

Personal Reflections: Daniel Wilke

The Project „Soundscapes Rostock“ is finally done and I am very happy to be part of it. Going into the field was an absolutely new experience for me but very interesting. It also pushed my own teamwork capabilities when we were doing the team fieldwork in the city and the fieldwork in Warnemünde which I did with Michael.

The fieldwork with Michael in Warnemünde, done during the day on the 19th December 2010, was quite productive. I had chosen this district because Warnmünde offers a variety of clean hi-fi sounds that I already know. We used a 4CH Flashrecorder Zoom H4N stereo for audio recording, a Sony DCR-DVD403E video camera, and an ordinary Medion 10MP digital photo camera. Michael made the audio recordings and I was responsible for the video recordings and photography. The main sounds we collected were: the train station and arriving train, ropes and flags flapping in the wind and hitting the masts, seagulls, water and waves, the wind whistling through logs, masts, and across sand dunes, several people, their voices, and a ferry.

Recordings at the beach and Mole were problematic. The small windshield of the flash-recorder was not at all suitable for the wind-forces which we experienced that day. So it was quite amusing to see Michael placing the expensive flash-recorder into a bin to make a good recording at the sand dunes - and it worked out. You can hear the grains of sand very clearly. I didn't noticed this sound at all at first.

I also chose the Rostocker Fischereihafen, because, as a former member-town of the „Hanse“, I think these areas in particular have influenced the life and (sound-) identity of Rostock It was also important for me because I have always been connected to these areas, as I grew up in a sailors' family. I must admit that I have never been quite aware of a sound-identity of Rostock. But there are sounds that shape an identity.

On the 16th December 2010 I made the recordings at the Rostocker Fischereihafen. As I expected I found basically "industrial" sounds, as some men were labouring with diggers at a new docking station for boats. On the same spot where unrefined iron had been delivered by ship on 5th December 2010, huge tree logs were being loaded onto trucks. The engines of a diesel locomotive and a diesel boat were constantly running. The most interesting place in this so sparsely "sounding" area of Rostock for me was a boat yard. The masts and ropes of probably a dozen sailboats, that had been collected and stored on land, were producing whistling sounds very similar to those in

Warnemünde. But in this sparsely populated area it aroused in me a feeling of an abandoned, forgotten part of Rostock.

As a born Rostocker, the connection between Rostock and myself has been consolidated so I can identify with this city much more. While working on the project, I noticed that I could focus more easily on environmental sounds. That doesn't mean that I always do, but it has pushed my capabilities. Especially during the team fieldwork it was very good to complement each other. Otherwise some interesting sounds would have been stayed unperceived. Unfortunately other recordings have been lost caused by technical problems during the fieldwork – another experience that will be considered for another time.

Further we have discussed the noise (-reduction) at the HMT. To me, this is one of the most important points in the project: to get new things going. It would be great to sharpen other peoples mind and ears by taking into consideration this project. That way peoples could find solutions to get rid of disturbing noises and become more aware of pleasant sounds. This could be another step to make today's rapid life more bearable.