertheless or precisely, as an optional practice of a "*Gegenwissenschaft*" ('a counter-science') (Werner Schiffauer, cited in Lindner 2002: 91).

Cultural studies as a practice of teaching and learning

Drawing on science and technology studies and the anthropology of knowledge with an interest in the construction of scientific knowledge, the first thing that stands out is that science has mostly been studied exclusively from the point of view of research practice. Teaching practice has hardly ever been considered as a site of knowledge production. To a certain extent, this is also true for empirical cultural studies: teaching appears rather as a "blind spot" of the canonically postulated (self-)reflexivity. Almost without exception, it is research that is written about and reflected upon. For a long time, teaching and learning remained *Schattendiskurse* (Leimstättner 2010) ('shadow discourses') conducted in hallway conversations or between the rows of benches in the seminar room, or discussed in an application-oriented manner at didactic training meetings of university lecturers. However, with the Bologna reform and the changed demands of an academic career, the emergence and demand for teaching certificates, teaching has increasingly become the focus of analysis and reflection – however, mainly in the context of higher education didactics and hardly with disciplinary reference, a knowledge theoretical focus or an interest in the praxeological production of the discipline and its perspectives.

The empirical cultural studies anthology *Lern- und Lehrerfahrungen kulturanthropologisch* ('Experiences of teaching and learning in cultural anthropology'), edited by Karin Bürkert (2016b), is a rare exception in this field. She cites, among others, the development of a hierarchical dichotomy of research and teaching (2016a: 13) in the history of education as a possible reason for the absence of research on teaching. Research (with its masculine connotations)[7] became the core career business, while teaching (with its feminine connotations) was not taken seriously. This leads to the plea – as is also the case for this article – for a cultural studies perspective on academic teaching and learning beyond higher education didactics (Bürkert 2016a: 15) and for more teaching-oriented research (Bürkert 2016a: 14).

Teaching and learning are everyday practices that are often undertaken in a self-evident manner – but they *are* a site where empirical cultural studies take place. Here, the discipline, its contents, perspectives, tasks in the (educational) political context and social relevance, the representatives and students of the discipline, the scenographies, the constellation of things in space and time are produced, performed, staged, acted out, reproduced (generationally as well as situationally) or transformed repeatedly in a polyphonic, relational and situational, and sometimes quite random way, and are experienced in a collective exchange and individually as a process. Subject identity in methodological and historical debates has, so far, been reflected almost exclusively in epistemic registers – emphasizing the methods of collection, analysis and presentation as well as the fields surveyed. This article, by contrast, focuses on the practices of teaching and learning in the institutes that produce the discipline. Teaching and learning are consistently referred to in tandem here because they are relationally intertwined: teaching, for example, is aligned with processes of learning and, conversely, instructors also learn in a shared exchange with students. I advocate for a perspective in which, in addition to the lecturers and the students, the practice of teaching and learning also involves actors such as the spatial conditions, the furnishings, the things circulating in these arrangements, the media technology, the online tools and the time structures. Disciplinary identity and perspectives, theoretical and methodological approaches, a scientific habitus and much more are produced at this tactical-performative level of practice; it can be vividly experienced, lived through, negotiated and repeatedly staged in new ways by all the actors involved (Mol and Law 2008).

7 Here, Bürkert points to a study in the social sciences by Romy Hilbrich and Robert Schuster (cf. Bürkert 2016a, 13 f.).

The constructivist approaches of situated learning (Lave and Wenger 1991), respectively, of participatory learning (Wenger 1998), developed by the anthropologists Jean Lave and Étienne Wenger in the 1990s, come very close to this view of knowledge construction in the practice of teaching and learning, even though they give somewhat more weight to social conditions – understood by them as human relationships – than to "artifacts" (Lave and Wenger 1991: 29). Lave and Wenger's contributions can be counted among the few studies oriented towards the anthropology of knowledge that deal with practices of teaching and learning. As Eileen Lübcke emphasizes, the central positional shift is that teaching and learning should be described as sharing of and participating in social situations and not only as an individual process of learning (2020). Learning is not the cognitive acquisition of mediated knowledge but occurs situationally in "communities of practice" (Lave and Wenger 1991: 89; Wenger 1998). In this process, an "ongoing process of negotiating meaning" (Wenger 1998: 54) is taking place in which no precise distinction can be made between interpretation and action, doing and thinking, understanding and responding. In Lave and Wenger's view, the community of practice should engage in a meta-reflection on its own conditions of learning and consider, among other things, the following aspects:

> location and organization of mastery in communities; *problems of power, access, and transparency*; developmental cycles of communities of practice; change as part of what it means to be a community of practice; and its basis in the contradiction between continuity and displacement. (1991: 123; emphasis S. K.).

Cultural studies modeling, in my view, provides a tool with which to initiate such a discussion.

Tim Ingold argues in *Anthropology and/as Education* in a similar vein to Lave and Wenger: he also rejects an understanding of teaching as a one-dimensional transmission of content knowledge – "against transmission" (Ingold 2018: 1). Instead, he proposes a concept of education that is not oriented towards pedagogical ideals of education, but instead focuses on relational negotiations:

> It is my contention […] that the first place to find education is not in pedagogy but in participatory practice: not in the ways persons and things are symbolically represented in their absence, but in the ways they are made present, and above all answerable to one another, in the correspondence of social life. Knowledge grows along lines of correspondence: in commoning, wherein they join; and in variation, wherein each comes into its own. Every way of knowing, then, is a distinct life-line, a biological trajectory. It follows that becoming knowable is part and parcel of becoming the person you are. This is what brings it about that when you think, it is with your mind and no one else's; that when you speak it is with your voice; that when you write it is with your hand. (Ingold 2018: 17).

Institutionalized learning and personal, experience-based, physical-sensory learning are intertwined. This "lifeline" that goes along with life-learning (Göhlich and Zirfas

2013: 187–90) takes place as an implicit process in all learning processes and often shows itself in the learning of a "position."[8] Especially in empirical cultural studies, more transparency should be created in this regard via a deconstruction of scientific knowledge in the practice of teaching and learning.

In Ingold's work, this reference to life and the approach of starting from one's own questions is important in many of his contributions. This is also relevant to the statements and reflections on teaching and learning made here: Ingold describes in the introduction to *Anthropology and/as Education* (2018) how his view of cultural anthropological education has changed with his increasing biographical experience in teaching and learning. "For fifty years I have studied anthropology; for forty years I have taught it. Yet the idea that anthropology is not just a subject to be taught and studied, but educational in its very constitution, has crept up on me only over the last decade or so" (Ingold 2018: 1). It is only with his advancing lecturing age, so to speak, and with his personal "lifeline" bias that these questions of educational policy, education and didactics have become urgent for him. From this perspective, he recognizes that, in his view, cultural anthropological teaching and learning is not only about content but also, in an educational sense, about questions of "*leading life*" (Ingold 2018: 1; emphasis in the original) – in fact, a political question that accompanies cultural studies repeatedly and that should be made transparent rather than left out in favor of a supposed claim to objectivity.[9] In any case, starting from one's own urgencies has been explicitly discussed in learning theory: The subject-specific perspective, as developed by Klaus Holzkamp, assumes that learning processes arise from personal experiences and moments of one's own irritation and then turn into social action (Faulstich and Ludwig 2008). However, it is necessary to define more precisely what is meant by "subject" in this subject-scientific approach and, in doing so, address current theories on the subject (Künkler 2014). In the practice of modeling, the "subject" appears as an "I" emerging in enactment, yet reflecting from a certain position in it and continuously theorizing (Stuart Hall, cited in Lutter and Reisenleitner 2002: 43).[10] Such theoretical considerations on learning overlap with methodological approaches of qualitative research: a personal connection, one's own experiences, an actor-centered perspective and the recognition of moments of tension are also central in empirical cultural studies. In the practice of teaching and learning, these urgencies – understood here as personal "connections" (Abu-Lughod 2006: 472) and recognition of one's own hegemonic positionality as well as unease about sociocultural grievances – should, therefore, be elicited. In the current

8 How often are students judged on the basis of their position? The concept of position is interesting here in several respects: for example, as a political position, a position in the arrangement of things, as a physical posture in the sensually experienced execution of life, and a position as an implicit learning goal.

9 Cf. on this discourse the many contributions from cultural studies (e.g. Winter 2019).

10 "I am not interested in Theory [sic], I am interested in going on theorizing." Stuart Hall, 1986; cf. Grossberg 1986: 60.

dominant scientific environments, some of which are somewhat alienated due to performance imperatives, it is necessary to include the "I" which reflects on urgencies and is in a relational exchange with others, in a kind of "retrieval action" (Rolshoven 2018) in a critical, transparent and updated way into processes of thought and knowledge.

