

Call for Papers

VISUAL EXPRESSIONS OF HEALTH, ILLNESS AND HEALING

34th Annual Conference of the Association for Anthropology and Medicine (AGEM) in Cooperation with the Austrian Ethnomedical Society and Weltmuseum Wien

June 2-4, 2022 Vienna / Austria

Visualization of medical topics to communicate aspects of health, suffering, diseases and therapeutic intervention may be used in different ways. Depending on setting, purpose and audience, images may be created not only as a didactic tool in order to explain medical content. Embedded in their respective social and wider contexts, artists around the world use their works to draw attention to social and disease-related suffering. Depiction can be done in the context of therapy, in the educational training of prospective medical professionals rooted in their medical cultures as well as on a broader societal stage. Simple sketches, vivid comics, elaborate paintings or computer-aided simulations, to name just a few possibilities, are used to directly illustrate topics that are often difficult to access through language alone. They not only facilitate understanding, but also enable awareness of and discussion about topics relevant to health. Pictures or drawings of the inner state and other visual tools can make it easier for patients to demonstrate and articulate their psychological or physical complaints and body perception.

We will explore the many ways of visual expression in the context of healing and look at options of their use for individual healing, education or social awareness. This also raises the question of which type of visualisation is appealing to whom. The conference shall be aligned interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary with a focus on visual medical anthropology and transcultural medical humanities. Researchers, artists, curators, health professionals as well as patients and their relatives are invited to contribute with their experience and expertise. The AGEM conference 2022 will be a continuation of the previous conference "Aesthetics of Healing: Working with the Senses in Therapeutic Contexts" which took place in 2019.

It is the aim of the organizers that the conference will be a tribute to Prof. Armin Prinz (1945-2018), physician and anthropologist, who was the first Professor of Medical Anthropology (Ethnomedizin) in Austria and a specialist for visual medical anthropology. He founded the Austrian Ethnomedical Society (Österreichische Ethnomedizinische Gesellschaft) and established a collection of numerous ethnomedical objects and paintings, which were donated to the Weltmuseum Wien in 2017.

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS OF INTEREST

How are health topics represented visually in particular medical cultures?

How do artists illustrate disease-related issues in their work?

What images do patients use to express their complaints?

What images do doctors and healers use to communicate diagnoses, medical concepts, and therapeutic interventions?

What form of visibility is helpful for those affected?

How should images of disease and therapy be shown in exhibitions?

What role do images play in teaching medical knowledge in education, therapy and public health.

What visual means do medical cultures use to illustrate complex content in education?

Visual documentation of healing rituals and ceremonies: films, photos or paintings

Demonstration of health issues through performance and theatre

Visual expressions of structural violence in public health

The power of images: illiteracy and health education

Visual medical anthropology in museums

Medical comics and medical graphics

(The presentations will be arranged in panels according to the topics, but there will be no parallel panels.)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Conference language: English

The conference is organized by the Österreichische Ethnomedizinische Gesellschaft (ÖEG) in cooperation with Arbeitsgemeinschaft Ethnologie und Medizin (AGEM) and Weltmuseum Wien. It will be organized by Katharina Sabernig (Medical University of Vienna), Doris Burtscher (Médecins sans Frontières) and Ruth Kutalek (Medical University of Vienna).

Further cooperations are planned with the following partners: Working Group for History of Medicine and Medical Humanities of the ÖAW, ISA (Institute for Social Anthropology of the ÖAW), Institute of Cultural and Social Anthropology (IKSA) of the University of Vienna.

Participation in the conference is free of charge for presenters, but reimbursement of travel and accommodation expenses is not covered by the conference and will be borne by the participant.

A publication of selected contributions in the *Curare: Journal of Medical Anthropology* is planned.

Submission of abstracts in English of up to 300 words together with a short biographical sketch (200 words) please by 31.01.2022 to

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