

Composing Coexistence

Challenges in Research on More-than-Human Health



Challenges in Research on More-than-Human Health



Call for Papers for a workshop organized by the research group Medical Anthropology at the BNITM, 20-21 February 2025 in Hamburg.

Environmental disasters and the (re-)emergence of infectious diseases require human health to be considered in relation to the health of animals and the environment. A growing number of social scientists investigate multispecies contact zones and how these are bound up with anthropogenic processes, such as climate change, land use, resource exploitation, pollution and toxicity.

Anthropological ambitions to compose coexistence in a sensitive way are higher than ever. However, multispecies researchers face several challenges and barriers, for example with regard to inter- or transdisciplinary work. While emphasizing the interconnectedness of humans, animals and the environment, concepts like 'One Health' or 'Planetary Health' ultimately revolve around questions of human health and well-being. As a result, anthropocentric and human exceptionalist approaches are often promoted, neglecting the perspectives and needs of non-human beings. How can social scientists debunk such approaches? How can we ensure that we do not reproduce these perspectives? How can we address issues of translation, advocacy and agency concerning non-human beings?

With this workshop, we seek to address doctoral researchers from the social sciences and humanities with a keen interest in the study of more-than-human health. Over two days, we will present and discuss our research projects, and engage in creative exercises considering current debates on multispecies methodologies and related obstacles. Furthermore, we are delighted that Giorgio Brocco (University of Vienna) will give a talk on his current research on chemicality and toxicity in the plantation world of the French Caribbean.

We warmly welcome applications from doctoral students who are at an early stage of their research or in the post-fieldwork phase. As early-career researchers, our aim is to create a supportive environment where we can strengthen our research topics and connect with researchers who share an interest in exploring the entanglements between human, animal and environmental health.

The workshop will be held in English. If you would like to participate, please send a description of your research project (max. 750 words) and your academic CV to vivien.barth@bnitm.de or to erik.zillmann@bnitm.de by 30 September 2024.

Applicants will be informed of the outcome by the end of October at the latest.

Challenges in Research on More-than-Human Health