Such a (self-)reflexive way of working and thinking is present in empirical cultural studies anyway. However, cultural studies modeling can make the enactment and the personally experienced urgencies even more palpable and trigger processes of learning and theorizing – lying in the hammock, sitting in the office, lecturing on the floor. Modeling settings of teaching and learning, designing them in various ways and designing them differently every time can break with the self-evident nature of academic teaching and learning: in this way, one can analyze more precisely what actually happens in these settings of teaching and learning, how cultural-scientific knowledge is produced in practice in these material-technomorphic arrangements animated by material and nonmaterial actors, and dominant arrangements can be questioned. While this has already been done in this way for research collectives in science and technology studies, it is also or especially important to do this reflective work for the practice of teaching and learning in order to create transparency about one's own processes of construction. Accordingly, it becomes discernible how multiple, random, transductive and multiform these constructions are, and which actors are or are not involved in which way. Conversely, the settings can be produced in a more reflective way and become negotiable.

Although this also seems to be a question of explicit discipline-specific didactics, such didactics can only be understood in the context of what has been described above: mandatory didactic specifications to be implemented do not fit with an understanding of the practice of teaching and learning as enactment. Instead, I understand the didactics of empirical cultural studies – and, thus, also my plea for cultural studies modeling – as a continuously reflexive teaching action in the open process of situational "participatory practice."

This perspective on empirical cultural studies at the level of the practice of teaching and learning also makes it possible to consciously step out of a competitive mode of thinking and working, as there is a great deal of latitude in teaching and learning to allow for unfinished thoughts as well as collaborative and open processes of learning. The focus is on the culture of feedback and discussion,[11] support and encouragement. The many coincidences that accompany everyday teaching and learning can also help shape the contents of knowledge and should, therefore, be taken into account: the PowerPoint presentation that does not work and then has to be improvised by hand on the flipchart; a lecturer's nose painted white by chalk they used; a particularly loud voice of a student and much more. Knowledge, the subject matter, questions or perspectives and the actors involved in them – lecturers, students, furnishings, spaces, ways of

11 These, in turn, could be designed more consciously. Cf. on this the DaSArts feedback method, https://vimeo.com/97319636, accessed September 12, 2020.

speaking, body performances, the hairstyle, the pointer and so on – are, in turn, produced in the practical execution of teaching and learning. The community gathered in a classroom is here understood as "extended" by the material co-discussants: the beamer that organizes the position of the lecturers in the room, the rows of benches that make the students sit down, and much more.

Modeling

> *On October 8, 2018, I was invited by Colette Baumgartner, environmental educator, exhibition maker, research associate in scenography, to the lab she has developed: "Aufstand der Dinge. Diskutieren, Reflektieren, Konzipieren mit räumlicher Praxis" ('Revolt of Things. Discussing, Reflecting, Conceptualizing with Spatial Practice') at the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK) to lecture on cultural scientific theories of space. The students were to tell me how and where to lecture. Maybe I would have to crawl under the table? But they simply asked me to deliver the presentation lying down. While I imagined this scene in advance in a very theatrical – "artistic" way, the students only made a small – "creative" change: from the vertical to the horizontal. However, this topological change of position already had a great effect: more relaxation, flatter hierarchies between lecturers and students, a free (thinking) space without tables and clearance to the ceiling. However, I missed my PowerPoint presentation, which I always use to structure my lecture. I was also less able to gesture with my arms. If I wanted to demonstrate something performatively, I would have had to roll around on the floor or get up. (Why, I ask myself afterwards, did I not do this at some stage? This setting, too, demanded a certain (body) posture from me – simply a different one). Of course, I pondered afterwards what it would be like if everyone lay down at the university or at a conference. Who exactly dictates how cultural studies should be practiced in the day-to-day of academia and teaching? What would happened if it were always done differently – sometimes like this, sometimes like that?*[12]

In the following, I will provide an exemplary sketch of the *Aufstand der Dinge* lab to show, on the one hand, the theoretical guidelines on this specific research case and, on the other, to make modeling adaptable as a possible didactic approach.

Baumgartner's "training"[13] is an extremely collaborative setting for teaching and learning which also includes things and spaces in the production of knowledge. Modeling can be understood as a plastic way of thinking (Dreissigacker 2015).[14] The knowledge that emerges processually in the interplay of "perceiving" and "modeling" and which is constantly transformed is to be located between "theory" and "practice." The term "*Aufstand*" ('uprising') is chosen deliberately: Baumgartner invites things to revolt, so to speak, in order to leave their suppressed position in the discourse on purely human perception and be recognized as a constitutive part of it. The idea is to work

12 From the research diary. I was also present during other course sessions for participant observation.

13 At the ZHdK, one course can be credited as a training module.

14 "*Modellieren ist Handeln und Denken im Dreidimensionalen*" ('Modeling is acting and thinking in three dimensions') (Dreissigacker 2015: 183).

"at eye level"[15] with things. However, the "Uprising of Things" also means: spatially distributed or deliberately placed things, relational "constellations," "volumes" and "perspectives" which can be perceived in changing, temporary states. In this context, Baumgartner speaks of space as an accomplice in reference to the vocabulary used by the scenographer Thomas Dreissigacker (2015: 182).[16] Spaces, through their specific arrangement, make an offer that can also lead to irritation and "frictions" (Tsing 2005)[17] in the spatial practice with them. In Baumgartner's laboratory, in addition to the work in the course room, various "guest locations" are visited on "nearby excursions" – such as bars, underground garages, the banks of a city river, markets, and a rehearsal stage. It can be modelled in various ways: by sheer perception, a change of position, things found on-site[18] or with the contents of a prepared suitcase, with wooden blocks, index cards or metal things. However, Baumgartner usually tries to work as situationally as possible with what is found on-site. The work proceeds along a three-step process: beginning with the perception of the uprising, at least two states are created subsequently. In the process, material is shifted, the perspective is changed or a cut through space (Rodatz 2010) – a freely chosen imaginary line – enables the recognition of a previously undiscovered "chain of associations."[19] The random character, form and material composition open up an unexpected insight, attention is heightened in this process and the discussion remains figuratively in the consciousness as an experientially learned, physically experienced theory that cannot be entirely verbalized but can, nevertheless, be discussed in action. The conclusion of this process of modeling is the "deconstruction." No fixations are made and no "consumables" are used. This makes it possible to strive for a "work" as the end product of the creative labor. The goal is rather an "*on-going-process of rethinking*" (Brandstetter 2013: 65; emphasis in the original). Discussing, reflecting and conceptualizing, thus, remain bound to the mode of process-oriented doing and ultimately serve to become "*wahrnehmungsschlau*" ('perception smart').[20]

In my interpretation, the expression "*wahrnehmungsschlau*" makes it apparent that it is not only about being able to perceive better in a rather passive sense. The addition of "smart" shows that a "fox with a file" (Latour 1996: 50) is required here who can play with perception and develop counterprograms (Latour 1996; 49). Modeling can be understood as a way of working that transforms perception. In contrast to perceptual exercises – similar to the method of the "*Wahrnehmungsspaziergang*" ('perceptual walk') (e.g. Rolshoven 2001) known in empirical cultural studies – which aim to increase sensory perception, modeling involves more active intervention, displacement

15 Cf. interview with Colette Baumgartner, June 17, 2019.

16 Dreissigacker and Baumgartner draw on the concept of complicity from Gesa Ziemer (2013).

17 I have chosen this reference.

18 Baumgartner uses the term "*objet trouvé*" (cf. Kellerer 1968; Rotzler 1975).

19 I have chosen this reference chosen to show the proximity of Baumgartner's work with things and ANT.

20 Baumgartner takes on this expression from Mira Sack, professor of theatre education at the ZHdK.

and the production of new arrangements in order to change and interrogate perception. Modeling can be further extended for cultural studies knowledge production in the practice of teaching and learning: Concepts and theory content could be transferred to the things that are modeled with – Baumgartner also worked with conceptual mappings from the daily press. The concept of "heteronormativity,"[21] for example, could be discussed: the table (Bichsel 1995) stands for "women," the carpet for "power," the chair for "men," and so on. Because these things bring along their own quality of expression and are shifted, new perspectives on "heteronormativity" emerge. How does the category "women" appear in the position of the table, how does "power" appear as a carpet? Is it relevant whether the carpet is yellow or green? How would "power" show up as a chair to sit on or to be placed on the table? Tracing modeling in writing seems insufficient. In the situation where things are moved together, these actors operate in their phenomenological appearance, whereby processes of thought occur spontaneously and develop collaboratively. After this scenographic (or choreographic, Sklar 2000) positional game, the questions and irritations have an effect (Can power be grasped as a chair? Or: Yes, it can even be touched as a chair) and continue to have a figurative and bodily-sensual effect. Such transmissions do not always have to work: perhaps it shows that it is not possible to connect the category "men" with the table. The table is perhaps too resistant as a thing, and it is through this material self-will that knowledge becomes emergent. One could also model with other actors than with space in empirical cultural studies: it is possible to experiment further with sounds, with one's own body, with images and other things, and even with writing, language and texts.

