

Call for Papers

Conference “Neue Kulturgeographie 2024”

Power of the Planetary – Transformative Geographies between Intervention and Reflection.

May 23th-25th, 2024, Schlossplatz 2, Münster

A new epoch in Earth’s history, a new geopolitical era, the age of social polarization: The diagnoses of the present could hardly be more fundamental and far-reaching. With the multiple crises discussed at NKG 2023 and discussions about a planetary turn (DKG 2023), the geosciences seem to be becoming a promising academic venue for future-oriented reflections and transformative approaches. Geographers in academia and practice are working with a range of topics and concepts, including climate change adaptation, mitigation, and resilience; environmental justice; smart and sustainable urban development; global health security and planetary health; ecosystem services and carbon sinks; geopolitical risk scenarios and global security architectures; economic deglobalization; post-growth etc. In the current planetary turn, human geography approaches criticize the focus on the human ‘as species’ as too narrow to deal with current challenges. In addition to social theories that analyse spatial processes at scales from the local to the global from a primarily human-centred perspective, more-than-human- and planetary approaches are gaining importance. But how will participation, the political, and power relations play out in the planetary turn? The conference contributes to these debates at three levels:

1. **How can the political be conceptualized in the broader context of geographies of planetary change?** In addition to social and political-economic dynamics, planetary approaches take into account the political agency of more-than-human actors. Although the entanglements between humans and more-than-humans are now well researched, the question remains to what extent planetary and new-materialist approaches can address politics and power. What approaches can be used to deconstruct power relations and politics in the Anthropocene? What technologies of power are enacted to securitize lives under capitalocene threats? What theoretical resources does human geography provide for reflexive and/or critical approaches to current futures and their political negotiation?
2. **Which kinds of futures can be envisaged with which theories?** In the wake of climate change, planetary boundaries, and economic and geopolitical disruptions, a lot of scenarios portray the coming decades as somewhat dystopic. What are the critical perspectives on the management and governance of threatening futures? Which technological, political, and social solutions come into view, and which ones are omitted? And how do present discourses and infrastructures anticipate the future? How can futures unfold differently?
3. Given the urgency of reacting to the current crises, **where do scholars in the field of new cultural geography situate themselves between reflection and practical intervention?** Answers to the planetary crisis are often implemented only very slowly. The social structures in which they must be anchored seem too complex. Institutional logics such as profit maximization, re-election in politics, and project-driven logics in economics, administration, and education are much too short term to be able to develop sustainable future-oriented solutions in the complex realities of the present. Which forms of knowledge production are suitable for facing these conditions? To what extent can geographers contribute with new approaches in politics, administration, civil society, economics, and planning? What role can urban experiments, activist interventions, future laboratories, and transfer activities play? How can geographers theorize in emancipative terms? How can those in the field of new cultural geography reflect and critically challenge hasty diagnoses and solutions supposedly without alternatives?

We look forward to submissions and contributions that reflect on these questions theoretically and/or explore them empirically. As always, the CfP is open to other submissions from the broad field of new cultural geography. Possible submission formats are

- proposals for presentations of 15–20 minutes in duration
- proposals for ready-curated sessions, which can contain of up to four presentations or creative formats such as sound and discussion walks, excursions, discussion rounds, fishbowls, barcamps, and summer cinema.

Deadline for submissions is 06/01/2024.