



The Anthropocene is marked by a planetary environmental crisis. Since we did not act in the last decades despite various warnings, the time left to respond to the catastrophe has almost run out. There is an urgent need to rethink the entire paradigm of society, economy and politics, when it is too late to save the planet. Radical ideas are necessary because the existing system is not able to offer a solution. Marx's idea of "degrowth communism," though barely known in the past, sets up such a new theoretical framework beyond green capitalism, environmental imperialism and colonial extractivism. His last attempt to consciously overcome productivism and Eurocentrism inherent to historical materialism represents the same difficulty of the 21st century, which is characterized by a myth of eternal growth and infinite technological development.

Following Kohei Saito's evening lecture, the workshop will discuss different approaches to and productive ways of dealing with Kohei Saito's theses from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Kohei Saito

Marx's Communism in the Age of the Planetary Crisis

Workshop

10. December 2024

Further Events in WS 2024/25

Next Auerbach Lecture

16.12.2024 – Serena Bassi (Yale):

Marxist Queer Theory in Times of Crisis

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Erich
Auerbach
Institute
for Advanced
Studies



UNIVERSITY
OF COLOGNE

Monday

Evening Lecture

09. December

6.00 Kohei Saito (Philosophy, Tokyo): Marx's
Communism in the Age of the Planetary Crisis

Tuesday

10. December

9.30 Welcome (Anja Lemke, EAI)
and introduction (Kohei Saito)

Political Implications

Moderation: Jakob Roth

10.00 Patrick Eiden-Offe (ZfL, Berlin): Lukács and the
role and function of the proletariat (and the
adequate understanding of this term) in the
emergence of degrowth communism

10.45 COFFEE BREAK

11.15 Leon Wansleben (MPIfG, Cologne): Degrowth
and the "realpolitik" of the working class –
Working class attitudes towards and relations
with the state

12.00 Kai Koddenbrock (Bard College, Berlin): The role
of internationalism and international solidarity
(and its relative absence and powerlessness) in
potentially bringing about degrowth communism

12.45 LUNCH BREAK

Global North / Global South

Moderation: Carlotta Rust

2.15 Clemens Greiner (GSSC, Cologne): When ideology
meets reality: What narratives does a degrowth
approach need in the current socio-political
and economic climate?

3.00 Victoria Huszka (Cultural Anthropology, Bonn):
How can degrowth be realized fairly and not
at the expense of already marginalized groups?

3.45 COFFEE BREAK

Further Methodological Perspectives

Moderation: Maximilian Kloppert

4.15 Nathaniel LaCelle-Peterson (CompLit, Yale):
Earth system science, ecosystem services, totality,
method, Sartre (In Search for a Method)

5.00 Serena Bassi (Italian Studies, Yale):
Gender non-normativity in contemporary late
capitalist societies and in utopian alternatives
to communism that might go under the name
of "degrowth communism"

Organization: Noah Otto and Sophia Wagenlehner

Location: Erich Auerbach Institute for Advanced Studies
Weyertal 59 (back building)
50937 Cologne
Library, 3rd floor