Regarding modeling, a change of perspective from the "artistic" to the "creative" can be undertaken that is fruitful for empirical cultural studies. Although numerous contributions on artistic research (e.g. Badura et al. 2015) have emerged in recent years that are relevant to the discipline and provide many suggestions for a formative scientific practice, it is, nevertheless, apparent that artistic practices in science are used primarily in the final research step: in the presentation of results and less as tools for reflection. In this way, a more conventional understanding of art sneaks in, in which the artistic (end) product is in the foreground and not the processual nature of creative work.

Something similar applies to courses or seminars in which a joint production is worked out: the artistic is used in a more application-oriented way, for example, to be able to show an exhibition or a film at the end of a course. There are collaborations between artists and scientists, although these two areas remain somewhat separate. However, if the concept of art is understood broadly and the artistic moment is understood as a process of design and materialization, it is possible to work in a different

21 I have chosen this example.

manner and the scientists are forced to reflect on their own techniques of visualization and materialization.

Especially the fluid negotiations of knowledge in settings of teaching and learning offer a suitable milieu for keeping the artistic as the continuous creation, as shaping or reshaping in a processual mode. The circulation of knowledge in teaching and learning remains in motion and unfinished. In the *Aufstand der Dinge* laboratory, for example, "deconstruction," the final step of the work, is intended to consciously undermine "creative imperatives" and fixations towards the work.

Using creative scientific techniques as a tool of teaching and learning practice makes it possible to emphasize the processual and the unfinished more strongly. The intermediate products[22] developed in collaborative work are temporary mediators (Latour 1996: 48) in chains of associations of joint reflexive exchange. Similarly, "mistakes" are allowed, especially in processes of learning. This also gives the modeled settings a different character: people try things by doing, they try to make knowledge content tangible, ready to be discussed and transformed for the respective round of participants by using creative means/mediators. Instead of simply working with PowerPoint presentations and images and, thus, activating the visual sense, these knowledge processes could be arranged in a more active, multiform, dynamic and, thus, multisensory way. This not only provides access for different types of learners and creates a broader, more egalitarian "accessibility" that can promote diversity in the academic world. Moreover, via a more physical-sensual level, knowledge can be deepened and feelings and reflections can be intensified among the participants in terms of the urgencies of why this knowledge is significant and important in the first place, or how it could be used. Furthermore, the material actors get a say – an ANT-oriented perspective on the teaching-learning settings of the discipline.

When creative work is not fixed in the discourse of artistic research, a modeling, formative mode of thinking can be unleashed that is, in fact, fundamental to cultural studies: creative elements such as "Materials, Movements, Lines" – the subtitle of the anthology *Redrawing Anthropology* edited by Ingold – can help shape the "vaults" of perception (Ingold 2016: 1).

Modeling as a creative process of knowledge production in the practice of teaching and learning in empirical cultural studies[23]

Teaching and learning settings are, thus, places of situationally conditioned knowledge production. These could be made more active, diverse and dynamic. For their part,

22 These intermediate products in processes of learning have not yet been explored in depth in the criticism of representation.

23 Although the focus here was mainly on teaching and learning events on-site, this modeling approach can also be applied to the digital practice of teaching and learning. On the occasion of a workshop on digital teaching designed by Sibylle Künzler and Daniel Kunzelmann in the fall semester 2020 at

Fig. 3: Cow pasture in fork and spoon. www.bzbasel.ch/basel/basel-stadt/basler-orchester- spielerisch-kennenlernen-mit-dem-malbuch-zur-musikvermittlung-135903538. Accessed February 1, 2020.

material settings shape knowledge and, conversely, knowledge can be negotiated and changed through them. The design of knowledge and "embodied knowledge" are social trends and should be able to be shaped according to the critical perspectives of cultural studies. In order for empirical cultural studies to be able to intervene here, updated tools and creative know-how are needed. This theoretical and practical "toolbox" has to be compiled during educational training. Active training in creating and practical knowledge in cultural-scientific modeling are needed: In empirical cultural studies, learning and trying out creative practices of knowledge could make thought processes plastic, multifaceted and moving, and the conditions of these knowledge constructions could be reflected upon with a view to possible intervention.[24] Interfering, as a basic interventionistic competence, could be tried out by means of a modeling way of work, by discussing and thinking in the "protected" framework of the open-ended processes

the University of Basel, they developed, for example, the techniques "Think with your Feet" (Sibylle Künzler), with which the material and spatial conditions in front of the screen were more strongly included in the Zoom meeting, or "Go with the Flow" (Daniel Kunzelmann) as active research on the Internet.

24 Such an interventionistic training could be offered in the curriculum as a methods seminar for advanced students.

of the practice of teaching and learning, and be integrated into cultural studies education.

Based on oral feedback, creative work was valued by students not least because "something tangible" was present that made the "intangible" learning content, which is typical of empirical cultural studies, more accessible.[25] By living through this modeling "participatory practice," approaches and concepts which are central to empirical cultural studies, such as anti-essentialist perspectives focused on the relational (Lindner 2002: 93), a focus on the particular (Abu-Lughod 2006: 473) or the Foucauldian dispositive, can be discussed in an experience-based way. Working with things makes it possible to discuss how an arrangement might be changed to counteract powerful orders. In order not to fix installations, it is important to arrange them very carefully and with critical reflection, and to change them again and again by shifting them. In this way, the thought processes can be kept constantly mobile. The resulting irritations and moments of friction enable a perceptual training that aims to explore beyond the self-evident (Rajchman 2000). Following Iris Laner, as a targeted training and expansion of the imagination (2018: 46), such aesthetic education can transductively and playfully expand cognition – for example, to hear a cow pasture in the spoon and fork[26] and to experience in practice that they can be used to do something other than eating.

Modeling teaching can happen in more ways than just by frontal teaching or sitting at group tables: all actors are called upon to become dynamic – to leave their seats, stand around an installation, lie on the floor, vacuum and much more – to become reflexive in processual exchange through experiences of difference, transformation or allowed friction. The role of the lecturers changes in the modeling community of practice: they are co-initiators of knowledge engaged in research, they are companions and counterpoints of individual learning processes and, in turn, learning from others and part of the participatory processes of construction in-situ.

Creative knowledge practices and established work techniques are by no means mutually exclusive. However, there seem to be implicit guidelines: in a teaching experiment, for example, I painted Foucault's nose red instead of reading his texts or citing his theory in order not to remain stuck on the level of reproduction or understanding,[27] but to create something new beyond that by trying out and transferring the contents

25 This oral feedback, quoted loosely here, originates from an introductory course in which we discussed the stations described by Lindner (2002) as cultural concept installations.

26 Cf. a listening exercise we conducted in my seminar "Artistic Knowledge Practices – Reflection and Training" in the spring semester 2020 at the University of Basel. Accessed February 1, 2020. www.bzbasel.ch/basel/basel-stadt/basler-orchester-spielerisch-kennenlernen-mit-dem-malbuch-zur-musikvermittlung-135903538.

27 With this creative-playful technique as a means of training for one's own empowerment, I refer to Doris Stauffer, artist and co-founder of the F+F (initially Schule für experimentelle Gestaltung ['School for Experimental Design'], later Schule für Form und Farbe ['School for Form and Color'], today Schule für Kunst und Design ['School for Art and Design']) (e.g. Küng 2019).

(Bloom 1976). Cultural studies modeling can go hand in hand with an empowering moment to actively construct (Leimgruber 2014: 33) and want to be involved in shaping the collectives and networks of contemporary everyday life. Although empirical cultural studies seem to be permeable for such "different" formats, it is, nevertheless, astonishing how often lecturers find themselves back in a classical setting. Time structures, the fear of a loss of authority in the role of a lecturer, expectations also on the part of the students, the furnishings and similar factors have a limiting effect on the possibilities and diversity of expression as powerful factors in the "hegemonic struggle" (Shear and Hyatt 2015: 13). This shows, all the more, how necessary a cultural studies modeling of the practices of teaching and learning is in order to carry out a "*rupture d'évidence*" (Rajchman 2000: 44) with such powerful arrangements. Cultural studies modeling can, thus, also be understood in a certain sense as "ontological politics" (Mol 1999) of actively asserting empirical cultural studies in the dominant educational context in the "minor key" (Ingold 2018: 37–57)[28] and to model it in many ways on the reflective level of tactical "micro-practices" (Beck, Niewöhner, and Sørensen 2012a: 21).

