Varieties of Cooperation. Mutually Making the Conditions of Mutual Making

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The second annual conference of the Collaborative Research Center (CRC) „Media of Cooperation" fulfilled its promise: a large variety of cooperative practices was analyzed in a convincing way. This made the panorama rich but the mutuality of making cooperation work got a little bit out of sight from time to time as contributions were maybe too diverse regarding their approaches. In his introduction CORNELIUS SCHUBERT (Siegen) named three dimensions of cooperative practices: scaling, composing and monitoring. Although this seemed a very good conceptual framing especially between the panels the lack of clear common concepts in the interdisciplinary discussions reduced the resonance between the contributions and the transferability of insights from the cases discussed. At least the interoperability of theoretical and methodical approaches was not always obvious.

The keynote by HANS-JÖRG RHEINBERGER (Berlin) concentrated on science historiography of molecular biology in the 20th century. This interdisciplinary field between physics, chemistry and biology was used to historicize the notion of cooperation. His tour de force through the „molecularization of the life sciences" went along three major phases ending with the start of the human genome project, biomedical commerce and gene-patenting putting new constraints to cooperation. Finally a virtual space for scientific communication in the form of databases emerged but he also recognized a re-nationalization of research. According to him these forms of cooperation were connected to the situation of the cold war and to the epistemic function of objects like the electronic microscope or the ultra centrifuge. Recurring pattern was the persistence of idiosyncratic local research features a „glocal picture" nevertheless at the same time forming a „networked landscape of experimentation" on a global level between Berkeley, Pasadena, New York, Paris, Berlin and Stockholm. Asked about the role of the Eastern Block, Rheinberger pointed to the fact that the Soviet Union heavily opposed genetics under Stalin but later soviet colleagues were always present at the conferences Rheinberger took part in himself.

The first panel was explicitly historical. CHRISTIAN HENRICH-FRANKE (Siegen) dealt with the example of a local company, *Siemag*, originally producing rolling mills, then typewriters and expanded into a globally active firm selling accounting machines and mini computers. This was only possible in cooperation with partners like Philips Electrologica and required several reorganizations of bureaus and communication technologies. Further research into the role of company cooperation with regard to the development of SIEMAG products for data processing seems promising. LAURA MENEGHELLO (Siegen) discussed pneumatic tube-systems, an often overlooked aspect of the history of communication systems although some are still in use today. She could convincingly show that they were never as standardized beyond their local implementation as others. Thus a teleological narrative of infrastructures being increasingly standardized and information technologies replacing another completely should be questioned.

The second panel addressed repositories as an important part of the theory of „boundary objects" that is central for the CRC in Siegen. AXEL VOLMAR (Siegen) most convincingly addressed scaling as a basic question by presenting his own outline of a format theory as an overarching framework for studying cooperation and collaboration.[1] He sketched the development of the conditions of expansion from small hand crafted into larger more technical media systems by drawing a line from early paper printing in the 16th century when the folio, quart, oktav as pages per sheet and simultaneously basic forms of layout were invented to modern sound file standards. He stated that formats ensured mobil-

[1] Sebastian Gießmann (Hrsg.), Susan Leigh Star, Grenzobjekte und Medienforschung, Bielefeld 2017.

ity and interoperability and were at the same time mutually made conventions, all of which helped scaling technologies into media infrastructures. Cultural techniques of compression were needed as they reduce transaction costs and increase the range of distribution. In the discussion the problem of the difference of the concept of format from genre and others and the goal of reducing ambiguity in cooperation were raised.

In his talk FLORIAN HOOF (Lüneburg) criticized film studies were still mostly preferring the format of film and cinema seeing digital streaming as a threat to „cineastic" culture and therefore ignoring a large field of media culture besides its ubiquity as repository. He spoke of an „Index of standardized uncertainty" because streaming platforms have a flexible format and are moving sites but on the basis of a rather robust index allowing constant use.

Composing and scaling in the research process itself were dealt with in the panels „Cooperating through Data" and „Academics in Cooperation" but both concepts were not discussed explicitly enough to further the discussion on practices of cooperation on a general level. NATASCHA GRUVER's (Berkeley/Wien) concept of „guided research" with the help of computational tools to trace discourses from digitized sources was seen critically as preselection is interpretation. The panel „Cooperating through data" was concentrating on the mutual responsibility of research data management between researchers and storing actors. This is definitely a very important issue and needs to be reflected not only by digital humanities experts. The challenge of all mentioned initiatives Research Data Repository (RADAR) Archive (Karlsruhe), Software Archiving of Research Artifacts (SARA), DARIAH-EU (pan-european infrastructure with 20 working groups from 17 countries) is to build a longterm repository data lifecycle.

