

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.

The Conference will be held online.

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

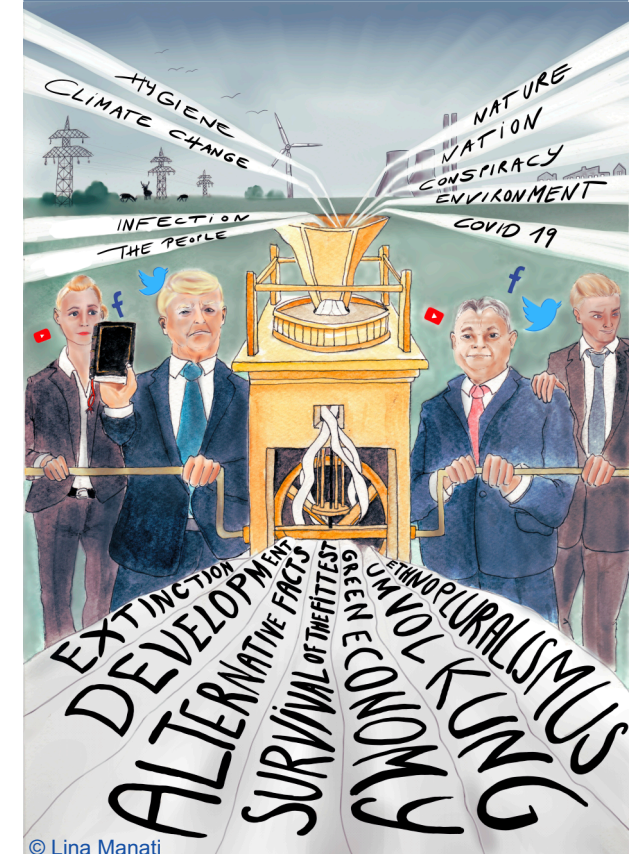
We kindly invite guests to apply for your participation by writing an e-mail to deutungsmacht@uni-rostock.de. We will then share the zoom link with you.

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Subversive Semantics in Political and Cultural Discourse

International Symposium
 Rostock University
 November 12-14, 2020



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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 Remembrance*

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

13:30-15:00 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