



Organizers: Bernhard Kleeberg (MWK), Urs Lindner (MWK), Martin Repohl (MWK), Cécile Stehrenberger (MWK) in cooperation with 'Ordering Dynamics', an interdisciplinary research group funded by the Thuringian Excellence Initiative, and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation Thuringia.

ROSA LUXEMBURG STIFTUNG THÜRINGEN



From the Coloniality of Natural Disaster to the Planthropocene. New Approaches to Planetary Crisis

Workshop on October 1st and 2nd 2019

Max Weber Kolleg, University of Erfurt
(Steinplatz 2, Erfurt)

The last two decades have seen various important shifts in scholarly and public discussions of disaster, catastrophe and crisis that are described as “natural” or “environmental” in their causes and effects. Not only has it become rather common to highlight how the consequences of floods, hurricanes and land slides (especially their augmenting death tolls and the destruction of things they cause) are influenced by the actions of humans (e.g. their tendency to build themselves “into harms way”). Such actions have also been increasingly understood as being at least partially causal for them, even in their very “naturalness”. Moreover, and in connection to this, have different singular catastrophic events been linked to each other and to larger (disastrous) processes, such as climate change and the overall geological transformation of the earth and its different spheres resulting from certain forms of production and consumption, associated e.g. with industrialization and its “big acceleration”.

The workshop will examine how these shifts in the understanding of disaster, crisis and catastrophe, emerged within different (techno-)scientific discourses, public policy and debate, as well as in the realm of social activism, and in the overlapping spaces between these fields.

It will analyze how they were linked to the increasing popularity of certain concepts, such as the “anthropocene” but also that of “toxicity”, “metabolism” or “slow violence”, and discuss their analytical and political usefulness and pitfalls. It will e.g. focus on the criticism that the “anthropocene” concept has been subjected to for not only reproducing a problematically anthropocentric world view, but for also obscuring with the unifying category of “the human” that it promotes the dramatically unequal geographical and social distribution of disastrous events and process. – Of processes often seen as a direct result of the violent forces of dynamics such as capitalism and colonialism. This critique of the anthropocene

model and the alternative frameworks and “aspirational epistemes” that feminist science and technology studies scholars have brought forward will serve as a starting point for a more in depth reflection on the coloniality of (natural) disaster and the more established ways of thinking them.

Monday, September 30th 2019

5 pm: Decolonial city walk

Meeting point at corner Augustinerstraße/Am Hügel

Tuesday, October 1st 2019

(Venue: Max Weber Kolleg, room 803)

9 am: Welcome and coffee

9.30 am: Bernhard Kleeberg (Erfurt), Cécile Stehrenberger (Erfurt)

Introduction

10 am: Daniel Lorenz (Berlin)

Colonial Pasts and Futures of Forest Fires in Germany

Comment: Hannah Holleman (Amherst)

11.30: Alexandra Toland (Weimar)

The Unbearable Heaviness of Dust – A Reflection on Ecosystem Services in Toxic Times

Comment: Julia Bee (Weimar)

1 pm: Lunch

2 pm: Martin Repohl (Erfurt)

Chernobyl as World-Catastrophe: Worldrelationship in a Contaminated World

Kate Brown (Cambridge/Massachusetts)

The Great Chernobyl Acceleration (via video)

3.30 pm: Hermine Bähr (Erfurt)

Transdisciplinary Knowledge Production in a ‘Real-World Laboratory’ of Energy Transition
Comment: Iñaki Prádanos (Oxford/Ohio) (via video)

6.30 pm: Public Lecture by Hannah Holleman (Amherst)

No Empires, No Wastelands: The Necessity of Forging a Real Ecological Solidarity for the 21st Century

Wellcome address: Fridays for Future Erfurt
(Venue: Haus Dacheröden, Anger 37, Erfurt)

Wednesday, October 2nd 2019

(Venue: Max Weber Kolleg, room 803)

9.30 am: Cécile Stehrenberger (Erfurt)

Annobón 1988: Toxic Waste, Colonialism, and the Franco Dictatorship

Comment: Sven Bergmann (Bremerhaven)

11 am: Sven Bergmann (Bremerhaven)

Speculative Ecologies - Knowledge Production in Environments of Toxic Uncertainty

Comment: Martin Repohl (Erfurt)

12.30 pm: Lunch

1 pm: Discussion of text material by Natasha Myers, Hannah Holleman and Iñaki Prádanos

Please register for the workshop until

September 25th with:

pauline.schneider@uni-erfurt.de

For the public lecture on October 1st no registration is required.