

Multimodal appreciation: Prototypes for the evaluation and institutionalisation of more-than-textual ethnography

Initiative: Aufbruch - Neue Forschungsräume für die Geistes- und Kulturwissenschaften

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This project takes on an impossible problem. Ethnographers from across the humanities and social sciences have recently experimented with multimodal forms of description, analysis and intervention in order to grasp slippery research objects that otherwise remain outside of the apprehensible. This multimodal turn has resulted in a proliferation of more-than-textual forms that are impossible to classify and at odds with institutionalised modes of disciplinary knowledge production. Despite the important openings created by multimodal works, they are rarely seen as of equal value when compared to articles and monographs. The current situation is problematic but to a certain extent understandable, as peers, reviewers and supervisors are confronted with a complex conundrum: What criteria should be employed to evaluate such multimodal singularities? This project responds to this conundrum through two experimental moments that correspond to the two challenges producing the current impasse, those of evaluation and institutionalization. The first moment is constituted by a set of immersive exercises designed to describe and compare the affordances of selected more-than-textual or multimodal research artefacts. The second moment is a set of prototyping exercises designed to produce and test a toolkit to facilitate the evaluation and institutionalization of future multimodal research. <http://hu.berlin/stadtlabor>

Projektbeteiligte

Prof. Dr. Ignacio Farias

Humboldt-Universität Berlin
Philosophische Fakultät
Institut für Europäische Ethnologie
Berlin

Dr. Tomás Criado

Humboldt-Universität Berlin
Philosophisches Fakultät
Institut für Europäische Ethnologie
Berlin

Dr. Andrew Gilbert

Humboldt-Universität Berlin
Philosophische Fakultät
Institut für Europäische Ethnologie
Berlin

