

Conference Abstract

Inspired by the large-scale occurrence of phenomena of semantic transfer and rhetorical inversion currently to be observed in right wing discourses and 'alternative knowledge' production, the symposium seeks to analyze processes of resemanticization (Umdeutung) of cultural concepts and narratives aimed at establishing hermeneutic hegemony in the political field. Special attention will be paid to discourses on "development" (with reference to the relations between Global North and Global South, e.g. the argument of overpopulation); reformulations of the meaning of nation and national identity; the rhetorical maneuvers of right-wing populism (how does it differ from leftist populisms?); the discursive construction of the urban-rural divide (in the context of climate change, corporate agroindustry, and rural ecofascism); and the seductiveness of conspiracy narratives concealing reality denial (e.g. climate denial, Covid-19 denial).

In all named fields, we can observe reinterpretations of existing narratives and motifs, aimed at obtaining power of interpretation/discursive hegemony and to prevent necessary reforms. The symposium will analyze to what extent such maneuvers serve to establish new and powerful belief systems beyond rational and democratic control, and why it is that societies priding themselves with their technological and rational excellence, as well as the accessibility of an immense amount of knowledge, yet have to fear that democracy, and planetary survival itself, may fall victim to an expanding communicative 'culture' of ignorance and doubt frequently coupled with a general hostility toward life.

Venue:

Aula, Universität Rostock,
Hauptgebäude/Main Building
Universitätsplatz 1
18055 Rostock

Aufgrund der Pandemiesituation ist die Zahl der möglichen Teilnehmer stark eingeschränkt. Interessierte Gäste werden um Anmeldung gebeten.

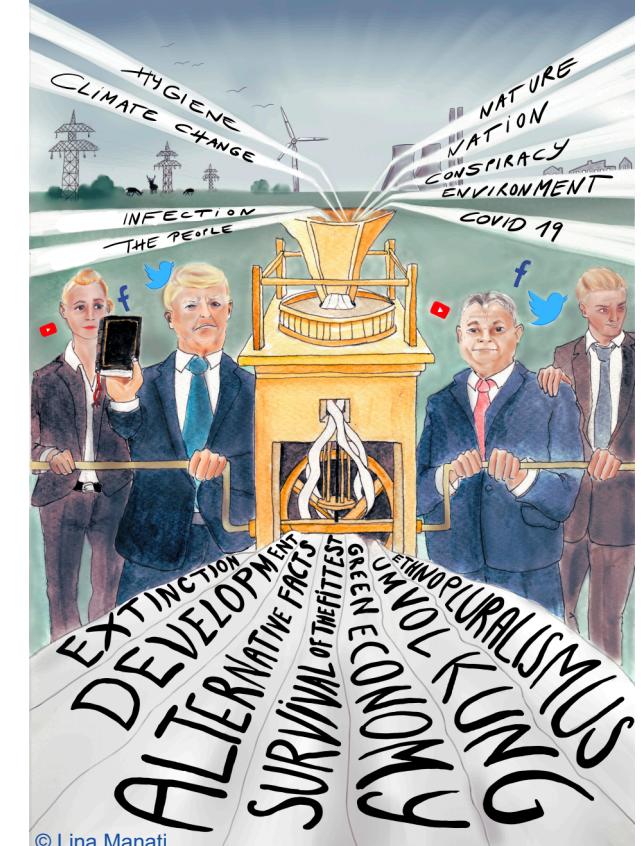
Due to the pandemic situation the number of possible participants is strictly limited. Interested visitors are kindly asked to register.

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Subversive Semantics in Political and Cultural Discourse

International Symposium
Rostock University
November 12-14, 2020



Thursday, 12 November 2020

14:30-15:00

**Welcome by Martina Kumlehn,
Gesa Mackenthun and Jörn Dosch**

15:00-16:00

Aram Ziai, Kassel

Legitimizing Colonial Rule in the 21st century. The AfD and the Politics of Rememberance

16:00-17:00

Christine Unrau, Duisburg

Time for Outrage? Globalization and the Emergence of Indignation as a Political Emotion

17:00-17:30 Refreshments

17:30-18.30

Manuela Caiani, Florence

The radical right, the internet and European democracy

19:00 Dinner (Restaurant Alter Fritz im Stadthafen Rostock)

Friday, 13 November 2020

09:00-10:00

Susanne Lachenicht, Bayreuth
Contested Nationhood in the Americas

10:00-11:00

Hans-Jürgen Puhle, Frankfurt/M.

Populisms, Populist Democracy, and the Shifting of Meanings: Subverting – Disfiguring – Transforming

11:00-11:30 Refreshments

11:30-12:30

Volker Weiß, Hamburg

Verwandlungskünstler. Die semantischen Strategien der Neuen Rechten

12:30-13:30

Eiko Grimberg, Berlin/Leipzig

Biographie der Zeichen

13:30-15:00 Lunch

15:00-16:00

Whitney Phillips, Syracuse University (video)

The Adaptive Consequences of Ecological Metaphors: New Ways of Talking about Mis- and Disinformation

16:00-17:00

Franziska Müller, Hamburg

(Un)Governing the Anthropocene, (En)countering Gaia: Narratives for and against Anthropocentrism

19:00 Dinner (Restaurant Hellas im Kurhaus Warnemünde)

Saturday, 14 November 2020

09:00-10:00

Emma Hart, St. Andrews

Americans construct the urban-rural divide: Refracting discourses of division through a settler colonial past

10:00-11:00

Daniela Gottschlich, Lüneburg

Rechte Landnahme

11:00-12:00 Refreshments

12:00-13:00

Michael Butter, Tübingen

Conspiracy Theories as Counter-Narratives

13:00-14:00

Joseph Uscinski, Miami

Conspiracy Theories and the Dimensionality of Politics

14:00 Final Discussion

Conference ends ca. 14:30