

December 15, 2012

ANNUAL REPORT OF STS-CH, 2012 (JANUARY – DECEMBER)

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1. EVENTS OF STS-CH IN 2012

1.1 “THE LOCAL CONFIGURATION OF NEW RESEARCH FIELDS. ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DIVERSITY” (LUCERNE, JUNE 14-16, 2012)

The international Workshop focused on the issue of how regional and national characteristics are played out in the local configuration of emerging research fields (such as nanotechnology, synthetic biology and molecular biology) and to what effect. The perennial tension between the universal outlook of science and local practices of research provided the key motive for tackling the raised question. Selected speakers from Science and Technology Studies explored the outlined tension, drawing on concrete empirical cases in view of systematic comparison. Fruitful discussions between scientists from various countries and disciplines concerned four thematic areas, dealing with policy, place, transgressing contexts, and organization. The outstanding evening lecture of Prof. Hans-Jörg Rheinberger on patterns of the global and the local in the history of molecular biology presented a welcome occasion for debate within a wider public context and stimulated comparison with more recently developing research fields.

Organization: Martina Merz, Philippe Sormani, Peter Biniok (Univ. Luzerne).

Supported by Swiss Association for the Studies of Science, Technology and Society (STS-CH) with generous funding of the SAGW/ASSH, the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNFS) and the University of Lucerne.

1.2 “III. KONGRESS KULTURWISSENSCHAFTLICHE TECHNIKFORSCHUNG” (ZURICH, OCTOBER 12-14, 2012)

This Meeting was initiated and hosted by the Forschungskolleg Kulturwissenschaftliche Technikforschung, located at the University of Zurich, and its director Prof. Dr. Thomas Hengartner. This new cooperation allowed STS-CH to strengthen the perspective of cultural anthropology. The Meeting thus constituted a platform for various approaches interlinking culture and technology. On the basis of a broad understanding of technology as located in cultural settings, phenomena and constellations that do not seem ‘technical’ at first sight speakers addressed a wide range of both professional and everyday settings. The studies focused, e.g., on everyday practices of indoor climate and comfort, boxing as a cultural technique between sport and lifestyle, air travel as a cultural technique, technologies of improvisation in intensive care practice, the embedding of various digital technologies in daily routines. One of the highlights was most certainly Thomas Hengartner’s evening lecture on the

“moving house”, referring to the so-called MFO management building situated just opposite the institute in Oerlikon and the project of how it came to be moved 60 meters further in May 2012. The shifting building was a subject also of a photo exhibition by Eva Lüthi, which presented an inspiring setting and occasion for an informal get-together.

Organization: “Forschungskolleg Kulturwissenschaftliche Technikforschung” in cooperation with Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Volkskunde/Société Suisse des Traditions Populaires and STS-CH.

1.3 “‘Ein ganzes chirurgisches Costume’: Die Kontroverse um die Einführung von Operationshandschuhen in der deutschsprachigen Chirurgie in den 1890er Jahren”, lecture by Thomas Schlich (Universität Basel, March 19, 2012)

Concept and organization: Sibylle Obrecht.

2. COMMUNICATION

2.1 Website

The website of STS-CH has moved to the University of Basel, and has the URL <http://sts.unibas.ch>.

Contact: Mario.Kaiser@unibas.ch

2.2 Mailing List

The association’s mailing list STS_L is hosted by the central informatics service of the University of Zurich (id.uzh.ch). It has approximately 240 subscribers. To SUBSCRIBE, send a mail to sympa@soziologie.lists.uzh.ch with the subject "subscribe sts_l".

Contact: Christoph Müller (sts_l-editor@soziologie.lists.uzh.ch)