

# Introduction to Media Anthropology

22.& 23.10.10.2015

## Agenda:

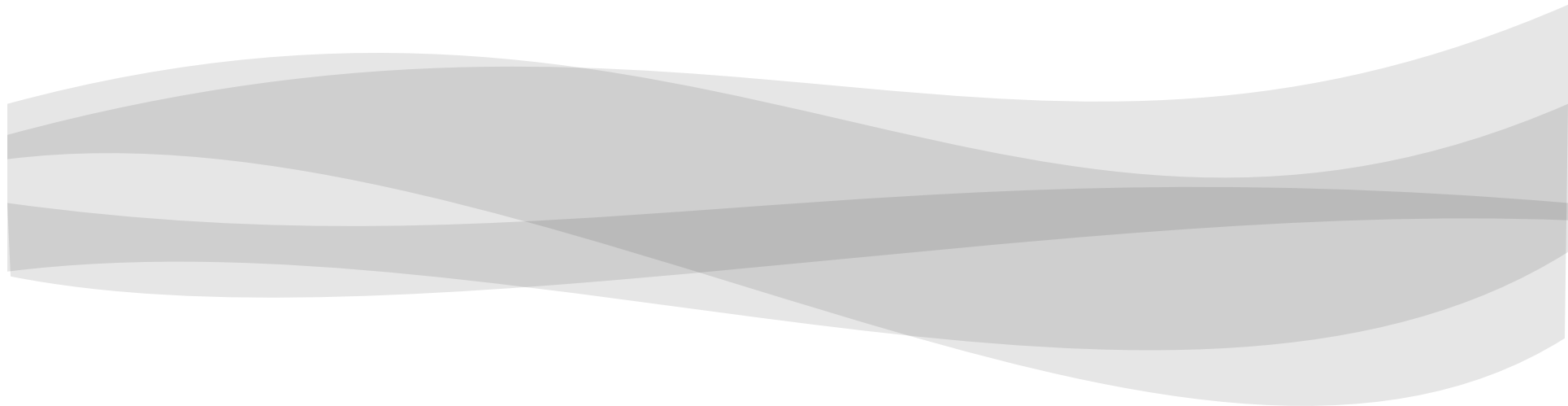
Second Day 23.10.15

- Exploring local media fields & Cultural Translation
  - Bollywood, Joint Reading VJs in Tanzania
- Current Debates
- Perspectives & Summary

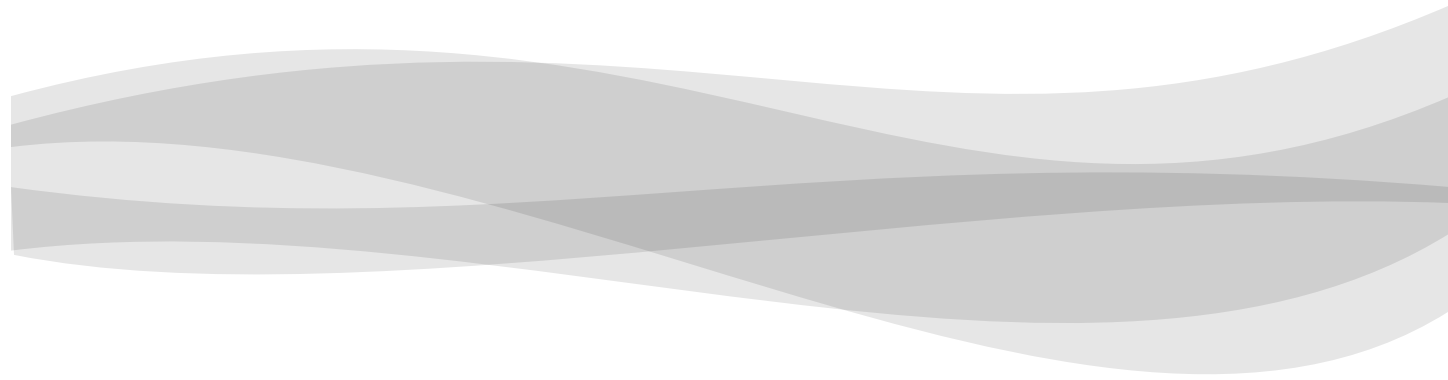
# Media Anthropology



Global media & the  
significance of local counter  
flows



# Media Anthropology



Thussu, D. K. (2007) Mapping Global Media Flow and Contra-Flow. In D. K. Thussu (ed.) Media on the Move – Global Flow and Contra-Flow. Routledge.