Epilogue

At the beginning, I was swinging in the hammock in the narrative space of this text. Now, I am already sitting here a little cramped, hacking the letters into the computer with the hunt and peck technique. Nonetheless, I invite anyone who might ever discuss this contribution in their "sessions" or modeling labs to do with it what they want (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 40 f.) – to scramble up a climbing wall, read it while sailing on a steamboat, study it while sitting mindfully in an office chair, cut up a printout, or rock back and forth with it in the hammock on a boring summer afternoon to see what emerges.

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28 With the term "minor", Ingold refers to Gille Deleuze and Félix Guattari, who, in turn, introduce this pair of opposites of "minor" and "major" in *A Thousand Plateaus* (cf. Ingold 2018: 37).

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Follow the tracks

On the methodology of tracing in ethnographic cultural analysis*

Abstract: The search for tracks as a knowledge practice represents a fundamental methodology of European ethnology. Developed on the basis of an empirical study on music collecting, the text embarks on a "search for tracks" in ethnographic working disciplines. As an example, it is proposed to understand the search for tracks programmatically as a comprehensive methodology of ethnographic-cultural-analytical research into everyday life, following Rolf Lindner's cultural analysis and the 'follow the actor' imperative of praxeographic approaches, which, furthermore, also includes questions of textual representation.

Keywords: ethnography, methodology, tracks, tracking, popular culture, ethnographic writing

Pick up the trail

'Tracking' is a term often used in ethnographic cultural analysis to describe methodological procedures.[1] What it means in detail often remains vague, and questions arise: does the term "search for tracks" refer to a concrete method or stand metaphorically for a kind of open search movement, which is considered the ideal of ethnographic research? What are these traces that are being followed? Are they intersubjectively recognizable or are traces first created or staged by researchers? Whither do these traces lead, and to what do they refer? What is their relationship to each other and what idea of 'field' does this imply? And what effects does the search for traces have on text production? In other words, how is it reflected in ethnography?[2]

I would like to explore these questions in my contribution by way of example. For this purpose, the text undertakes a 'search for tracks' in ethnographic working disci-

* German version in *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 2021, LXXV/124, Heft 2: 181–208. The text and quotations in German have been translated by Philip Saunders.

1 The terms 'trace' and 'tracking' can be found in numerous thematically and theoretically very different texts, some of which are the subject of the following remarks. See e. g. Latour 2005; Marcus 1995; Tsing 2015; Massmünster 2017; . Moreover, the terms are often used as (sub)titles of publications, lectures or courses. They seem to be placeholders for an 'inductive approach' and do not play a conceptual role beyond that. See e. g. Bürkert et al. 2019.

2 I understand ethnography as a (multi-)methodological approach, epistemological perspective and representational practice. See Schmidt-Lauber 2010: 54.

plines. My aim is to synthesize different partly established, partly newer approaches of 'tracking' in the discipline and related disciplines and point out the consequences of a programmatic implementation of ethnographic tracking such as I will propose.

The philosopher Sybille Krämer has described the art of reading tracks as a universal art of knowledge, which is not only an "archaic remnant of a 'wild knowledge'" (Krämer 2007: 11), but represents a central epistemological moment of many disciplines – in both the humanities and the natural sciences.[3] In addition, reading the tracks illustrates "how everyday practices and scientific procedures intertwine" (Krämer 2007: 11). This is especially true for ethnographic disciplines.[4] A central thesis of this text is, therefore, that the search for tracks represents a fundamental epistemology of ethnographic cultural analysis that can connect different research perspectives, albeit – as I will show – under varying theoretical auspices, methodological implications and, consequently, different conceptions of what is conceived as a 'trace.' What I propose beyond this stocktaking is to link the search for tracks with questions of textual representation.

Feedback between field and desk: ethnographic tracks

The following reflections arose in connection with my research project *Pop-Musik sammeln. Zehn ethnografische Tracks zwischen Plattenladen und Streamingportal* ('Collecting Pop Music. Ten Ethnographic Tracks between the Record Store and the Streaming Portal'). In this project, I described the practice of collecting music in the form of ten tracks that can be understood as ethnographic short stories (Elster 2021). The tracks, so I argue therein, are more than a linguistic image that refers to the piece of music or the soundtrack. They are also an expression (or imprint) of my methodological and theoretical-epistemological approach, my cultural-analytical search for traces. The tracks examine the topic of music collecting from different perspectives. There are several tracks on practices associated with collecting, such as rummaging, organizing or sorting out; on media artifacts, such as the record, the iPod, Spotify or the object biography of a CD; on spaces associated with collecting, such as the record store; and on cultural figures, such as the collector. They all approach the topic with varying methods and the help of different theoretical concepts.

These tracks are framed by an intro and a final hidden track, a conclusion, which finally takes up, arranges and bundles these 'tracks.' I interpret music collecting as a multilayered, technically grounded, subjectivizing practice and everyday competence, which also takes on a sense- and world-creating character in the course of digitalization. The tracks, I would argue for the use of this text structure, allow the complexity

3 On the search for traces in scientific disciplines, see e. g. Bock von Wülfing 2017.

4 Ethnographic methods, such as participant observation and the interview, can be understood as systematized everyday practices. See e. g. Schmidt-Lauber 2007 [2001]: 221.

and ambiguity to be mapped, and help to avoid leveling them in the linearity of the text.

Orvar Löfgren and Billy Ehn, in the last chapter of their study *The Secret World of Doing Nothing*, search for traces in their own material (2010). Similar to archaeologists, they try to reconstruct their methodical approach by means of notes, drafts, exposés, and earlier versions of their manuscript. This, they write, they do not do in order to derive a recipe for 'how to do cultural analysis' from a "messy"[5] research process typical of ethnographic research. Instead, the aim is to understand how a project transforms in the course of research, i. e., what influence the exploratory searching, writing, linking and rewriting has on the researchers' relationship to their research topic and, thus, on their analysis (Ehn and Löfgren 2010: 218). Inspired by this approach, I also question my research and reflect on what the search for traces achieves. It can be stated that my ethnographic foraging as well as its textual representation in the form of tracks are in a kind of feedback process that has emerged between the observation of pop-cultural collecting practices and my research-based tracking. Music collecting is also a tracking that parallels ethnographic research practices, which, as I will show later, has brought home to me key aspects of each. The methodological considerations formulated here are, thus, by no means to be considered in isolation but as the result of feedback between 'field' and 'desk.' The following sections are, therefore, each preceded by small vignettes – traces – from my work on music collecting.

The course of argumentation

I will first collate various approaches to the search for traces in the subject of European ethnology and question them regarding their epistemic potential. These are partly contradictory to each other and have been formulated from different cultural-theoretical positions. My aim is not to resolve these inconsistencies, but to ask what they each achieve, what view they allow of the object of investigation, and how differences between them can be made productive. In doing so, I am also following up on considerations that were the central subject of the dgv university conference *Äußerungen. Die Oberfläche als Gegenstand und Perspektive der Europäischen Ethnologie* ('Statements. The Surface as the Subject and Perspective of European ethnology'). In the introductory text of the corresponding anthology, Timo Heimerdinger outlines debates about "the surface" (which is empirically accessible) and its counterpart, "the depth" (which is interpretatively accessed from surface phenomena), as well as cultural understandings that are associated with them (also in terms of subject history) (2013). Concepts of tracing, as I will show in the course of my paper and discuss in the conclusion, also draw

5 The authors note: "In the secure world of research handbooks a study proceeds in well-planned steps, driven by clear ideas about aims, materials, and methods. In cultural analysis the process tends to be messier [...]" (Ehn and Löfgren 2010: 217).

on these notions of depth and surface. I will show that in combination they circumvent this problematic dichotomous separation and open up multidimensional analytical perspectives.

I propose to understand tracking as a program that not only includes multidirectional empirical-methodical search movements and a specific epistemic gaze, but, in a further development, also includes textual production. Therefore, I outline below four approaches or aspects of the search for traces that are present in the subject and seem to me to be particularly relevant: (1) circumstantial paradigm: here, the search for clues is conceived as a movement into depth that reveals what is hidden. (2) Serendipity: in connection with this concept of the only apparent chance find, forensics appears as an open search movement and requires specific research attention. (3) *Follow the actor* imperative: in contrast to the circumstantial paradigm, the trace in multi-sited ethnography and actor-network theory is conceived of as a connection that points to the surface, not the depth. (4) *Writing tracks*: in the light of the *Writing Culture* debate, I finally explore the question of what textual forms of representation tracking can lead to.

