

Overview:
The development
of the project
Campus Medius
from a historical
case study to a
mapping platform.

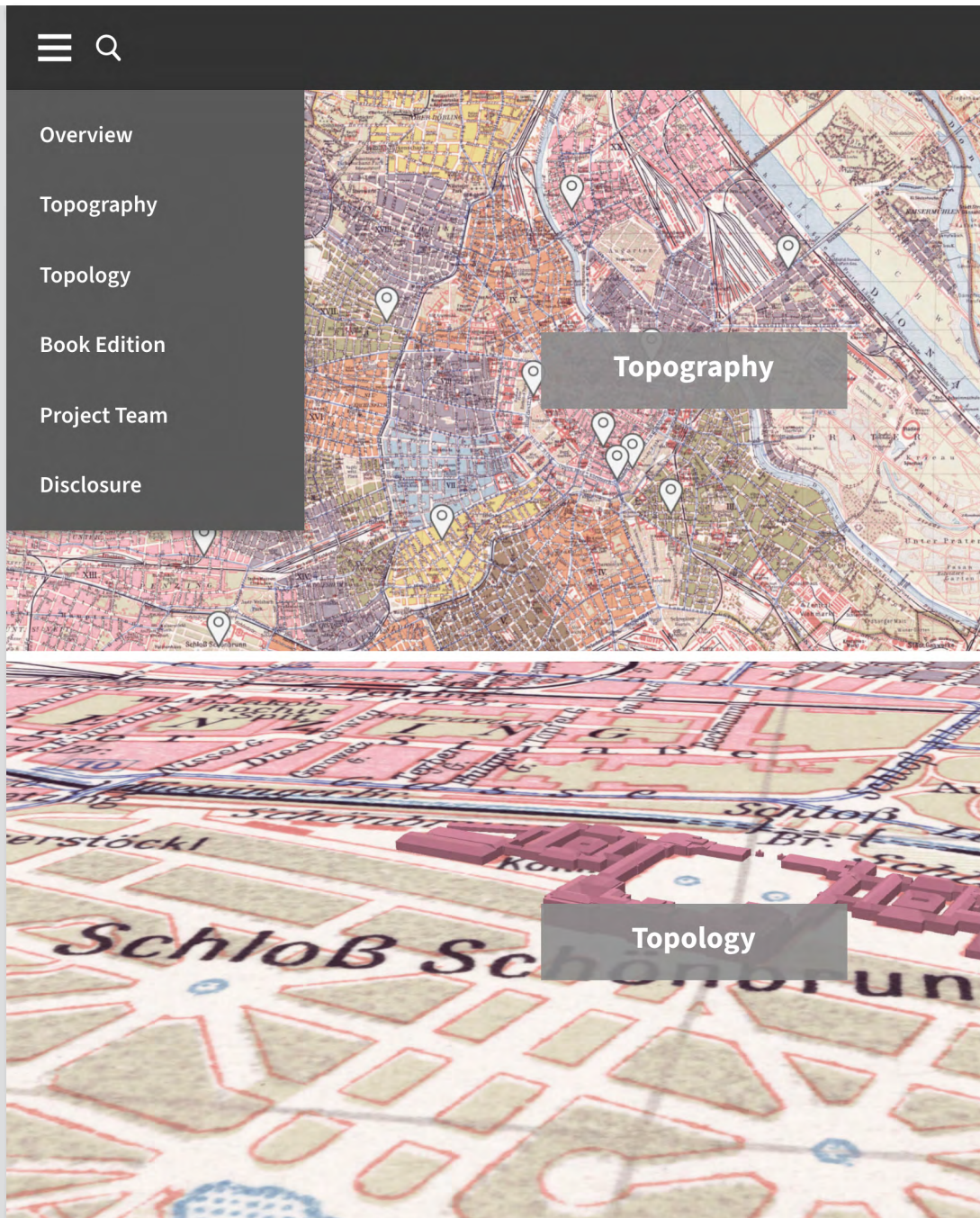


Fig. 1: Screenshot of the website campusmedius.net (desktop version 2.0/2021) showing the start page with the opened menu and the selection of the page “Overview” (text: Simon Ganahl, code: Andreas Krimbacher, design: Susanne Kiesenhofer).



Campus Medius explores and expands the possibilities of digital mapping in cultural and media studies. The fields on the left lead directly to the historical case study. However, we recommend reading the introductory overview first.