contra-flows:

“the semantic and imaginative referents for the institutional, cultural and political matrix of a world framed by processes of **global cultural power** and **local negotiation**: a world experienced through the identity politics of nations, individuals and cultures and negotiated through contestations of locality, nationality and global citizenship”



# Dayan Thussu

## Media flows:

Table 1: Types of flow

Type of flow	Source of Production	Destination of production
Core Markets	Hegemonic Audiovisual Production country (US, Western Europe, Japan)	Western Europe, Canada, US, Japan
Core to Peripheral Markets	Hegemonic Audiovisual Production country (US, Canada, Western Europe, Japan)	Any country (or countries) not belonging to the Core Market
Peripheral to Core Markets	Small or Regional Production Country (Latin-America, Asia, Eastern Europe)	Western Europe, Canada, US, Japan
Peripheral Markets	Small or Regional Production Country (Latin-America, Asia, Eastern Europe)	Any country (or countries) not belonging to the Core Market

*Table 1.1 A typology of media flows*

<i>Dominant flows</i>	<i>Contra-(subaltern) flows</i>	
<i>Global</i>	<i>Transnational</i>	<i>Geo-cultural</i>
Hollywood	'Bollywood'	Phoenix
MTV	Al-Jazeera	Zee TV
Disney	Telenovelas	TRT-International
CNN	TV5	Al-Hayat
Discovery	Telesur	<a href="http://Baidu.com">Baidu.com</a>
BBC	Radio France Internationale	MBC
ESPN	CCTV-9	NHK World TV
Google	RTTV	<a href="http://islamonline.net">islamonline.net</a>
CNBC	Euronews	Roj TV
Wall Street Journal	M-Net	
Japanese animation	Korean films	

**TABLE 2**  
**National reach of main news networks**

Network	Ownership	Language
Aaj Tak	India Today Group	Hindi
NDTV India	New Delhi Television	Hindi
Zee News	Zee Network	Hindi
Star News	News Corp./AB Group	Hindi
NDTV 24x7	New Delhi Television	English
DD News	State-owned	Hindi/English
Sahara Samay	Rashtrya Sahara	Hindi
Headlines Today	India Today Group	English

*Source:* Data from TAM Media Research, July 2005

Example of India:

dominant regional broadcasters

News	Entertainment	US-Link
• NDTV 24x7	NDTV Imagine	NBC
• CNN/IBN	TV 18	Viacom/Disney
• Zee News	Zee Cinema	AOL-Time Warner
• Star News	Star Gold	News Corp.
• Sahara Samay	Filmy/Firangi	HBO

– some of them with international links

## Example 1: Global Media Events

- staged, scripted and mediatized sequence of actions
  - transnational connections
  - aim and necessity of mass reception AND emotional effects, creating ideas of immediacy, synchronicity, Particularity ->(Remediation), but:
  - Tendencies: ritualization, repetition, standardization, multiplication
  - narrative & -dramaturgical- ritual components
- (Victor Turner-> liminoid stages, appeal on *communitas*)
- Ex. Lady Diana 1997, 9/11, Fukushima, Chilean Miners, FIFA World Cup, Olympics
- community of audiences- >“global village“
- (Marshall Mc Luhan 1964) or enacted illusion?



Example 2:  
Trans- Regional Media Worlds

# Bollywood

- refers to Hindi cinema produced in Bombay/Mumbai (not Indian Arthouse Cinema)
- Aesthetically and different from Hollywood, but as prolific in its production & distribution
- Importance of film music
- Indian music as a part of religious ceremonies
- Beginning Sanskrit Theatres, later marathi language-film sounds
- Combination of music- fashion- storytelling
- Love & family conflicts,

# Bollywood

- First blockbuster: What I am to you?
- Proliferation of studios, cinemas, exports->subregion
- From 1990 to 2000: growing exports from 10 to 100 mio \$/year
- **2000s: Global Distribution:**
  - a) Indian Diaspora**
  - b) Globally dispersed fanhood (Shah Rukh Khan)**
  - c) Awareness of major festivals, media groups**

