DESIGN ANTHROPOLOGY

SoSe 2019 – Master, Europäische Ethnologie
Veranstaltungsumsmer: 51733 | 2SWS – 6ECTS
Wednesdays 10:00–12:00. Seminar room: IfEE, R.312 – Møhrenstraße 40/41

Lecturer: Dr. Tomás S. Criado, Chair of Urban Anthropology, Room 131 – IfEE
Sprechstunden (prior appointment by email): Mondays 10-12
E-mail: tomas.criado@hu-berlin.de

DESCRIPTION

Design features amongst the most important set of practices shaping our contemporary worlds: our work, private, and public settings are, in fact, designed through and through. Because of this, design has recently acquired great importance in anthropology. In fact, a newly developed field called Design Anthropology has become an interesting crossroads of different people trying to address design as (1) a topic of scholarly and professional/applied interest, (2) a source of methodological inspiration, and (3) an object and space of intervention.

Since the 1980s, several scholars have in fact analysed different aspects of design ethnographically: for instance, its creative spaces and operations, the imagined and inscribed users of different design objects, together with their more or less creative or disputed uses and appropriations. Also, many ethnographers have tried to have an impact on the development of artefacts and their mediating role in work, cognitive and everyday life practices. Besides, the methods of design (from user studies to forms of collaborative and participatory design) are regularly scrutinized and sometimes imported into the discipline, searching to have an impact on the particular modes in which ethnography and anthropological research at large are carried out (as a means for social intervention, be it for the creation of public debate or collaborative forms of research).

This course wishes to develop such concerns inquiring on different forms of anthropological engagement with design: from an anthropology of design, to the many forms in which anthropology could contribute to the processes and practices there being designed–be it in forms of anthropology for design, or in the ways in which anthropology could be practiced as a designerly affair--, together with the cross-fertilizing experiments in which an engagement with design could change, alter or inspire other forms of practicing anthropology through design. In sum, in a workshop-oriented manner, this course will explore what forms of anthropology emerge at the crossroads of design studies, but also through and as design practice.

REQUIREMENTS TO PASS THE COURSE

a) Class presentations

Tentative method (to be defined depending on the number of students and group dynamics)

1. Bring an object to think through throughout the course: something you hold dear to, something you find deeply problematic, something you are intrigued about; it could be of any scale: if too big, bring us something, a representation, a fragment; you are welcome to add up layers in each session, but please always bring the previous ones.

2. One person/group is in charge of presenting the reading: The person/group presenting will have to decide (perhaps discussing this with the rest of the group) the main reading that will be discussed by the whole group, also reading in preparation the second one, and giving insights in the session for the ones who haven’t read it.
3. For the discussion we will use the method à la carte developed in the Object Experimentation Workshop.

4. Following one of the two options (either/or), to be discussed in class
   a. Before that, every person should read and submit a quotation from the main text s/he would like to discuss in the session, together with a 2/3 lines explanation.
   b. Doing a personal summary of the main debates or discussions in any kind of textual or graphic form (following the experiments discussed by Mauksch, 2018a, 2018b, see below), and send this through the Moodle.


b) Reading one of the books from the Semesterapparat and summarizing it in 2-3 pages (deadline: 15.7.2019, submission through the Moodle)

1. The main idea is that you could engage critically with the modes of engagement there present. Indeed, the Semesterapparat list contains a tentative classification with references to 'modes of engagement’ for your orientation. However, given that there is a special shelf for the course at the Grimm-Zentrum, a closer look at the books in the library is advised. I am in any case more than happy to help you choose.

2. Semesterapparat (Search for it at the Grimm-Zentrum)
   i. Suchman 2014 Human-machine reconfigurations: Plans and situated actions OF
   ii. Murphy 2015 Swedish design: An ethnography OF
   iii. Farias & Wilkie (Eds.) 2015 Studio studies: operations, topologies and displacements OF
   iv. Clarke (Ed.) 2011 Design anthropology: Object cultures in transition OF
   v. Simonsen & Robertson (Eds.) 2012 Routledge International Handbook of Participatory Design FOR
   vi. Gunn et al (Eds.) 2013 Design anthropology: Theory and practice FOR / THROUGH
   vii. Smith et al. (Eds.) 2016 Design anthropological futures FOR / THROUGH
   viii. Ingold 2013 Making THROUGH
   ix. Estalella & Criado (Eds.) 2018 Experimental Collaborations: Ethnography through Fieldwork devices THROUGH
   x. Gunn (ed.) 2009 Fieldnotes and sketchbooks: challenging the boundaries between descriptions and processes of describing THROUGH / AS
   xi. Orangotango (Eds.) 2018 This is not an atlas: A global collection of counter-cartographies THROUGH / AS
   xii. Escobar 2018 Designs for the pluriverse: Radical interdependence, autonomy, and the making of worlds AS
   xiii. Ingold 2018 Anthropology and/as education AS
PROGRAMME

10.4 Presentation: Practicing Anthropology of / for / through / as Design

* Recommended reading:

OF

17.4

*Potential readings

24.4

*Potential readings

8.5

*Potential readings

FOR

15.5

*Potential readings
*Potential readings

**THROUGH**

29.5 [LECTURER NOT PRESENT]

*Potential readings

5.6

*Potential readings

12.6

*Potential readings

19.6

*Potential readings
*Potential readings

*Potential readings

10.7 *LECTURER NOT PRESENT Optional. Student discussion on modes of anthropological engagement with design*