

**Sat, March 29, 2014**  
**Power and Law**  
**Fluid Manifestations of Protest**

Symposium in cooperation with the Zentrum für angewandte Rechtswissenschaft (ZAR) [Center of Applied Jurisprudence] at KIT ZKM\_Media Theater, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., admission free, in German

**As an accompanying program for the exhibition *global aCtIV-ISM* (December 14, 2013 – March 30, 2014) at the ZKM, the symposium focusses on global activism from the perspective of right, as *the* art form of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With the use of new modes of communication and technologies, civil social protest has found new forms of appearance and expression. In contrast to the familiar forms of organization and expression, these demonstrate special features which the symposium seeks to approach through the key term *loosening of borders* (spatial limits; centralist / decentralist forms of organization; public / private; art / expression of opinion; minority / majority, assemblies / performance):**

Social media play an important role in the mediation of activist content, but also for communication among activists. They promote the education of ad-hoc groups beyond spatial borders, and facilitate an open response based on the private sphere: spatial borders become obsolete, and the private becomes the public. Protest organizes itself beyond national borders and in decentralist forms, whether these involve global problems, such as climate protection, or regional railroad projects. Art is now shifting away from the *White Cube* of the museum and moving towards the public sphere, and the global data space of the Internet. At the same time, global activism gains access to art. The borders between art and the expression of opinion, assembly and performative, artistic forms of expression begin to blur.

In view of the application of property and data protection policies as well as concepts of company and trade secrets protection, are hacker attacks or whistleblowing justified? Acts of protest in real space (sit-ins, flyers, demonstrations) are site-bound and consequently subject to the territorial sovereignty of legislators. They are protected by the fundamental rights of assembly and the freedom of expression. But to what extent can the national rights of assembly be transferred to trans-border, organized decentralist acts? Do civil liberties also protect virtual forms of protest (such as virtual sit-ins as blockade forms of the age of digital networks)? Whereas a ban on face coverings in the case of assemblies in real space is valid, the right to anonymity on the Web is currently being debated. This leads to questions about the extent to

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**Press Contact**

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which state surveillance on the Internet is legitimate, and where boundaries run as set by the new fundamental rights that pertain to the confidentiality and integrity of information-technical systems. How do the classical forms of civil involvement in the organization of NGOs operate with respect to the new forms of global activism? In view of the apparent reversal of existing conditions, is the protection of an inactive majority in contrast to an active minority required?

Where right does not itself become fluid, then these should reflect new developments in civil involvement. But is it possible for these fluid forms to establish analogies to right, which is aligned to clearly defined institutions? The difficulties can already be seen in attempts at systemization, though this is similarly characterized by fluidity.

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