

Non-representational thinking across German and Anglophone Geographies

09. – 10.06.2016

Bayreuth, Germany

This workshop speaks to an **ever-growing interest in and engagement with non-representational theory** in human geography. *Hayden Lorimer* (2005: 84) offers a broad summarisation of non-representational theory/geographies (NRT)'s intentions: "The focus falls on how life takes shape and gains expression in shared experiences, everyday routines, fleeting encounters, embodied movements, precognitive triggers, practical skills, affective intensities, enduring urges, unexceptional interactions and sensuous dispositions."

To avoid any misunderstandings, NRT is neither a "fixed body of thought" nor a single theory to approach the world (Thrift 2004: 83). It is **situated within various different disciplines and approaches** (performing arts, ethno-methodologists, (post-)phenomenologists, deleuzians, corporeal feminists, or actor-network theorists and others) as well as non-academic activities. Consequently, there have been a lot of different works published under different labels that are very diverse in theory, style, approach, and practice. Therefore, to put it broadly, NRT can be understood as a **style of thinking**.

That said, NRT has not been uncritically incorporated into English-speaking geographies. Many **geographers have been critical** of NRT's radical potential. It has been criticised as mechanistic, masculinist and apolitical (Thien 2005; Tolia-Kelly 2006). In spite of such critiques, there has been a **considerable rise in the number of publications referring to NRT** – predominantly in Anglophone geographies. And after an initial reticence, there have also been a growing number of publications **in Germanophone geography** referring to NRT (see Kazig 2007; Dirksmeier & Helbrecht 2008; 2010; Korf 2007; 2012; Strüver 2011; Schurr 2014; Müller 2015; Hutta 2015, a.o.). But, **what does it mean to integrate the ideas and concepts proposed by NRT** (and similar approaches), which are born in a particular (epistemological) context, into so-called Germanophone geography? It must be born in mind that, of course, the **boundaries between language sub-communities are as 'blurred'** as it is the case with sub-disciplinary communities.

In this workshop, we aim, firstly, **to provide a forum to openly discuss non-representational geographies'** main theoretical stakes, their points of reference, as well as a collection of points of difference. Secondly, and simultaneously, **we want to reflect on what it means to make geographical knowledge** both within Anglophone and Germanophone geographical traditions. We invite contributions that address the following issues:

- New and vital materialism; affect theory; engagements with the non-cognitive dimensions of embodiment; psychoanalysis; performance (art, theatre, dance and music) and aesthetics as a whole; philosophy of the event; the actual and the virtual; ecologies of (non-)organic life; the question of subjectivity; (micro-)politics; experimental and practice-led research methodologies.
- How can 'we', from Germanophone epistemological traditions, work with NRT? Where can 'we' respond with approaches and concepts such as atmospheres and (*Leib*)*phänomenologie* sensu Hermann Schmitz; practice theory; habitus; pragmatism; attention and geographical praxis; approaches from political geography; discourse and systems theory; new generations of the Frankfurt School; feminist critiques, etc.?
- In light of NRT, what *should* the role of philosophy and cultural theory be within Anglophone and Germanophone geographies?

The workshop will take place on the **09. & 10. of June 2016 in Bayreuth**. It will start on **Thursday at 14:00 and will end on Friday at 19:00**. We aim at providing a workshop that differs from a 'classical' conference. We want to give priority to discussions and reflexions on non-representational thinking (and related approaches) and, by doing so, tackle the question of where geographers can contribute to, or even counter-act academic conventions of thought. **Last, but not least**, we are pleased to announce that Dr **J-D Dewsbury** (University of Bristol) will be attending the workshop and will

present a **keynote lecture** (working title: “*The Question of Social Transformation: Deleuzian Interventions and the Ethics of Individuation*”), **as well as leading a seminar** about the Deleuzian-Guattarian concept of the “**assemblage**” (*Fr. agencement*).

This *Call for Participation* is both for **social-science/humanities researchers** and **non-academics** who are interested in the above-mentioned topics. Please **submit summaries of proposed contributions** (250 – 500 words) **before the 30.04.2015**. These can also be **detailed suggestions for sessions** (including the necessary material: readings, clips, performances, etc.). We will arrange the programme of the workshop based on the incoming papers. However, it will also be **possible to attend the workshop without submitting a contribution**. Size of the workshop: approx. **40 people**.

Please send your ideas and questions to:

Non-representational_thinking@uni-bayreuth.de

Conveners: *Erik Bertram, Matthew Hannah, Jan Hutta, Eberhard Rothfuß, Madlen Hornung*

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