Trace 1 – Circumstantial paradigm

Moritz was a real collector, a real freak, my neighbor had told me. I urgently needed to interview him for my research. A few weeks later, I met Moritz in a bar. He had collected several thousand records and his hard drives were overflowing with music, he reported. We talked for almost two hours and agreed to talk again. But it never came to that. Moritz could no longer be reached. When we met by chance, he avoided eye contact; on Facebook, he 'unfriended' me. After relistening to the recording of our conversation several times, I noticed that it faltered oddly at some points. "Have you talked to real collectors, too?," he asked me several times. He anticipated in the conversation itself that he might be perceived as "weird," "problematic" or "extreme." It seemed to me afterwards that he might have feared that I would interpret his behavior as neurotic or somehow pathological – a familiar pattern of interpretation when it comes to collectors in 'science and media.' As if for protection, he anticipated an analysis – which he perhaps feared. I encountered the rejection of the term 'collector' as a self-attribution even more often in the course of the research, although not as explicitly. I interpreted this as an indication that there must be a notion of what a 'real collector' is in the air that is identity-effective for Moritz – in a way that made it impossible for him to position himself as a collector to me as a researcher.

Jens Wietschorke describes the "heuristics and methodology of 'trackers'" in European ethnology with its focus on "small sections of reality" as a traditional procedure (2013: 26). The view of the inconspicuous, the incidental, sometimes even the banal has always been an established approach to research topics in folkloristic and cultural studies; the "trivia" are the subject.[6] Microhistorian Carlo Ginzburg theorized this turn to supposed trivialities as a "circumstantial paradigm" in his essay *Spurensicherung* ('Securing Evidence'). Ginzburg recognizes parallels between the methodology of Freudian psychoanalysis, the detective approach of Sherlock Holmes and the procedure of the art historian Giovanni Morelli, who exposed art forgeries on the basis of seemingly unimportant details, such as messily traced fingers, for the late 19th century. "In all three cases, infinitely fine traces allow us to capture a deeper reality that is otherwise inaccessible. Traces, more precisely: symptoms (in Freud's case), clues (in Sherlock Holmes' case) and picturesque details (in Morelli's case)" (Ginzburg 2011: 17). Ginzburg identifies the origin of this circumstantial paradigm in a medical semiotic: "a science that allows us to diagnose diseases unattainable by direct observation by means of surface symptoms that sometimes seem irrelevant in the eyes of the layman [...]" (2011: 17). Even though, according to Ginzburg, the roots of tracking go back much further – "[for] thousands of years man was a hunter," (2011: 18) he writes, romanticizing the epistemological practice of tracking as a kind of anthropological constant – he locates the circumstantial paradigm at the end of the 19th century.

Rolf Lindner refers to Carlo Ginzburg in several places, and in his text *Spür-Sinn: Oder: Die Rückgewinnung der Andacht zum Unbedeutenden* ('Tracking Sense: or: the Recovery of Devotion to the Insignificant') he argues for a methodical turn to the supposed trivialities, which, following Ginzburg, can be read as clues, as traces (2011). Lindner illustrates this with photographs. In one photograph, which he takes from a volume by the writer Wilhelm Genazino, it is the pillows behind a posing woman; in another, which shows the former German Chancellor Willy Brandt with his two sons in the hallway at home, it is the key rack next to the front door that, according to Lindner, allows greater conclusions to be drawn about the social milieu of those depicted than the carefully staged main motif (2011: 163). "Traces are not made, but left unintentionally," Krämer describes a key attribute of traces, which here, in Lindner's methodology, represents the central epistemic moment (2007: 16). The unintentionally (co-)photographed becomes the focus of analysis and is interpreted as a telltale trace. But where does it lead? What does it suggest? The trace is caused by the social milieu of the person depicted, which is formally imprinted in the pillow or the key rack – in other words, in their taste. Lindner's concise interpretations do not allow for any polysemy as to what else the trace could refer to; at least, he does not make it explicit. The cultural or social deep grammar to which the traces refer, thus, appears indexically, as totality. Reading traces, as Sybille Krämer makes clear, is always observer-dependent. Traces are not found, but produced (through interpretation). The question therefore arises: what does this interpretation of the trace actually reveal about the tracker? Does the interpretation in the end say more about the researcher Lindner than about the originator of the trace, the social

6 Wietschorke names the interest in the banal and the trivial as a "basis of epistemology in cultural studies," referring to Martin Scharfe's Bagatellen (1995). See Wietschorke 2005.

milieu of the depicted? "To read a trace is to transform the disturbed order to which the trace formation owes its existence into a new order" (Krämer 2007: 17). The disorder, in Lindner's sociologically trained eyes, represents an incongruence between bodily pose and material culture, which he sees as being in a telltale relationship to one another. The new order into which Lindner transfers the trace is based on the sociological or cultural-scientific knowledge of social milieus and the assumption, made explicit above all by Pierre Bourdieu, that social structure inscribes itself as habitus in body and taste (Bourdieu 1982) – and, thus, indirectly also in the things with which people surround themselves. Lindner's reading of the traces, therefore, reveals a certain amount about his theoretical preferences, research interests, his own social position and, based on the selection of photographs, perhaps also his sense of humor. What is revealed here above all, however, is that all knowledge is situated (Haraway 1988). In the case of the quest for traces, this becomes particularly clear: traces only appear as such in the eyes of those searching for them, and they only gain meaning through interpretation.[7]

The irritation described at the beginning, which had arisen in the conversation with my interview partner Moritz, was based on a somewhat different 'disturbance' than the one just described. Moritz, the owner of a substantial music collection, did not want to be understood as a collector. I interpreted this as an indication that there must be an image and a kind of ideal type of collector from which he would like to distinguish himself. This assumption led to a targeted search movement in my research: I was sensitized to images, literary texts, feature articles, psychological literature, films and online videos that have collectors as their subject. These materials opened up a broad panorama of imaginaries and attributions. Collectors (usually male) appear here as connoisseurs, preservers and experts, but also as (anal) neurotics, freaks, hoarders, nerds or "junkies."[8] The track I have followed does not refer to any totality or structurally unambiguous "deep cultural grammar." The manifold attributions, according to my interpretation, condense into a shimmering cultural figure to which collectors relate, to which they can position themselves.[9] At any rate, this is the new order, the discursive cultural-scientific proposition into which I transferred the trace through whose lens I interpreted it. Here, too, it becomes clear: "Something is not a trace, but is read as a

7 Within the framework of interpretive workshops, as they take place, for example, in the working group Wiener Werkstatt Ethnographie ('Vienna Workshop Ethnography'), attempts are made to counter possible (narrow) readings of empirical materials through collective interpretations. Similar efforts are made by groups oriented towards ethnopsychoanalytic approaches, where the person of the researcher is of particular importance. See e. g. Bonz et al. 2017.

8 In particular, supposedly negative, pathologizing attributes are also negotiated affirmatively and playfully in pop cultural contexts. An impressive example of this is the term 'vinyl junkies,' which functions as an attribution to others and oneself. In extreme cases, this person has lost control of his or her 'passion for collecting,' but is also the one who knows the 'good stuff.'

9 This has culminated in the track *Der Sammler als (Anti-)Figur* (Elster 2021: 143–160). On the concept of the cultural figure, see Ege 2013: 49–74; Ege and Wietschorke 2014.

trace" (Krämer 2007: 16). The inattention of the person who leaves the traces and the attention of the tracker who finds and identifies the traces are the obverse and reverse of the trace in the sense of the circumstantial paradigm (Krämer 2007: 17). Tracking, therefore, always has something to do with speculation.[10] The "sense of intuition" that Linder calls for in this context has a more general meaning in ethnographic research and points beyond the methodology of the circumstantial paradigm. This describes a researcher's attitude, which leads me to a second track.

Trace 2 – Serendipity

Browsing is an essential part of music collecting, whether in the record store, on the CD shelf at home or in the offerings of streaming services, where browsing can become programmatic and guided by algorithms. A central aspect of browsing is the chance find. Discovering a recording or a song by chance, however, is more preconditioned than the term suggests. On the one hand, openness is required to discover new things. In addition, prior knowledge is necessary, without which chance cannot be recognized as such. When I 'accidentally' came across the concept of serendipity, sensitized by my interest in rummaging, it not only changed my view of this practice by suggesting a cultural studies interpretation of it. The obvious parallels between 'academic' and 'pop-cultural' rummaging also made it clear that the search for traces is not limited to an 'empirical field,' it is also crucial in the search for literature, theoretical concepts, and sources as well as methods, and in this interconnectedness, it also influences the analysis.

Krämer points out how closely "'tracking,' i. e. the act of picking up and following a scent ('sniffing!')" is related to the trace in terms of etymology (2007: 13). According to Lindner, perceiving the trace as such requires "an unorthodox and unprejudiced receptivity that engages with what it encounters and also considers the deviant, peripheral, and accidental" (2011: 167).

