

Call for Papers

Morality as Organizational Practice

19th Workshop of the Section “Cultures of Work” of the German Association of Cultural Anthropology and Folklore Studies (dgv), 22.–23. April 2021

Organizations are increasingly the subject of moral debates. Calls for product boycotts due to norm transgressions or political engagement of organizations, developments of compliance management and corporate social responsibility standards, initiatives for supply chain laws, the implementation of labels for family friendliness or sustainability – to name a few examples – all address organizations in terms of their ethical conduct and guidelines. The positioning of organizations, including small and medium-sized enterprises, and non-governmental organizations, is publicly discussed and taken as a basis for consumer, client, and political decisions in a broad scope of topics, ranging from racism, diversity, environmental impact, and animal treatment to corruption, income inequalities, workers’ rights along supply chains, or customer relations. Both the perspectives of customers, organizations, and further stakeholders on such developments have been highlighted under the label of “ethical consumption” or vis-à-vis the fragility of organizations. However, the impact and effects of these contemporary processes on actors working in or for such organizations or subcontractors, both as employed or freelance workers, have so far only been dealt with tangentially or left as a blank spot.

The workshop asks for contributions on the subjective perspectives of actors (employees, freelancers, customers, and other stake holders) on the moralization of organizations and on morality as organizational practice. It asks how they are affected by discourses on morality, how such discourses change organizational culture, hiring practices, work standards or modalities of employment.

We invite papers from ethnographic disciplines and neighboring fields, including practitioners and museums, to address, among other topics:

- How do actors in or connected to organizations position themselves in moral debates on organizations? Which practices do they employ to deal with or organize against perceived immoral organizational practices, e.g., as part of union activities? How do actors, e.g., as “norm brokers”, manage to position organizations in moral debates?

- How and by whom are employees, including self-employed persons, addressed and portrayed in public, media, personal debates, and in political processes? What kind of images of employees are drafted in such debates?
- How are employees confronted with measures connected to moral debates (within organizations as well as in contact with customers), e.g., as part of anti-discrimination trainings and legal regulations, with regard to guidelines on sustainability or anti-corruption, related to the effects of hiring practices or to models of participation and decision making?
- How do moral discourses shape organizations, and how are they used to influence or to justify certain decisions?

While the regional focus of the workshop is on Europe, contributions from other areas and dealing with global entanglements and supply chains are welcome. Presentations should be based on empirical research and should not have been published elsewhere. Your contribution to the workshop proceedings (planned with an international publisher) is expected.

Deadline

Please send your paper proposals (paper title and abstract not exceeding 300 words), including name, email address, and a brief biographical note, until 20 November 2020 to arbeitskulturen@gmail.com.

Organizing Committee

Sarah May, University of Freiburg (sarah.may@kaee.uni-freiburg.de)

Johannes Müske, University of Freiburg (johannes.mueske@zpk.uni-freiburg.de)

Stefan Groth, University of Zurich (stefan.groth@uzh.ch)

Organizer

The Section "Cultures of Work" of the German Association of Cultural Anthropology and Folklore Studies (dgv) and the Institute for Cultural Anthropology and European Ethnology, University of Freiburg, in cooperation with the Department of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies (ISEK), University of Zurich.



**Universität
Zürich** ^{UZH}

Contact

Email: arbeitskulturen@gmail.com

Website: <http://organization.dgv-arbeitskulturen.de>