

HSG Ethnography Talks *Fall Semester 2021*

Thursday, December 2nd, 10h15, Room *01-104*

Producing Intimate Knowledge: Ethnographic research, activism, and friendship in times of uncertainties

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In this paper I examine experiences of friendship and activism as ethnographic methods in times of political uncertainty. Drawing from long-term ethnographic fieldwork experience in and on (transnational) Turkey I analyze different research moments and contexts and explore the meaning of (personal and political) closeness and trust as foundations for producing ethnographic knowledge under distressing conditions. The ethnographic examples I work with span extended research experiences with 1) feminism and gender relations in the late 1980s Turkish village societies, 2) anti-racism in the early 2000s Austrian right-wing populism and 3) my engagement with mobility justice and border politics after the migration crisis 2015 in the Turkish Aegean. All my research experiences are shaped by my own belief in political struggles and they all generated friendships which sparked shared knowledge production. It is these intimate personal and political relationships, I argue, that allow to produce meaningful and generalizable intimate knowledge as well as represent a continuous challenge to research ethics and open science.

HSG Ethnography Talks

The HSG Ethnography Talks have emerged as an initiative by anthropologists who have found themselves in an inspiring interdisciplinary setting of the School for Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS) at the HSG. With the goal to make use of synergies this unique setting offers, we decided to use the notion of Ethnography as a focal point for a wider transdisciplinary conversation. We understand Ethnography as an interplay of ethnographic fieldwork and a commitment to ethnographic theory and writing, primarily developed and practiced by anthropologists and sociologists, but also widely used in other fields of knowledge such as Human Geography, Media Studies or STS. Both fundamental and contested, due to its transdisciplinary scope Ethnography figures as a prime platform for conversations about methodological and epistemological issues in contemporary social and cultural sciences.

The goal of the HSG Ethnography Talks is to gather colleagues from the SHSS (and the HSG), as well as invited (international) guest speakers to reflect upon ongoing and future research as well as wider epistemological and methodological issues. By focusing in depth on why and how one practices Ethnography; where Ethnography starts and where it ends; if and how one could make use of Ethnography in own research; and finally, why one decides to use other approaches will not only enable conversations on particular research topics. Moreover, the HSG Ethnography Talks represent a platform for a joint and critical reflection on issues such as power and (different kinds of) knowledge, research and data ethics, personal dimensions of research, socio-political relevance and impact of research, digitalization etc.

Hosted by: Transcultural Studies, GCE and Islamic Studies

Jointly organized by: Marta Dominguez Diaz, Sandra King-Savic and Jelena Tasic