[OVERVIEW](#)[BOOK EDITION](#)[PROJECT TEAM](#)

The QR code leads
to the corresponding
web page.



1. Topography: *Campus Medius* 1.0

The idea for this mapping project originated in my doctoral studies on the media references in the writings of Karl Kraus (1874–1936) and Peter Altenberg (1859–1919), where I investigated a text that Kraus had written in Vienna in 1933: the *Dritte Walpurgisnacht* (*Third Walpurgis Night*).¹⁰ In this 300-page essay, the events of a weekend that May are central to its judgment about the contemporary political situation, namely the Nazi “seizure of power” in Germany and the Austrian response to these developments. By researching what had happened in Vienna on May 13 and 14, 1933, I soon understood why Kraus had experienced this weekend as a turning point. Consequently, I decided to represent fifteen selected events within twenty-four hours, from Saturday at 2 p.m. to Sunday at 2 p.m., on a digitized map of Vienna from 1933. Supervised by the media scholar Shannon Mattern, the initial version of the website was developed in collaboration with the software engineers Rory Solomon and Darius Daftary and the designer Mallory Brennan at The New School in New York and launched at campusmedius.net in July 2014.¹¹

The selection of the empirical material was also influenced by the concept of the *chronotope*. In the 1930s, Mikhail Bakhtin had written an essay on time-spaces or space-times in literature from antiquity to the Renaissance, which became very important in literary studies after its publication in 1975.¹² This approach inspired me to limit the historical case study to

- 10 See Simon Ganahl: *Karl Kraus und Peter Altenberg. Eine Typologie moderner Haltungen*, Konstanz: Konstanz University Press 2015, pp. 21–111, DOI: doi.org/10.26530/oapen_574830. A digital edition of the *Third Walpurgis Night* is online available at URL: kraus1933.ace.oeaw.ac.at.
- 11 Shannon Mattern has since published her urban media archaeology, which had a formative influence on *Campus Medius*, in two books: *Deep Mapping the Media City*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2015; *Code + Clay... Data + Dirt. Five Thousand Years of Urban Media*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2017.
- 12 See Mikhail M. Bakhtin: “Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel” [Russian 1975], in: *The Dialogic Imagination. Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, Austin: University of Texas Press 1981, pp. 84–258.

exactly twenty-four hours in Vienna—a temporal and spatial unity that not only emerged in the course of events, but also resembles the most significant chronotope of the Modernist novel. Just think of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs Dalloway*, Andrei Bely’s *Petersburg*, or—to name another medium—the documentary *Berlin: Symphony of a Metropolis* by Walter Ruttmann. In all these artworks from the first third of the twentieth century, one finds the attempt to capture modernity in a very specific time-space: a day in the city.¹³

- II.10 The historical chronotope of twenty-four hours in Vienna
II.7 on May 13 and 14, 1933, is marked by so-called “Turks De-
liverance Celebrations” (*Türkenbefreiungsfeiern*) held by the
Austrian Homeland Protection (*Heimatschutz*) in the **gardens**
of **Schönbrunn Palace** and by the NSDAP in the **Engelmann**
II.13 **Arena**. As the 250th anniversary of the city’s liberation from
the Ottoman siege in mid-September 1683, celebrated in ad-
vance for reasons of propaganda, these competing rallies were
oriented from the outset on media communication: prepared
by the party-political press, partially broadcast live on **Radio**
II.12 **Wien**, and captured in newsreels. To create counter-publicity,
the Social Democrats published programmatic editorials and
organized “**freedom celebrations**” in the municipal housing
projects (*Gemeindebauten*). While the Burgtheater staged the
II.6 play ***Hundred Days***, cowritten by Benito Mussolini, several
cinemas were screening Fritz Lang’s sound feature ***The Tes-***
II.5 ***tament of Dr. Mabuse***, a film banned in Germany. In other
movie theaters, adherents of National Socialism viewed the
II.11 documentary ***Germany Awakes***, and a group of communists
II.8 showed Sergei Eisenstein’s ***Battleship Potemkin*** and ***Turksib***
by Viktor Turin. Moreover, the Sunday edition of the *Neue*
Freie Presse, Vienna’s most important bourgeois newspaper,
II.9 printed an essay entitled “**Humbug, Bluff, and Ballyhoo**” on
public relations as practiced by Edward Bernays, a nephew
of Sigmund Freud.

