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.

The Conference will be held online.

Due to uncertainties regarding the Covid-19 situation, we decided to convene the symposium online.

We kindly invite guests to apply for your participation by writing an e-mail to deutungsmacht@uni-rostock.de. We will then share the zoom link with you.

Koordinator Tobias Götze
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Tel.: +49 (0) 381 498 - 8468
Thursday, 12 November 2020

14:30-15:00
Welcome by Martina Kumlehn, Gesa Mackenthun and Jörn Dosch

15:00-16:00 (Chair: Frieda Sanftleben)
Aram Ziai, Kassel
Legitimizing Colonial Rule in the 21st century. The AfD and the Politics of Rememberance

16:00-17:00 (Chair: Christoph Rothenbücher)
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 (Chair: Lisa Grellert)
Manuela Caiani, Florence
The radical right, the internet and European democracy

19:00 Dinner

Friday, 13 November 2020

09:00-10:00 (Chair: Judith Bollongino)
Susanne Lachenicht, Bayreuth
Contested Nationhood in the Americas

10:00-11:00 (Chair: Tim Fritjof Huttel)
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 (Chair: Ronny Rohde)
Volker Weiß, Hamburg
Verwandlungskünstler. Die semantischen Strategien der Neuen Rechten

12:30-13:30 (Chair: Antje Maaser)
Eiko Grimberg, Berlin/Leipzig
Biographie der Zeichen

13:30-14:00 Lunch

15:00-16:00 (10am US EST; Chair: Katharina Alexi)
Whitney Phillips, Syracuse University
The Adaptive Consequences of Ecological Metaphors: New Ways of Talking about Mis- and Disinformation

16:00-17:00 (Chair: Paula Koch)
Franziska Müller, Hamburg
(Un)Governing the Anthropocene, (En)countering Gaia: Narratives for and against Anthropocentrism

19:00 Dinner

Saturday, 14 November 2020

09:00-10:00 (8am Scottish Time; Chair: Nadine Walter)
Emma Hart, St. Andrews
Americans construct the urban-rural divide: Refracting discourses of division through a settler colonial past

10:00-11:00 (Chair: Philine Lewek)
Daniela Gottschlich, Lüneburg
Rechte Landnahme

11:00-12:00 Refreshments

12:00-13:00 (Chair: Tim Bauerschmidt)
Michael Butter, Tübingen
Conspiracy Theories as Counter-Narratives

13:00-14:00 (8am US EST; Chair: Joshua Folkerts)
Joseph Uscinski, Miami
Conspiracy Theories and the Dimensionality of Politics

14:00 Final Discussion

Conference ends ca. 14:30