# Discussion:

## Bollywood- regional counterflow:

### Bollywood & Hollywood:

- Cultural differences
- Regional distribution
- Marketization /foreign investments, adaptation  
->World wide circulation

# Bollywood- Nationalism, Ideals of Indianness:

„This is an industry where there are no divisions based on caste, language, religious or region“ (Pramod Navlakar)

->quality of nationalism:

- Hindi as main language
- Diversity of music and settings
  - **Appeal to Indian Diaspora**
  - **Global Fanhood**
  - **Festivals & Global Marketing**

# Cultural Translation

- Part of a logic of (re-)mediation:  
communication & act of representation
- Inherent & explicit acts of translating cultural  
differences
- Particular modes of decoding & encoding

# Cultural Translation

Example:

VJs in Tanzania- > Reading

Englert, Birgit 2010 (with Nginjai Paul Moreto). Inserting Voice: Foreign Language Film Translation into Kiswahili as a Local Phenomenon in Tanzania. In: Journal of African Media Studies Vol. 2 (2): 225-239.

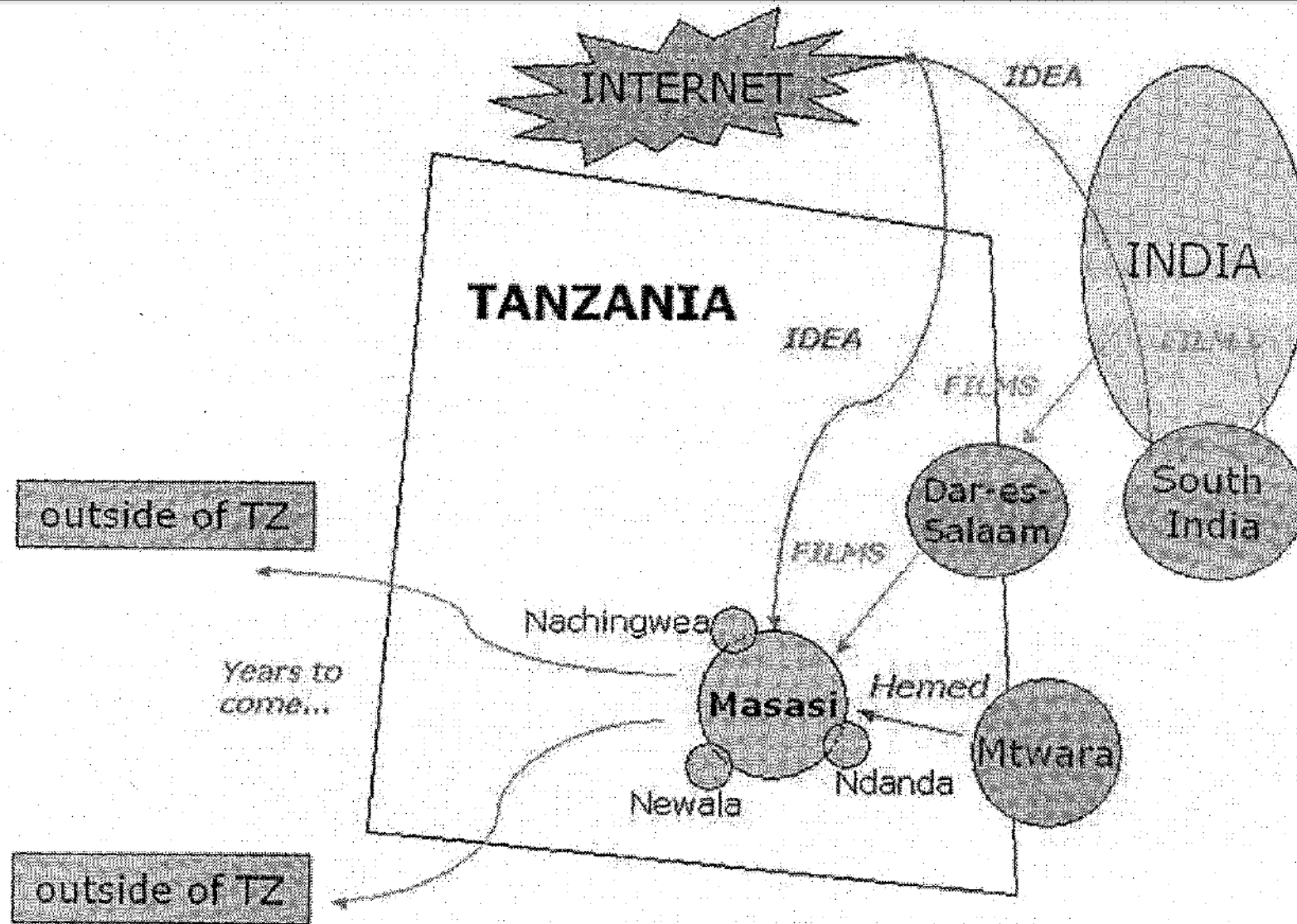


Figure 3: Translation of Indian Films into Swahili.

## VJs in Tanzania-

- cultural entrepreneurs
- importance of orality
- commentators & guides
- translation as cultural creativity

Further Examples: a type of Press Review->-

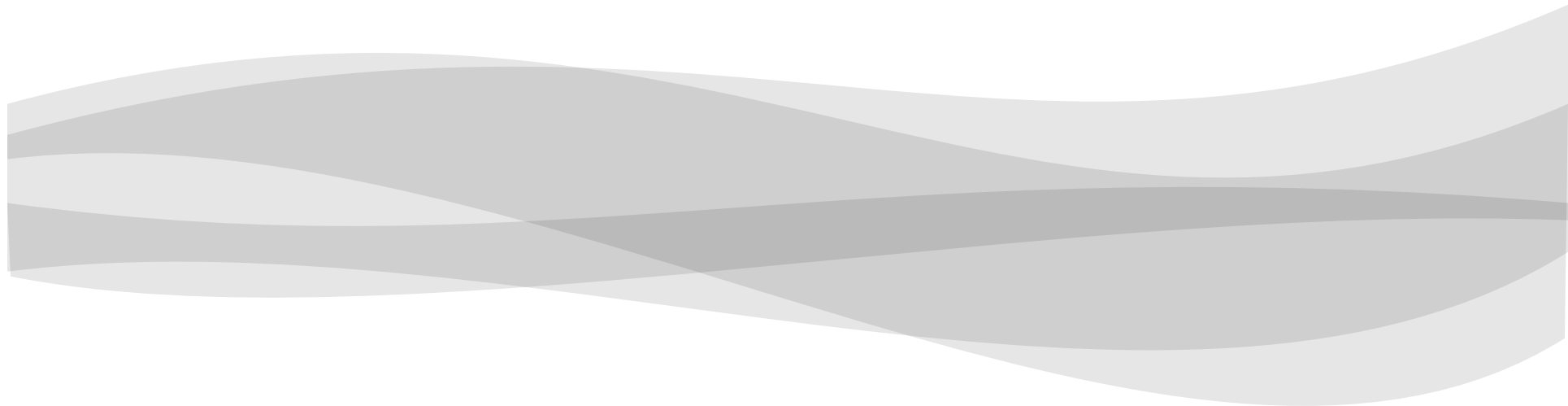


# Media Anthropology- Current Debates



1 Virtual worlds –

methodological challenges



# Virtual worlds – methodological challenges



## a) Virtuality and the Possibilities and Limits of Fieldwork

-- internet-> growing importance for various local communities

Problem a)

-- classical approach: fieldwork within communities, participant observation, direct access

-- internet-> rather indirect access, dispersed information -> how to do fieldwork? Offline/online?

Problem b)

-- communities in the internet->loose relations, rather “virtual communities”

--> not” real” communities? no immersion possible?