On the website, users can discover what was happening simultaneously at different places in Vienna by moving the

13 See Simon Ganahl: “Der monströse Fouleuze. Eine philosophische Lektüre von Andrej Belyjs *Petersburg*,” in: *Le foucaldien*, 3/1 (2017), DOI: doi.org/10.16995/lefou.23.

twenty-four-hour timeline. The interactive map also makes it possible to give a spatial overview of the events. Inspired by the research platform *HyperCities*,¹⁴ to which *Campus Medius* in general owes a great deal, we not only geo-referenced their sites but used an established technique for historical mapping projects known as *rectification*. In our case, a city map of Vienna from 1933 was scanned with high resolution at the Austrian National Library,¹⁵ converted into a GeoTIFF file, and rectified to align with the underlying GIS data of OpenStreetMap.¹⁶ This technological procedure discomfited me because of the idea that a digital map represents the reality from which a printed map more or less deviates. What actually happens in the process of rectification, though, is a translation between different projections of reality that ought to be traced back to the historical conditions of their emergence.¹⁷ Due to this critique of the cartographical approach, we have striven to question and alienate these standardized representations of time and space in the current version of the project that I will discuss in the **second part** of the introduction.

I.2

Fig. 2, p. 24

By selecting a pin on the map, an **actor-network** of the respective event popped up in the initial release of *campusmedius.net*. This visualization was derived from actor-network theory, which basically states that it is not a subjective consciousness that decides to act, and then things happen accordingly—in other words, that actions should not be understood as human intentions, but rather as interplays between human and nonhuman actors.¹⁸ We styled the actor icons along the lines of the International System of Typographic Picture Education (ISOTYPE), a conceptually universal picture language developed under the direction of the political economist and Austro-Marxist Otto Neurath, a member of the Vienna

14 See URL: www.hypercities.com.

15 See *Gesamtplan von Wien*, Vienna: Freytag & Berndt 1933, source: Austrian National Library, K III 101617.

16 See URL: www.openstreetmap.org.

17 See Todd Presner: "The View from Above/Below," in: Todd Presner, David Shepard, Yoh Kawano: *HyperCities. Thick Mapping in the Digital Humanities*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2014, pp. 84–127, here pp. 110–118.

18 See Bruno Latour: *Reassembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press 2005.

Fig. 3, p. 26

Circle, from the mid-1920s onward.¹⁹ In our project, however, ISOTYPE is not regarded as a universal design concept, but rather as a visual vocabulary that is closely related to the historical setting of the case study. In *Campus Medius* 1.0, the colors of the icons designated political backgrounds, with red for socialist and communist, green for Austrofascist, brown for National Socialist, and blue for bourgeois actors. If the user clicked on this actor-network window, a **multimedia description** of the associated event opened up, featuring photographs, sound recordings, movie clips, archival documents, press articles, etc.

This is, by and large, the first version of *campusmedius.net* as the website went online in 2014—a kind of digital exhibition. The project’s take on the research field of digital humanities has been strongly influenced by the *Digital Humanities Manifesto 2.0*, which argues for “the scholar as curator and the curator as scholar.”²⁰ With every historical document that is digitized, this claim becomes more important. By October 29, 2020, the Austrian National Library, for example, had made twenty-three million newspaper pages available in Austrian Newspapers Online (ANNO):²¹ What is such “big data” good for if it is not correlated in meaningful ways? One way is to develop algorithms that help recognize patterns; another way is to curate this cultural heritage in digital monographs. We started with the latter approach, used the preliminary results to translate our theoretical concepts into a data model, and have begun to devise an algorithmic analysis based on the second version of the project that I will present in the here following section.

- 19 See Otto Neurath: *International Picture Language. The First Rules of Isotype*, London: Kegan Paul 1936, and Christopher Burke, Eric Kindel, Sue Walker (eds.): *Isotype. Design and Contexts. 1925–1971*, London: Hyphen Press 2013.
- 20 Jeffrey Schnapp et al.: *The Digital Humanities Manifesto 2.0*, 2009, p. 8, URL: www.humanitiesblast.com/manifesto/Manifesto_V2.pdf.
- 21 See URL: anno.onb.ac.at.