ANNETTE STRAUCH (Siegen) MATTHIAS RAZUM (Karlsruhe) and TIMO GNADT (Göttingen) agreed the main motivation for designers of the data-infrastructures is creating the conditions for future cooperation by holding data accessible and usable, making possible they can be referred to in case of accusations of falsity. In the discussion a central ethical dilemma became prominent: in the perspective of public funding, accessibility and sharing of data between researchers is unquestionably seen as good but in the case of sensitive data there also has to be protection of the people studied in field research for example. All agreed that data management has to be part of the workflow of research to function effectively in a cooperative way: from private domain through group level to enriched meta-data and finally access to others. Gnadt stressed the necessary processuality of the work „we do as we go" and spoke of „embedded data management" referring to DARIAH-DE. All Data storage providers offer domain agnostic services so that the data format does not become an obstacle for further use.

The Panel „Doing Da Sein" and „Cooperating Bodies" both concentrated on bodies and/or persons being made present or absent. SIMONE PFEIFFER (Mainz) dealt with mediated or absent-presence and social closeness of husband or siblings in transnational social relationships at a wedding via money sent or video and photo evidence. She demystified physical presence as the ideal of social closeness and pointed to local or situated notions of absence and presence differing between Seneghal and Germany. The mutual makings of delegation and of trust were central.

The „trustability" was also brought up by THILO HAGENDORFF (Tübingen) in the panel „Lost in Cooperation" in relation to apps and internet companies when people see their privacy threatened by mass surveillance and attacking scenarios (side channel attacks, viruses etc.) Learning about these threats some apps were used less and self-censoring was applied but the „price for loss of trust is very high".

Concentrating again on trustability – DAVID WALDECKER (Siegen) was one of the few addressing the negative aspects of and undesired cooperation directly. Based on 30 interviews coded according to objective hermeneutics he problematized stalking, harassment, misuse of information with the use of social media in a school context. Not only do adolescents present themselves

differently on different platforms. They develop a certain fatalism instead of worrying about the „privacy paradox". In other cases it is the belief in technical devices (audio recorders, lamps, batteries) combined with personal mediums like in the 19th century that characterize cooperation to prove the absent presence of the dead.

EHLER VOSS (Siegen) discussed this showing a video from his field research with ghost hunters in California thereby enriching the perspective by pointing to the simultaneity of technical and personal mediation to this day.

ASTA CEKAITE (Linköping) was taking up the conference topic of mutual making very clearly and explored social touch creating conditions for cooperation by analyzing video-filmed preschool situations. She made evident how orderliness of human interaction is achieved with touch as basic form of human sociality. She interpreted the footage along the phenomenological concept of inter-corporeality (bi-, sometimes multi-directional sequences of talk-touch-gaze) between body-subjects.[2] With the help of examples like the control-touch while shepherding children the corporeal perceptual field was convincingly described as cooperative accomplishment. Especially interesting was, that she stated that cross-cultural similarities could be found with regard to social touch.

BINA MOHN (Siegen / Berlin) presented camera-ethnographical miniatures of children interacting with smartphones in an analytical arrangement after Wittgenstein. This specially framed „thick showing" enriched the discussion methodologically.

Combining mobility studies with sociology of the body LARISSA SCHINDLER (Mainz) focused on cooperation in the form of tinkering practices on a micro level between bodies and things and could show ways of accomplishing complex cooperation mutually on an airplane. Somehow passengers seem not to be a person for the time of travel avoiding touch and making oneself not-present.

Complementary to the two talks about children CLAUDIA MÜLLER (Siegen) focused on the elderly and reflected on cooperation of researchers from socio-informatics with their counterparts in projects of „Ambient Assisted Living" and „Aging well". She pointed to the thin line between persuasion and coercion in digitized programs. Scholars should rather see the elderly as active users than concentrate on their deficits. Mutually making as she argued is a question of translation between heterogeneous interests and (Self) care can be shared work. Dimensions of the variations between cases become clear for the researcher as moderator, translator between technologies, designers and other actors in a Co-design-process. Long-term reflexive engagement makes more sense than generalizing.

The inspiring second Keynote by ALEXA FÄRBER (Hafen City) described the promise as a characteristic and productive social form of mutuality and cooperation in cities. Cooperation, she convincingly argued, can be understood as representational work in urban anthropological research and urban planning. Both are – as she provokingly concluded – in the end project work. The promise of a promised land as speech act and practice produces an extension of time – the future somehow becomes present. Her instructive example was the „Second Avenue Line" in Harlem and the respective map of it which was important as imaginary combined by her with multi-medial references to blacksploitation movies and Wonder's song texts of his music. Färber worked out the tensions between „harmless promise" and „cruel optimism" in this urban culture of promise. Such promises are articulating the social configuration of urban life at the same time underlining the affective relationship connected to it. The city then is an ambivalent object of desire promising multiplicity of relatedness of city dwellers articulated through public infrastructure projects especially. These work as scaling devices and promissory notes.

