

Samstag / Saturday, 15.12.2007, 17:00-18:30

Kartographische Übung III / *Cartographic practice III:*

Round table discussion:

“What makes the ‘re’ in the re-making of genealogies?”: Emergent patterns – transdisciplinary perspectives

with

- Susan Leigh Star (CSTS, Santa Clara University, CA)
- Tanja Michalsky (Aesthetics and History of Arts, UDK, Berlin)
- Staffan Müller-Wille (Centre for Genomics in Society, University of Exeter)
- Skúli Sigurdsson (MPIWG, Berlin and Science Institute, Reykjavik)
- Elizabeth A. Povinelli (Anthropology, Columbia University)

Moderation / *Chair:*

- Michi Knecht (Europäische Ethnologie, HU Berlin)

The roundtable is intended as a form of stock taking: What kind of questions that invite further research emerged during the workshop? Do the ethnographic and historic case studies that were presented, their microanalytic perspectives and their cornucopia of detail, allow for new insights? Did the proposed shift from *genealogy as principle* to *genealogy as practice*, from the ostentatious to the performative (Bruno Latour) succeed in complicating the histories of genealogies that we write? Do our analytics of gender and heteronormativity add depth? Do they reformulate our thinking? And what can be learned from the fate of genealogical ‘styles of thinking’ for a yet to be written history of inter- and transdisciplinarity? The social history of genealogical practices and their role in the formation of the natural, social and cultural sciences is widely acknowledged to still be under-researched. Fragments and episodes of such a history have been published. Most of them concern the incorporation of genealogical thinking and practice into the sciences of heredity, and later, genetics. In social anthropology, genealogy has emerged as a topic that works well to demonstrate how deeply theoretical concepts in kinship studies were influenced by folk concepts and vernacular thinking (Mary Bouquet). Seldom, however, are the loops that connect the genealogical practices of the (natural, social and cultural) sciences with those of wider society tracked in their full reflexivity, interactivity and processuality¹. And only rarely do genealogical practices get analyzed within shifting biopolitical, colonial and postcolonial contexts.

Currently, the unidirectional temporalities and the hierarchical order of genealogical systems seem to get undermined not only through social and cultural critique but also through biotechnological developments: By “looping the line in lineage” (Hannah Landecker),

¹ But see Susan Lindee (2003) for an interesting case study on Victor McKusick's fieldwork with Amish people in the 1960s: Provenance and the Pedigree. Victor McKusick's Fieldwork with the Old Order Amish. In: Alan H. Goodman, Deborah Heath, M. Susan Lindee (Hg.): *Genetic Nature / Culture. Anthropology and Science beyond the Two Culture Divide*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, S. 41-57; Nukaga, Yoshio / Alberto Cambrosio (1997): *Medical Pedigrees and the Visual Production of Family Disease in Canadian and Japanese Genetic Counseling Practice*. In: Mary Ann Elston (Hg.): *The Sociology of Medical Science and Technology*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, S. 29-55.

technologies such as cryoconservation, cloning and certain assisting reproductive technologies intervene in the succession of generations and modify our perception of time. Whereas it therefore might suggest itself to start thinking and talking in terms of a “postgenealogical age”, for this workshop we propose to focus attention instead on the “*remaking of genealogies*” (Sarah Franklin) and an *emergent transdisciplinary cartography of such practices*. What the “re” in “re-making” entails, how it reproduces that which is well known under slightly shifting signs, how much “post” might still be part of it - these are questions we would like to discuss.

The workshop tries to present recent research that relates to “remakings of genealogies”. It assembles contributions that integrate scientific practices with everyday life and culture and start to re-conceptualize what can be done with cartography. From the round table discussion at its end, we would ideally hope that its participants work through some of the material that was presented again and reconnect it with our basic questions:

1. What insights are provoked (or not) by shifting the view on genealogies from principle to practice? From representation to performance? And from “science” to “science in continuous interaction with society”?
2. What functions do genealogies obtain between disciplines – how can we trace their routes and connections cartographically?
3. How do we recognize emerging patterns of a “remaking of genealogies” and how should such practices be analyzed? What alternatives to genealogical classification and ordering do appear? How are they connected?

We would like to ask the participants of the round table to comment on one or more of these questions on the basis of their own research and experience for app. 5 minutes and open up the discussion with these statements. We would, however, also like to see the round table discussion as a forum for all workshop participants. It is the résumé of the workshop and it would be great, if the round table participants would invite discussion on concepts, contributions and examples that were introduced during the workshop early on and help stimulate debate between all contributors.