# Virtual worlds – methodological challenges



Alexander Knorr(Munich): „The online nomads of cyberia“ (2006)

–Game modders –degrees of involvement:

–Inner circle->cohesion->community

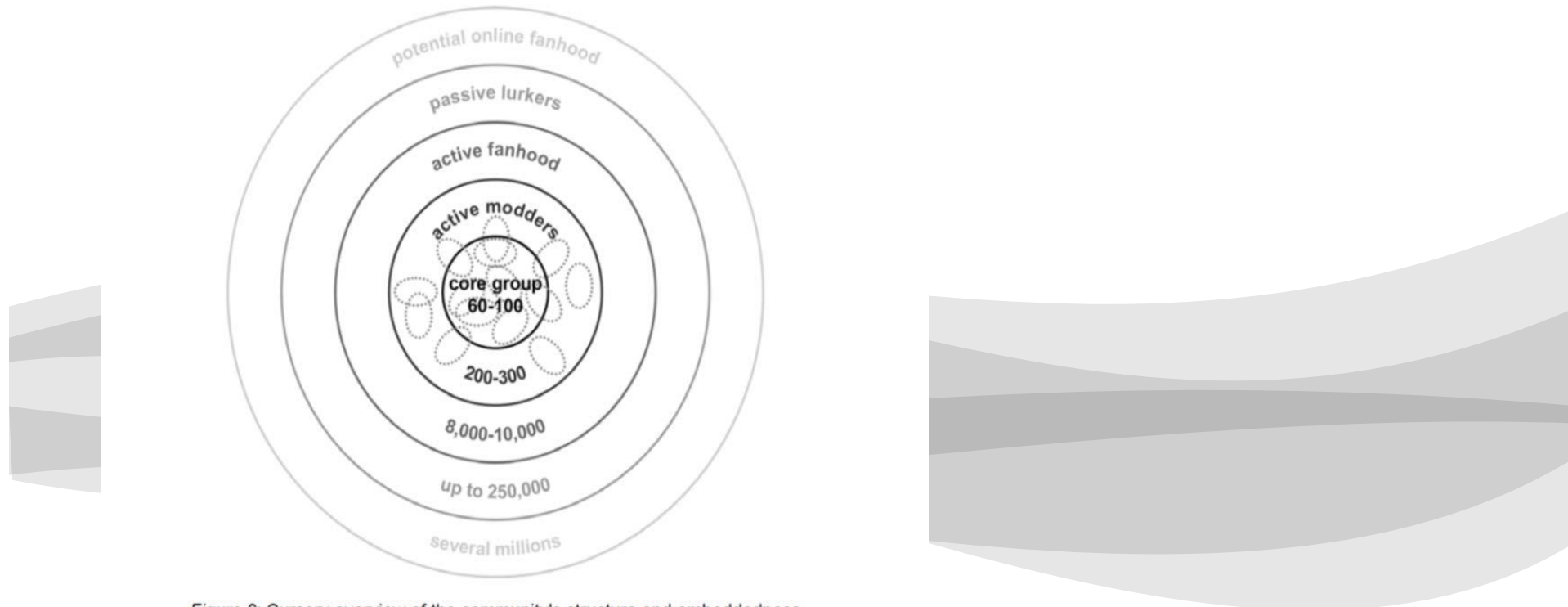


Figure 2: Cursory overview of the community's structure and embeddedness

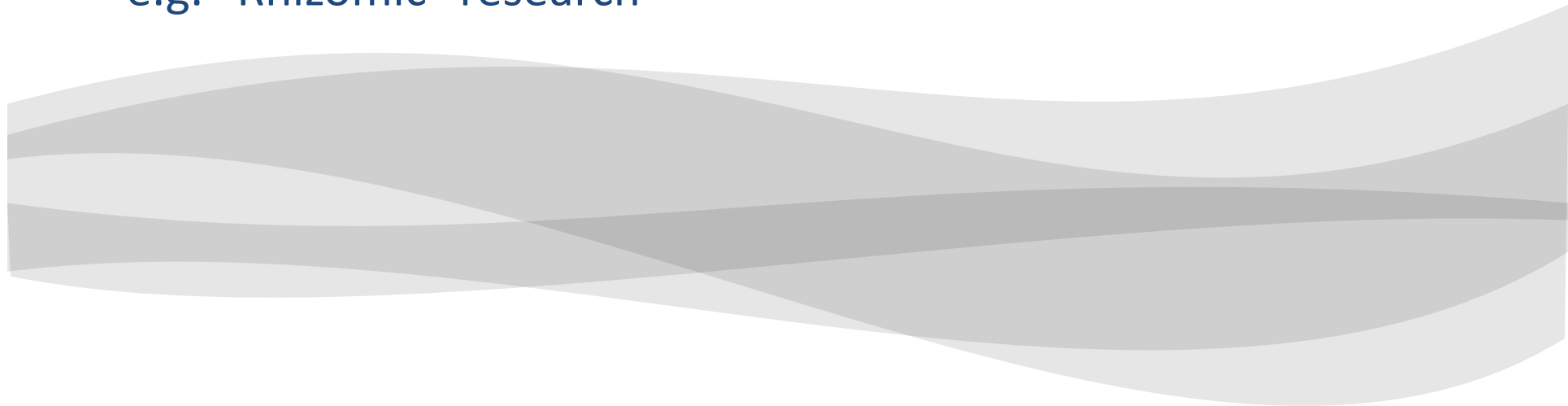
# Virtual worlds – methodological challenges