Lindner connects this notion of a sense of intuition with the concept of serendipity (2012). He characterizes the methodology and attention it presupposes in his text *Zum Wesen der Kulturanalyse* ('On the Essence of Cultural Analysis') as follows:

> 'Entering' a theme, an object means 'living' this theme, this object for a time. Not only in the sense of classical field research, but in the total sense of a researcher who opens all his senses, who sees, hears, smells, tastes, feels, who is constantly on the trail and tracks down sources, who thinks (of) nothing but (of) his object in order to be able to 'grasp' it. He must stalk his object, circle around it, penetrate it, encounter it in a perverse way, sometimes even give it the cold shoulder, in order to gain new stimuli from its opposite, the antipode. He will meet the object, if he abandons himself to it totally,

10 The aspect of the speculative appears particularly acute when traces are interpreted as signs of the future, as Arjun Appadurai suggested in his lecture *Traces of the Future* at the Berlin Institute Colloquium on April 20, 2021.

> in the most impossible places. [...] Then, and only then, the way is also cleared for the chance hit, for the experience of *serendipity* [emphasis in original, author's note], yet chance [...] helps only the prepared minds. (Lindner 2012)

The linguistic images that Lindner draws on here – researchers would have to be permanently on the "trail," "stalking" their subject and "tracking down" sources – evoke associations with hunting and make one think of Ginzburg, who introduces tracking as an archaic practice. This undoubtedly carries the danger of romanticizing ethnographic research and the figure of the researcher, who is imagined here as male and appears at least implicitly as a daring and perhaps pretentious adventurer.[11] Nevertheless, an open, multi-method approach is introduced into the field, which proves to be fruitful for cultural analyses of everyday life. While the search for traces in the sense of orientation is often used as a metaphor to describe the "orientation in the field" that is especially necessary at the beginning of qualitative research, this procedure seems more comprehensive and central here. The object of research is opened up by searching for traces.

Michel Massmünster refers to Lindner in his study *Im Taumel der Nacht. Urbane Imaginationen, Rhythmen und Erfahrungen* ('In the Rapture of the Night. Urban Imaginations, Rhythms and Experiences') and works with the concept of traces (2017). He writes:

> Cultural analysis does not start from a pre-structured existing and consequently 'ascertainable' object or field of research, nor from structures that are merely to be uncovered, but from the fact that the field is constantly being redeveloped. Cultural analysis, thus understood, harnesses the insight that science can never investigate something independent of inquiry that would exist objectively and independently of perspective, language and concepts. (Massmünster 2017: 46)

In this constructivist view, the object of research is first produced in the search process. "The traces do not exist independently of me, but are produced when I follow connections," Massmünster states (2017: 50). This can be further refined: the potentiality to read something as a trace, its creation, exists very well intersubjectively, independent of the researcher. But the trace becomes a trace and is generated as such only when it is grasped. In this context, it is also important to reflect on which traces are not (or cannot be) discovered or have not been consciously traced. Traces can, for example, remain invisible or seem uninteresting from the social or gender-specific position of a

11 This competence of tracking down traces is reflected in a whole series of (explorer) figures. Robert Ezra Park propagated "nosing around" in the city. Before his career as a sociologist, Park worked as a reporter for tabloid newspapers. Lindner sees a connection between Park's work as a reporter and the methodology of later Chicago-style urban sociology, which relied heavily on ethnographic research methods. The gallery of stereotypical figures of tracking, which Ginzburg filled with the hunter, psychoanalyst, detective and art historian, is now supplemented here by the reporter who develops into an ethnographer. See Lindner 2007.

researcher. Questions that direct the view or simply practical research questions can also lead to certain traces being disregarded or eluding researchers.[12]

Massmünster identifies moments of serendipity in his research: "My search for traces was at times characterized by a seemingly aimless buzzing around and by readings found by chance that took me further and opened up new questions" (2017: 46). The sensitivity to recognize traces as such depends on the prior knowledge and the research question of the researcher and is much less 'unsystematic' or 'random,' as is often associated with "serendipity."

The moment of serendipity described at the beginning, which I experienced when I became aware of this very concept, did not only influence the chapter on rummaging. My research subject of music collecting increasingly mirrored my entire ethnographic work. I recognized aspects of the one in the other and vice versa. Similar to many music fans, ethnographers are also passionate collectors: instead of browsing record stores or streaming portals, they browse libraries and online catalogs, collecting research literature and field notes, recordings of interviews and informal conversations, newspaper clippings, and Internet finds that, like music collectors on streaming portals, increasingly come to their attention through algorithmically generated suggestions.[13] They try to put what they have collected into context, to order the material. They have to sort out elements and part with ideas, as do some collectors of recordings or files that no longer fit into the collection for various reasons. Just as a music collection can never be complete in view of the abundance of available music, ethnography (not only that of 'modern societies') also inevitably remains incomplete, fragmentary. The modern idea that the world can be collected in its entirety seems futile in both cases. Research fields have long since ceased to be imagined as closed spaces, but as open, dynamic webs "of relationships, connections, influences, and alignments that point in all directions and to different levels" (Massmünster 2017: 51). These cannot be holistically opened up, but can merely be made visible or produced partially – in traces – and only from certain perspectives that are to be reflected upon. The search for traces as a tentative and situated method(olog)ic movement corresponds to this understanding of the subject and brings forth the concept of the field. Just like music collecting, ethnographic tracking is not a purely rational practice based exclusively on explicit knowledge, but is guided by affects, emotions and tacit knowledge, not infrequently grounded in (media) technology, and influenced by moments of serendipity.

12 On the withdrawal paradigm, see Levy 2007.

13 The anthropologist Nick Seaver, who has ethnographically researched developers of *recommender* algorithms, theorizes these programs as traps in which users are supposed to get caught. The digital traces that users create through their media usage are the basis for optimizing suggestions and making the traps more effective. The traces left behind, thus, influence the course of the (pop-cultural and exploratory) search for traces, which must increasingly be understood as technically grounded. See Seaver 2019: 423. Many thanks to the anonymous reviewer for this literature reference.

Trace 3 – Follow the actor

The history of the vinyl record can be read as 'one track.' Chronologically descending, it then leads from the so-called vinyl revival of recent years to its near disappearance in the 1990s, through its pop-cultural heyday in the 1960s and 1970s, back to its invention by Emil Berliner in the 1880s. That, at least, would be one possible narrative. But its history can also be read 'in traces' (Timm 2013: 57).[14] *At every conceivable point of the outlined time span, traces lead in all possible directions away from and through the record. These traces refer to different subjects (e.g. pressing plant operators, label owners, dealers, DJs, cover designers, collectors), practices (e.g. recording, designing, making, rummaging, arranging, putting on, sorting out), places (e.g. pressing plants, record stores, shelves), discourses (e.g. novels, films, advertising, pictures, magazines), meanings (e.g. memory carriers, authenticity, nostalgia, coolness), and so on. Interpreted in this way, traces are no longer to be understood (only) as indications that are followed with a sense of sleuthing. Instead, they form paths and connecting lines that are to be followed in cultural analysis, that are to be traced. When viewed from above, they allow the record to appear as part of a structure.*

In connection with the circumstantial paradigm or the concept of serendipity, traces tend to be picked up passively or discovered by chance in research practice. In other contexts, the search for traces turns out to be more active and directed. "Traces" and "tracking" are particularly prominent in George Marcus' "Multi-sited Ethnography." In the mid-1990s, against the backdrop of virulent globalization debates, George Marcus proposed the methodology of a mobile ethnography (1995: 102). "Tracing paths and discovering connections, 'tracing' and 'tracking' – in other words, finding and following traces – are subsequently the central tasks of mobile field research," says Gisela Welz (1998: 184), who introduced Marcus' concept to the German-language professional discourse at the end of the 1990s, summarizing the main concern of multi-sited ethnography. Marcus uses studies from different research directions to show what a mobilization of research or multiplication of "sites" – in contrast to the classical ethnological "single-sited" field research, which is limited to one (more or less 'artificially' limited) place as a field – can look like. The assumption of an increasingly mobilized and globalizing world guides Marcus to form a set of methodological imperatives: follow the people, follow the thing, follow the metaphor, follow the story, follow the life or biography, and follow the conflict (1995: 106ff.). "Instead of claiming holistic cultural capture, multi-sited ethnography takes a look at cultural dynamics and linkages, threads, pathways, and connections, and is involved in different research designs and questions that follow people, things, metaphors and symbols, narratives or conflicts," writes Brigitta Schmidt-Lauber (2009: 240). The search for traces, thus, becomes potentially global and

14 Timm points out that Michel Foucault (1981) reads documents not *as traces* that point to a totality, but rather *as traces* on the surface.

is no longer limited to supposedly 'small sections of reality' that are holistically examined. Although Marcus understands "*multisitedness*" not only in spatial-geographical terms, his approach has also been taken up (Hess and Schwertl 2013: 27) in European ethnology, primarily in transregional or -national fields, for example, in the context of migration research. In this context, the perspective of multisitedness and spatially bound research are not to be understood as opposites. "Field research based on the principle of immersion and prolonged presence in a place need [...] by no means lead to the construction of closed horizons. On the contrary, paths and connections can also be recognized and opened up from a locus of research" (Schmidt-Lauber 2009: 247). But in terms of research practice, what does it mean to follow people, things, metaphors, etc.? What traces do they leave behind that can be 'tracked'? Marcus leaves this question only vaguely answered. However, the trace appears implicitly less as a (material) imprint of a movement or structure, which is tracked diachronically and interpreted as an indication, and more as a "trajectory" (Marcus 1995: 96), as a straight flight path, which is traced more or less synchronously. How this can be implemented methodically in detail – especially on a global scale – can only be understood in a casuistic way on the basis of concrete studies.

