

With the so-called Arab Spring and Occupy, but also with the German PEGIDA, a seemingly new transnational wave of dissent movements has arisen. What we consider new in these movements is their constitution as a heterogeneous multitude based on physical presence, temporarily gathering an otherwise highly diverse population. As much as these groups appear united concerning their shared enemy – namely political and economic elites – as well as with regard to the name in which they act (“the people”), they remain of inner dissent insofar as they put the possibility of an overarching identity of the movement into question. What we witness, hence, is the dissolution of the belief in traditional emancipatory movements united by class, gender or ethnicity standing up against a hegemonic regime and its substitution by the hope for the subversive and revolutionary potential of a post-identitarian counter-public performing their being-in-difference. Yet, their ability of representing “the people” seems to disappear in spite of the proposed inclusiveness and multivocality, as their radical dissent leads to non-representation: They refuse to traditionally represent “the people” by making claims or engaging in formulating positions.

At the same time, these protest movements certainly stand and fall with the production of symbolic politics likely to be disseminated via social media sites, newspapers and TV or radio broadcasts. Pierre Bourdieu had already noted that the success of mobilisations depended on the existence of a “symbolic apparatus” for the production of epistemological claims about the world – a *fait social* that becomes even more decisive regarding the organisational ephemerality of current movements. Taking this changing notion of political movements with their underlying anti-hierarchical, non-representational, fragile and network-based logic as a starting point, the workshop aims at critically investigating current formulations of dissent by specifically broaching the issue of the (im)possibility of representing the unrepresentable. By doing so we evidently focus on the so-called crisis of representation but aim at enlarging this debate to those intentionally organising to “disrepresent” representation.

Engaging this problematic, the following question may serve as our starting points:

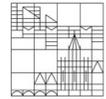
How is non-representation performed on the streets, for the mass media or in more intimate settings?

Which symbol practices are employed and to what extent are they grounded in narratives of earlier protests or resistances (e.g. the altermondialist movements of the 1990s, the uprisings in French banlieues in 2005-2007, or the riots in the UK in 2011)?

How do these practices connect to current discussions of direct democracy (e.g. David Graeber’s thoughts on anarchist anthropology in the wake of Occupy)?

Can we discern national, social, cultural or gendered lineages that contain (and maybe limit) these narrative and aesthetic forms?

Universität
Konstanz



Workshop

20./21.Nov. 2015

Bischofsvilla
Otto-Adam-Str.5
Konstanz



Symbolic Politics of Non-Representation in Contemporary Cultures of Dissent

KEYNOTE

Christian von Scheve (FU Berlin)

**Relational Affect and Collective Emotion
in the Construction of Belonging and Repulsion**

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Eine Veranstaltung des Graduiertenkollegs
Das Reale in der Kultur der Moderne

– uni-konstanz.de/reales



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Friday	10:30am	Welcome and Introduction
	11am-12:20pm	Panel 1 Stephanie Siewert, Stuttgart: “ <i>Occupy</i> as a Constructed Situation: Arts – Intervention – Social Revolution?” Andreas Beer, Constance: “A Void Masked as Triumphant Carnival? The Politics of the ‘V-Mask’ within Contemporary Cultures of Dissent”
	12:20-2pm	Lunch Break
	2-3:20pm	Panel 2 Tobias Braun, Jena: “Die Uneindeutigkeit der Unzufriedenheit. Über die schwierige Verortung der <i>PEGIDA</i> ” Francis LeMaitre, Constance: “We, The Masses! The Voice of the Void”
	3:20-4pm	Coffee Break
	4-4:45pm	Keynote Prof Dr Christian von Scheve, Berlin: “Relational Affect and Collective Emotion in the Construction of Belonging and Repulsion”



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Saturday	9-10:20am	Panel 3 Paul Raekstad, Cambridge: “Democracy Against Representation in the New Democracy Movement” Veronika Zink, Gießen: “Shimmers of Resistance”
	10:20-10:35am	Coffee Break
	10:35-11:55pm	Panel 4 Samuel Cooper, Nottingham: “Poetics of Dissent: Representation in Contemporary Radical North American Poetry” Jens Kabisch, Heidelberg: “Transparency No More – <i>Tiqqun</i> and the Politics of Invisibility” Final Discussion
	approx. 12:30pm	End of Workshop

Organisers

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