TRANSFORMING SOLIDARITIES LECTURE SERIES
Friday, 01. July 2022, 6-8 pm| Institute for European Ethnology , Room 311, Möhrenstr. 40/41, Berlin

›Capturing Public Health in Computational Infrastructures‹

Transforming Solidarities proudly presents the second of three talks in their Lecture Series with Seda Gürses:

In this three part talk, I will introduce the concept of computational infrastructures as it manifests itself in the domain of public health. First, we will acquaint ourselves with Computational Infrastructures, a term we use in our ongoing research to refer to the rise of the cloud + mobile era in the hands of a few companies, in particular Amazon, Apple, Google and Microsoft. These infrastructures are distinct as they have come to capture most forms of software production as a means to expand their programmability to other domains like transportation, education and health. In part two, we will look at two examples, the making of the Contact Tracing Apps that were adopted in many countries across Europe and elsewhere, and the digital immunity certificates that were introduced by the EU. The examples are very different, invoke different actors and fulfill different goals, and yet, they both pass through Computational Infrastructures in ways that allow us to better understand the underlying infrastructural power and its impact, in this case, on public health. In the third part, I will present some of the work that The Institute for Technology in the Public Interest has been doing to articulate, engage and reimagine Computational Infrastructures. The talk will be interactive and while I will introduce many technological concepts, I will aim to make it accessible in presentation and format to those who do not possess prior knowledge of computing.

Capturing Public Health

in Computational Infrastructures

Transforming Solidarities Lecture 2

Seda Gürses

Seda Gürses is an Associate Professor in the Department of Multi-Actor Systems at TU Delft at the Faculty of Technology Policy and Management (TPM), and an affiliate at the COSIC Group at the Department of Electrical Engineering (ESAT), KU Leuven. Her current research focuses on questions around how changes in the business of computing and the production of software lead to our current day computational infrastructures (cloud computing and mobile devices as their accessories) concentrated in the hands of "big tech" companies. These computational infrastructures have varying effects including constraining the protections afforded by Privacy Enhancing Technologies, and the increased adoption of forms of operational

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control using optimization that comes to fundamentally transform organizations, both of which are topics Seda works on.

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