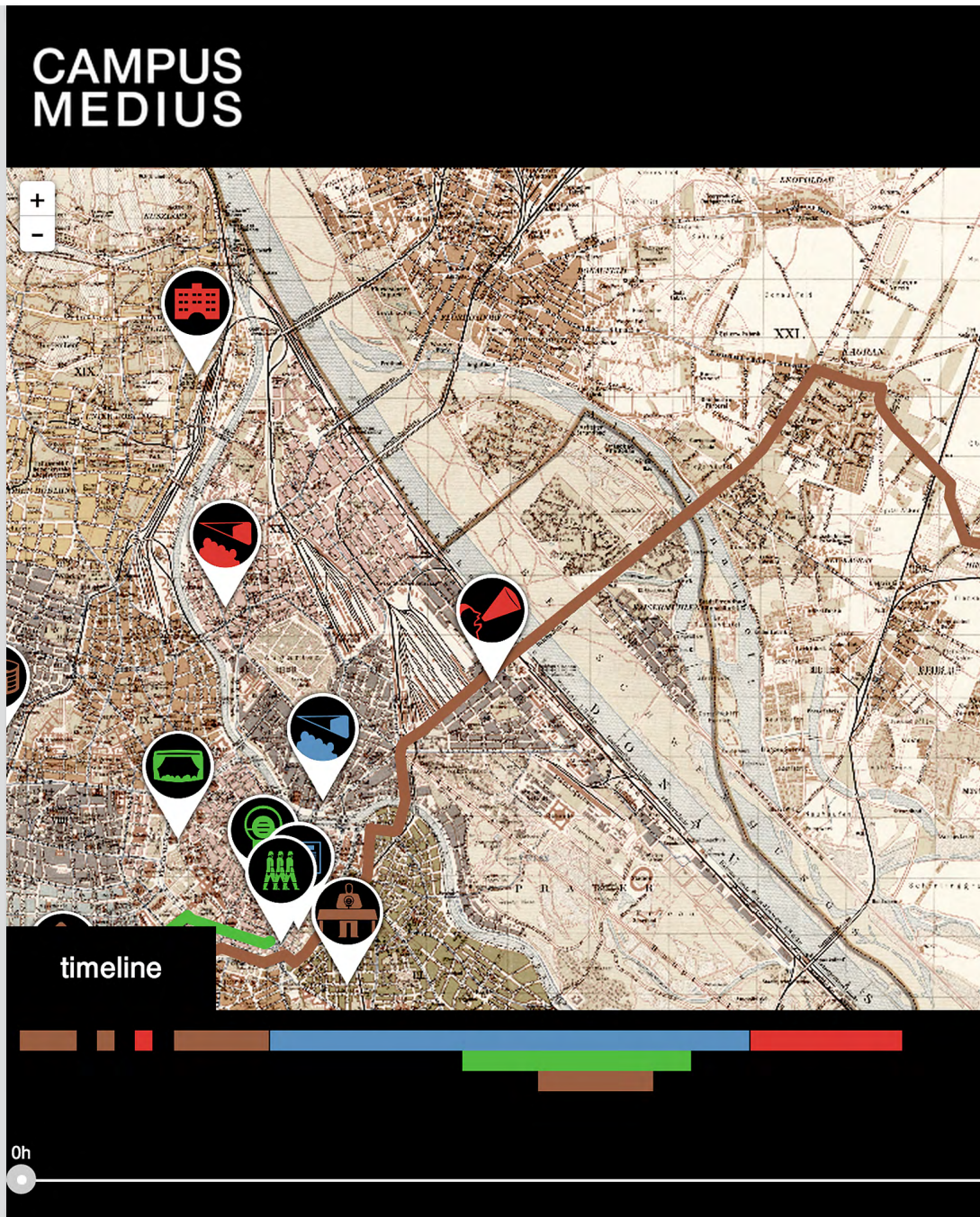


Fig. 2: Screenshot of the website campusmedius.net (desktop version 1.0/2014) showing the map of Vienna from 1933 rectified to align with the underlying OpenStreetMap, the twenty-four-hour timeline from May 13, 1933, at 2 p.m.,



to May 14, 1933, at 2 p.m., and the opened actor-network window of the event “Aspern Airfield” (text: Simon Ganahl, back-end coding: Rory Solomon, front-end coding: Darius Daftary, design: Mallory Brennan).