In view of the complete conference the perspective of cooperation onto diverse analogue and digital media studied as simultaneously involved in a constantly recurring endeavor to monitor or synchronize each other – mutually and effectively coordinate and compose distributed bodies, things, operations or data

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[2] She collaborates with Christian Meyer. See Christian Meyer / J Streeck / J. Scott Jordan (Hrsg.): Intercorporeality. Emerging Socialities in Interaction, Oxford 2017.

and thereby articulate relations between them – proved very fruitful. As the speaker of the CRC EHRHARD SCHÜTTPELZ (Siegen) underlined in the final discussion the basic epistemic importance of the cooperative perspective lies in fighting techno- and media-deterministic or teleological narratives of media history. It became clear that „cooperation" should not be used as a catch-all-concept and has to be defined in contrast to other terms. The biggest challenge remaining is an improved interdisciplinary translation between diverse notions like scaling or accountability used in media-praxeological cooperation research as presented here and other more conventional concepts from the fields of media studies, history, cultural anthropology, and sociological theory.

Conference Overview:

Keynote I

Hans-Jörg Rheinberger (Berlin): Cooperation in the Sciences: Remarks from the Perspective of an Historical Epistemology of Experimentation

Panel 1 Implementing Information Systems

Christian Henrich-Franke (Siegen): From Dahlbruch to the World: Organizing a Company for International Markets in the 1960s

Laura Meneghello (Siegen): Meta-Infrastructure and Cooperation in Enterprises: The Pneumatic Tube System

Panel 2 Repositories in Cooperation

Christine Hanke (Bayreuth): Tables and Databases – Multiple Infrastructures of Appropriation and Accessibility

Florian Hoof (Frankfurt am Main): Standardizing Uncertainty: Digital Streaming Platforms
Axel Volmar (Siegen) Formats as Media of Cooperation. Some Thoughts on Format Theory

Panel 3 Cooperating through Data

Annette Strauch (Siegen) / Matthias Razum (Karlsruhe)

Research Data Management for the Collaborative Research Centre 1187 and Research Data Repositories

Stefan Wesner (Ulm): Technological Challenges for a Sensible Research Data Management for the Social Sciences and Digital Humanities, Example: Replay[U+2010]DH

Timo Gnadt (Göttingen): Technological Challenges for a Sensible Research Data Management for the Social Sciences and Digital Humanities, Example: DARIAH-EU

Panel 4 Doing Da Sein

Simone Pfeiffer (Mainz): Mediating Absence and Presence in Transnational Social Relationships

Ehler Voss (Siegen): „It Sounds Like at Least Three People Here." Practices of Sensory Evidence Among Ghost Hunters in the US

Ivan Tchalakov (Plovdiv, Bulgarien): The „Scar Tissues" of Research Experience: Tracing Back the Intercorporealities that Bring in the 'Not Yet' There

Bina Mohn (Siegen / Berlin): Sometimes There, Sometimes Not: Children in Families with Smartphones vis-à-vis Ethnographers with Cameras

Panel 5 Lost in Cooperation

Thilo Hagendorff (Tübingen): Information Control and Trust in the Context of Digital Technologies

Niklas Barth (München): Facebook's Secretaries. (Un-)Desired Practices of Order

David Waldecker (Siegen): On (Not) Being Lost in Cooperation. Perspectives of Young Adults

Panel 6 Cooperating Bodies

Asta Cekaite (Linköping, Schweden): Social Touch and 'Carnal Subjectivity': Coordinationof Affection and Control in Embodied Social Interaction

Claudia Müller (Siegen): Negotiation and Presentation of Bodily Perception and Performance in the Design of Supportive Technologies for Older Adults

Larissa Schindler (Mainz): Entangling Bodies and Things in the Air

Keynote II

Alexa Färber (HafenCity University, Hamburg): Temporalising Mutuality: Explorations in the Workings of the Promise

Panel 7 Academics in Cooperation

Albert Müller (Wien): Cooperation among Cyberneticians

Natascha Gruver (Berkeley University): Interdisciplinary Cooperation in Philosophy: a Case Study and some Reflections

Thomas Wallgren (Helsinki, Finnland): Socratic-Wittgensteinian Philosophy as True Politics

Final Discussion Talking Cooperation

Natascha Gruver (Berkeley)

Christian Henrich-Franke (Siegen)

Martin Zillinger (Köln)

Erhard Schüttpelz (Siegen)

Sebastian Gießmann (Siegen)

Volker Wulf (Siegen)

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