SSH13-039 - Spaces of Commoning - Artistic Practices, the Making of Urban Commons and Visions of Change

Zusammenfassung

In the context of major economic crises, ecological catastrophes and pervasive technological innovations, 'the commons' has resurfaced as a key concept in discussions of alternative economies, new social movements, and the transformation of public space. This project proposes to build on the creative insights and energies developed in and around the debate on commons in order to reframe the debate on public space, which has largely run out of breath due to the naïve belief that the state and market work in opposition. We propose to introduce the concept of the commons as a third element and new entry point into the debate on public space, to promote a radical repudiation of neoliberal politics as much as a creative envisioning of alternatives beyond capitalism. Assembling artists, urbanists, architects, cultural theorists and radical pedagogists, who situate their work in the intersection of theory and art, we hope to contribute to new economic, political and social discourses that build on and help articulate the many existing struggles that challenge the mantra of capitalist accumulation and profit-driven growth.

While innumerable, competing definitions of the commons exist, general agreement rests on the assumption that commons do not exist as such, but are necessarily in the process of becoming; in other words, they are a product of commoning. In recent years, theorists, activists and artists have explored the power of commoning in activist struggles for clean water, organic food, shelter, health and education. Somewhat paradoxically, capitalism has also started to promote the commons in its own way, seamlessly merging the alternative value systems of the commons into turbocapitalism. The project proposes to investigate precisely this ambiguous territory of claiming and reclaiming, in order to approach the central question, what is a common, as well as to gain insight into the means of differentiation and qualification of strategies used to disrupt the capitalist enclosure of commons. Using six case studies representing variations on the commons, the project will investigate the social and political practices that constitute commoning, its preconditions and effects including underlying value systems, subjectivities and ideologies. These are: a gated community in Warsaw, a housing and work cooperative in Berlin, a migrant workers' camp and shopping mall in Dubai, a Manga-Kissa in Tokyo and online peer-to-peer platforms for sharing goods, time and knowledge.

The project will have three phases: The first aims at the creation of a common space that serves as a self-reflective laboratory for the practices of commoning ("Settlement"). In the second phase we will develop an extensive mapping of existing strategies of commoning as observed in the chosen case-studies, tracing relationships between material, social, political and discursive elements. The third phase is dedicated to an experimental de- and recomposition of the insights acquired. We will reorder the relationships studied and pursue experiments with via re-location, re-vocation, re-appropriation and rescaling while at the same time engaging in a radical imagining of other, possible worlds and relationships. Ultimately, the objective is to open the project's debate to a wider audience, to introduce the insights gained to the academic world via conferences and publications, as much as to the larger public via non-academic publications, talks and presentations or exhibitions.

Schlagworte:
commons, radical imagining, artistic research, ethnography, social movements, anticapitalist critique, public space, urbanism, alternative economies

Principal Investigator:	Anette Baldauf
Institution:	Academy of Fine Arts Vienna
Co-Principal Investigator(s):	Stefan Gruber (Academy of Fine Arts Vienna)

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Weiterführende Links zu den beteiligten Personen und zum Projekt finden Sie unter
https://wwtf.at/funding/programmes/past/ssh/SSH13-039/