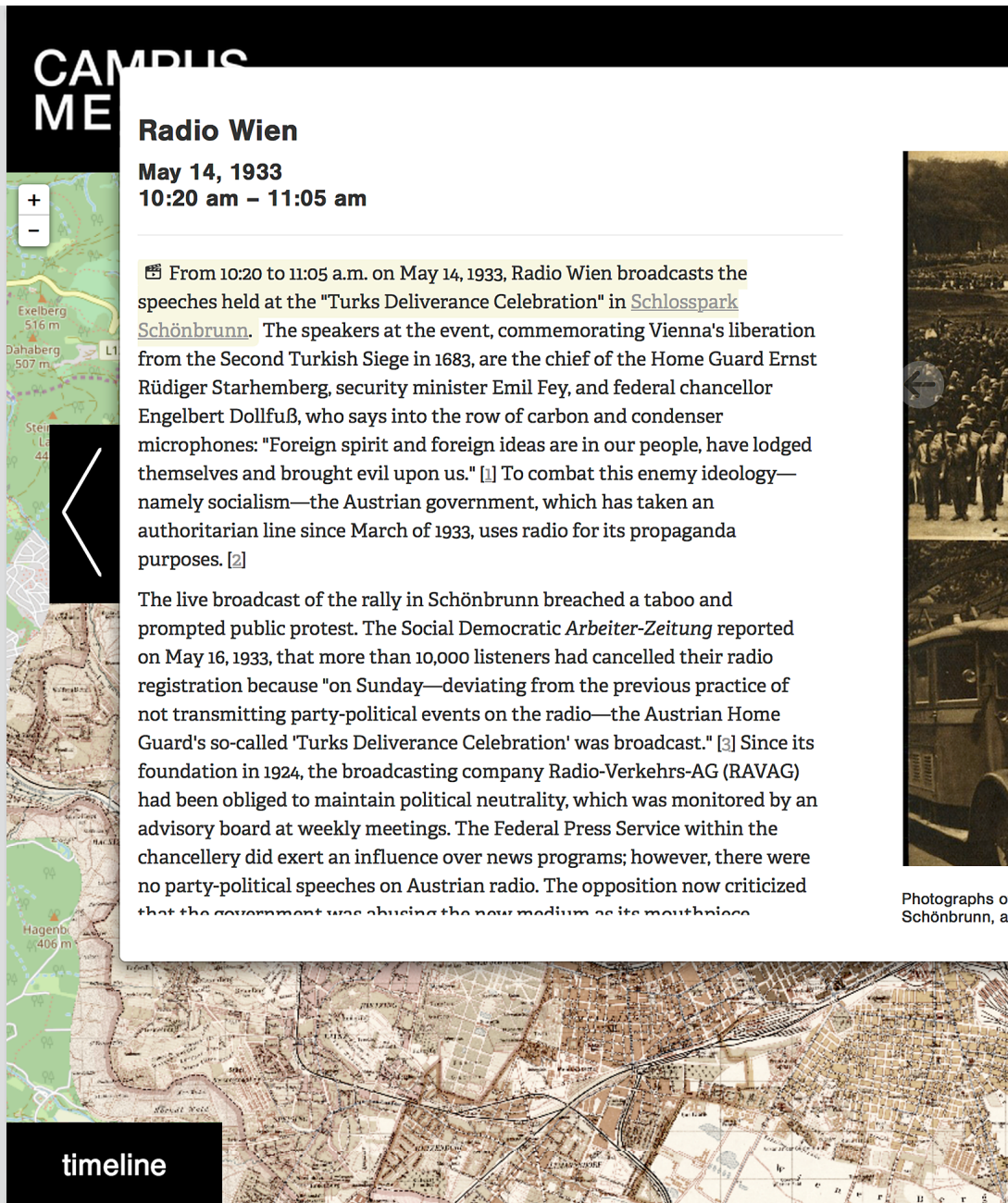


Fig. 3: Screenshot of the website campusmedius.net (desktop version 1.0/2014) showing the opened information of the event "Radio Wien" (text: Simon Ganahl, back-end coding: Rory Solomon, front-end coding: Darius Daftary, design: Mallory Brennan).



of the events where Radio Wien reported live on May 14, 1933: the "Turks Deliverance Celebration" in Schlosspark, relay race in the Prater, and the horse-and-buggy races at Krieau. Source: *Radio Wien (Vienna)*, May 19, 1933, p. 2.