## Networking & Translocality

– new concepts of representation

e.g. “Rhizomic” research



# Virtual worlds – methodological challenges



## 2. Producers-

media producers & users –  
growing indistinction

# Producers



## Producers (Axel Bruns) (2008:23p.)

« fluid movement of *producers* between roles as leaders, participants, and users of content “

- producers may have backgrounds ranging from professional to amateur;
- artefacts always unfinished , continuous process
- open participation; permissive regimes of engagement which are based on merit (ad hoc meritocracy) more than ownership, heterarchy , common property, individual rewards

Examples:

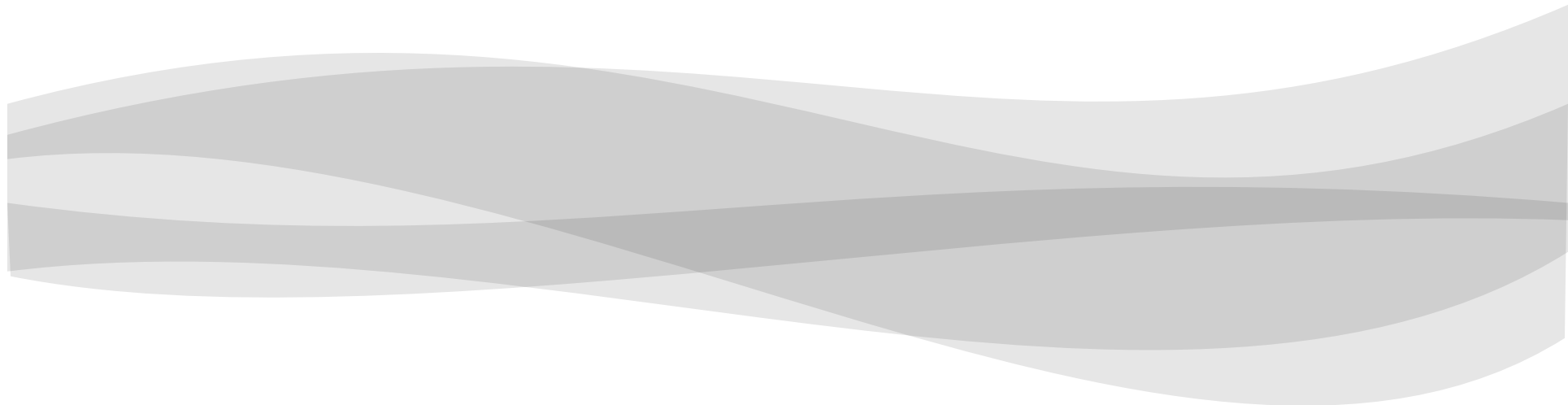
Vloggers Examples:

- Wikipedia
- Vloggers

# Objectives:



- Understand central perspectives of media anthropology
- Learn more about particular fields of study central concepts & debates



# Summary



## I Media anthropology :

### studying

- media actors, media & cultural construction(s) of societies & lifestyles
- media in a comparative perspective
- media as a central field to understand the global-local-nexus
- > no cultural homogenization



# Summary



## II Concepts:

Appropriation  
small alternative media  
cultural translation

## III Debates:

Virtuality  
Producers

# Summary



## Media Anthropology :

Vibrant , open field of research, debate  
& engagement