Considering my research, this kind of following appears manifold: from the statements of an interviewee, who in her remarks has laid a trail to a topic, a person, a place, which I have followed, to go-alongs in record stores, which represent a 'following on the heels,' to production processes, trade routes and economies, which I have tried to trace. Parts of this project resulted in the track *The Biography of a Spice Girls* CD. Following Arjun Appadurai's idea of a *Social Life of Things* (1986)[15] and Igor Kopytoff's explicit notion of a biography of things (1986), I combined various research materials and brought them into a conceivable, but empirically found, context. This methodological trick, inspired by ethnofiction, makes it possible to trace the object from its production, through appropriation by various actors and the reproduction of the object's biography in an online exchange, to the death of the CD as trash. *Follow the thing* can, thus, sometimes require unconventional approaches.

In the context of actor-network theory, Marcus' imperatives shrink to a terse "follow the actor" (Latour 2005), referring to both human and nonhuman actors. In order to trace the social, Bruno Latour urges "to trace connections" in *Reassambling the Social* (2005: 1). Elisabeth Timm writes that "traces [in the ANT perspective, author's note] [are] seen as laid or activated rather than found and existing" (2013: 56). And, compared to the circumstantial paradigm, they differ fundamentally in their orientation: "When we speak of traces here, they do not lead vertically to causes or entities, but horizontally to conflations whose open flanks are always thematized as well" (Timm 2013: 61). It is not deeper structures and orders that are of interest here, but fleeting oc-

15 Marcus cites this text as an example of multi-sited ethnography.

currences and situational associations. "'Connections' are not of interest in a structured way, but at best as temporary 'stabilizations' that always refer to their having become or becoming (but precisely not to history!)" (Timm 2013: 62). Traces point to the surface, not to the depth, and they do not hide anything. When researchers trace them, they lie open on the surface as connections. *To trace*, therefore, means less 'tracing' than 'drawing' tracks. Timm criticizes the reduction to this two-dimensional search for traces, which she observes, above all, in the field of social anthropology of the life sciences as well as in science and technology research. As a "praxeography" it would be unjustifiably positioned as a methodological innovation in these contexts.[16]

In fact, the mere description of these connections, which Latour describes as the most important research task, can only be an intermediate step from the point of view of an interpretive ethnographic cultural analysis. The 'blind spots' of actor-network theory – primarily its focus on the situation, which knows no structures, no history, no 'cultural context' – can be put forward as an argument against ANT, if one understands European ethnology as a 'contextual science' that argues historically, certainly in the sense of cultural studies. Nevertheless, this theoretical approach to empirical cultural studies offers more than the metaphorical twist of understanding the trace as a horizontal connection between actors, even if its context of origin, the natural science laboratory, does not make a transfer to everyday cultural questions smooth (Timm 2013: 74). Jens Wietschorke sees the possibility of reading the concept of a network as a plea for "starting from the material practices – which can be traced ethnographically – in which artifacts, things, people, signs, norms, organizations, texts and many other things are linked together, forming a network of *connections* [emphasis in original, author's note]" when describing contexts (2005: 343).

Following collecting practices, the vinyl record appears polysemous in the hands of different actors and from different standpoints of the network of relationships: as a nostalgic artifact, as a hip merchandising object, as an audiophile recording medium and as a memory store. The groove of the record, which has stored traces of a musical event (voice, sound, atmosphere), connects with biographical events, situations, places and meanings. Situationally, in dealing with the record, in listening to and looking at the cover, these emerge and form a structure that can be traced ethnographically. It is important to keep in mind that ethnographers not only follow traces and (re)draw them, they also leave traces in the field, through their interests, their questions, their way of confronting people with their practices and worldviews that are unquestioned in everyday life. This happens during the research process as well as afterwards, through the publication, with which the research itself becomes part of this web of relationships (Massmünster 2017: 47). This leads me to one last trace.

16 Timm refers in her critique, for example, to works by Michi Knecht and Stefan Beck. See Knecht 2012.

Trace 4 – Writing Tracks[17]

The search for traces of music collecting resulted in a text that consists of ten tracks. These tracks are not simply tracings put down on paper or descriptive tracings of the tracks I came across or that were left for me. They are again interpretations, constructions preceded by a change of perspective. This fragmentary-seeming textual production does not aim at the 'grand narrative,' as the classical monograph ideally does; it does not level 'partial truths,' but exposes them. The text is more like a playlist, which is always incomplete and can potentially be continued, than a self-contained concept album. The tracks enter into conflict, depicting contradictions and complexity. Connected to this is a theoretical eclecticism: each track is contextualized with the help of different theoretical approaches. Theory is a lens, not an all-encompassing corset.

Following the Writing Culture debate (Berg and Fuchs 1995; Clifford and Marcus 1986) in which a crisis of representation was diagnosed, there has been increased experimentation with different forms of (scientific) writing (Binder 2015: 109). Beate Binder emphasizes "that the challenges of ethnographic representation can only be met if form and content remain related to each other" (2015: 122). Calling the chapters of my study 'tracks'[18] could be interpreted as an attempt (or need?) to write myself close to the 'field' in which I am involved as a music fan, collector and researcher (Bönisch-Brednich 2001). However, the tracks also have other, epistemological dimensions, which I would like to explain by means of an example.

American cultural anthropologist Anna Tsing tracks down the matsutake mushroom in her book *The Mushroom at the End of the World* (2019). This mushroom, which is considered a delicacy in Japan, grows on industrially ruined soil and cannot be cultivated. The mushroom is circumstantial – a material, intersubjectively recognizable trace – that points to an economic system and its forms of exploitation, which gives Tsing grounds for a critique of capitalism. To this end, she traces and establishes connections between people, plants, animals, soils and capitalist ruins.[19] These interconnections can be described as decentered and posthumanist, and they are global in scale. Tsing radically transfers her search for traces in these ramifications to her text. She writes on its structure:

> Following a mushroom, this book offers [...] true stories. Unlike most scholarly books, what follows is a riot of short chapters. I wanted them to be like the flushes of mushrooms that come up after a rain: an over-the-top bounty; a temptation to explore; an always too many. The chapters build an open-ended assemblage, not a logical machine;

17 *Writing Tracks* evokes associations not only with the *Writing Culture*, but also with the ANT-inspired *Writing Networks* debate, to which I link by implication. See Färber 2013: 61f.

18 'Track' refers to several things in pop culture: the trace on the tape or digital recording program is called a track, as is the groove on the record. In addition, pieces of music, especially in the context of electronic music, are called tracks.

19 Tsing laid the foundation for an "ethnography of global connection" much earlier. See Tsing 2004.

> they gesture to the so-much-more out there. They tangle with and interrupt each other – mimicking the patchiness of the world I am trying to describe. Adding another thread, the photographs tell a story alongside the text but do not illustrate it directly. I use images to present the spirit of my argument rather than the scenes I discuss. (Tsing 2015: viii)

The traces of the mushroom that Tsing follows here are reminiscent of George Marcus' traces. Tsing traveled the world for years for her study, seeking out places where the mushroom grows and is collected (USA, Japan, Canada, China, Finland). She follows the matsutake as a nonhuman actor and, through it, comes into contact with people who collect it, eat it, trade in it – and who themselves often have migratory biographies. Starting from the mushroom and the network of relationships that surrounds it, she develops a view of the capitalist present. In her introduction, she juxtaposes "scholarly books" – presumably meaning classic monographs – with her book of short chapters that spring up like mushrooms. She, thus, establishes an aesthetic connection to her object of study, which seems idiosyncratic, wild and difficult to calculate. The analogy, however, is much more far-reaching. The notion of the field as an "open-ended assemblage" is applied to the text, which, like the underground network of mushrooms, resembles an open structure, a rhizome.[20] By contrast, the "logical machine" evokes associations with a rational modernity in which, ideally, everything can be deduced and resolved without contradiction. The rhizome as a text is the anti-monograph,[21] the opposite of the 'grand narrative,' and, according to Tsing, suitable to represent the complex patchiness of the world. The atmospheric underscoring of what is said, which Tsing attributes to the pictures attached, is, thus, largely already provided by the text. Tsing also refers to various theoretical currents in her chapters. Stefan Wellgraf writes about this: Tsing is

> […] drawing, among other things, on a feminist philosophy of technology to destabilize the distinction between nature and culture, and elaborates on unusual value chains with reference to (post-)Marxist discussions. In doing so, however, she places the mushroom, rather than the theories, at the center of her ethnography, taking stylistic cues from mushroom analogies and constructing her text as a kind of rhizomatic web. Such an approach requires an unorthodox understanding of theory, the ability to as-

20 Tim Ingold argues for a similar understanding of the field in *Eine kurze Geschichte der Linien* ('A Brief History of Lineages') (2021). Curiously, he traces his interest in lines back to his father's profession as a mycologist. As a child, he says, he regularly observed his father drawing microscopic fungal species with hairline precision; he describes this as a key experience. Unlike other animal or plant species, fungi could not be clearly distinguished from one another, and they interbreed in an almost anarchistic manner. This gave fungi a special status in biology that fascinated him. Ingold does not make the parallel to the development of cultural and social theory (especially the "rhizome" of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1977)) explicit, but it, nevertheless, seems obvious. See Ingold 2021: 61.

21 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1977) wrote, contrary to the Freudian paradigm of circumstantial evidence, the anti-Oedipus.

> sociate and combine, and also knowledge of various contextual issues for discussion. (Wellgraf 2020: 16 f.)

Despite all the danger of foreshortening and inaccuracy that accompanies it, this form of theoretical contextualization, which is more lens than scaffolding, represents added value. Theory here does not pursue an end in itself; it is a tool that is put away again as soon as it has served its purpose (Massmünster 2017: 58 f.). The writing does not follow the research, it is not the monographic outline including the theoretical framework to which the 'empirical results' are assigned. Writing in rhizome-like chapters (or tracks) emphasizes the processual character of the research and the nature of the subject, it remains fragmentary.

Nevertheless, writing remains an interpretative and, thus, also potentially problematic act. Traces are homogenized, combined, arranged and produced in writing. Traces become tracks.

> When we stretch our net of signifying relationships around things, we do indeed follow the traces to which our field points us, but, above all, we actually *construct* [emphasis in original, author's note] – in the sense of [...] 'writing culture' – a plausible context that was not there previously. For that very reason, it can also make visible something that was not there before. (Wietschorke 2005: 345)

Tracking, analysis and writing are, thus, closely intertwined. Which lines are finally selected and into which narrative structure they are put depends on the research interest, the research question, and, not least, on the personal priorities of the researcher. Researching and writing in pursuit of traces are, however, only one side of the story. It is completed by the readers. They also make connections, interpret what they read, relate it to their knowledge and their experiences. Open and fragmentary text forms, such as Tsing's teeming chapters or the tracks of my research, offer multilayered interpretations, and, at least potentially, more comprehensive space than closed narratives.

Tracking as a program: depth, surface, sleuthing and representation

These four dimensions of 'traces' and the authors to whom I refer each stand for specific characteristics of the search for traces, which I would like to highlight once again in conclusion. It is important for me to emphasize that the concepts do not have to exclude each other in research practice, despite their partly different goals and cultural-theoretical basic assumptions; on the contrary, I plead for interweaving them.

Sybille Krämer locates traces between semiotic discourses, on the one hand, and the world of things, on the other. "[W]ith the reading of traces [...] we hold an Ariadne's thread in our hands that leads us out of the 'pure' world of signs and connects us with the thingness, physicality and materiality of the world" (Krämer 2007: 13). The presence of the trace testifies to the absence of that which produced it. Furthermore, according to Krämer, traces are never left intentionally, but always casually, and there is a time gap between the creation of the trace and its discovery as such. These attributes of trace apply to the circumstantial paradigm. Traces appear in the examples given above as materializations (pillow and key rack) or (speech-)performative utterances ("Have you also already talked to real collectors?"), which can be understood as im- or expressions of a social structure or a cultural figure. The empirically accessible surface in this conception opens up the interpretative access to something deeper, actual, which is, however, 'absent' (in the research situation) and does not immediately reveal itself to researchers. This idea of a cultural surface, on which the essential either emerges or which conceals this essential, is the subject of a traditional epistemology of European ethnology (Heimerdinger 2013: 7 ff.). However, as Timo Heimerdinger shows, the idea that the 'big picture' is reflected in the details or that a congruent 'inside' can be inferred from the 'outside' may be true in individual cases, but it is only sustainable to a very limited extent as a comprehensive epistemology. Not everything is reflected in everything (Heimerdinger 2013: 11). Instead of a 'totality,' as Ginzburg and (presumably not intended to the same extent) Linder suggest, fragmented contexts have long since emerged. Empirical details, understood as traces, as shown in the example, can certainly provide interpretative access to these. However, as Heimerdinger demands, it is necessary to name to what the traces concretely refer, to which contexts they suggest, and what is meant by 'depth,' 'structure' or 'figure' (beyond the metaphorical designation) in detail (2013: 15). This is because, as much as the dichotomous figure of thought consisting of surface/depth, outside/inside is entrenched in everyday thinking and also in scientific disciplines, it has no analytical value in itself. Heimerdinger, therefore, states that "the all too simply imagined division into an allegedly superficial outside and an allegedly actual inside" has been overcome in our discipline for quite some time. It is, therefore, a matter of distancing oneself from the polar positions and structures of either-or in cultural theory, and of moving instead in complex contexts, the both/and (Heimerdinger 2013: 14 f.).

This interplay is reflected in the use of the concept of trace in the research practice of European ethnology. Tracing functions beyond its conceptualization as imprinting (e.g. after Krämer) as a metaphor for the processual picking up and mapping of threads, the following of paths and the making of connections. Contrary to the movement into an imagined depth, the *traces* of multi-sited ethnography and ANT, as described, spread out rather flatly, they know nothing hidden, real. Their interest lies in the observable surface. These *traces* do not correspond to Krämer's definition of trace. They neither necessarily indicate something absent, which is traced diachronically (it is more a matter of a synchronous following on the heels), nor are the 'traces' *per se* left behind unintentionally. On the contrary, they are understood as placed or staged. *Following or tracking*, thus, refers less to an interpretative process than to a comprehensible description. I am skeptical about the extent to which these practices can be sharply differentiated; there is already interpretation, or at least selection, in every description. Nevertheless, the concepts offer a perspective that does justice to a focus on concrete practices and situations and enables the identification of connections and relationships between human and nonhuman actors. It is precisely in this dialectic that the search for traces proves to be a suitable methodology for ethnographic cultural analyses, allowing it to oscillate between praxeological-situational descriptions and interpretative deep drilling.

Both of these methodological search processes require 'tracking sense'. The moment of serendipity is closely connected to this and makes clear that both of these orientations of the search for traces are observer-dependent practices that are connected to the specific perspective of the ethnographic researcher. The latter is interested in the empirical detail and is at eye level with the object of research, which, in constructivist terms, only gains shape during this search. The role of chance, which is often in the foreground in the perception of the serendipity concept, should not be overestimated. The attention of the researcher is at least as important. This, in turn, depends on prior knowledge, theoretical preferences, research interests and concrete questions and, ultimately, decides what is recognized and taken up as a trace and which traces elude us and remain hidden. Finally, the concept of tracks offers the possibility of translating the results of these multidirectional search movements into text. Tracks are also not traces in Krämer's sense. They are constructions based on empirical materials whose contradictoriness, complexity, and incompleteness they represent. They can be understood as a narrative stylistic device that makes the search for traces comprehensible.

The example of Anna Tsing and my research on music collecting show that the approaches presented can be combined. This is accompanied by a certain understanding of the field, an undogmatic (but, thus, not arbitrary) relationship to theory, and a multi-perspectival form of representation. Tracking in the understanding proposed here is, thus, a program that flexibly alternates between the surface, where actors and practices are traced and connections are shown, and deep drilling, which makes historical dimensions visible and brings to light cultural contexts that allow interpretations beyond a description of the situation (Timm 2013: 75). Thus, tracking as a program can be understood as a multilayered methodological process that combines orientation and search processes, descriptions and interpretations, and narrative strategies.

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