

Workshop Ecological Perspectives on the Nexus Rerum

Organized by Ross Shields, Alexandra Heimes, Johannes Wankhammer

This workshop will explore an undercurrent of ecological thinking that dates back to rationalist theories of universal connectivity. Introduced in the wake of Leibniz's theory of monads, the idea of a general connection of things (nexus rerum) became a key philosophical concept in the early- to mid-eighteenth century, earning a nineteen-page entry in Zedler's *Grosses vollständiges Universal-Lexicon*. Although the idea of an interconnected world was eventually eclipsed by the idealist turn of the late nineteenth century, its traces can still be discerned in the writings of Herder, Goethe, Humboldt, Schelling, Hegel, and even Kant, who displaced connection from the world (in itself) onto the transcendental subject of knowledge. This workshop will excavate this deep history of the nexus rerum, in the conviction that it represents not only a desideratum within the field of German Studies, but has the potential to contribute to contemporary transdisciplinary debates on ecocriticism and the environmental humanities: to theories of intersubjective interdependence, characterizations of the human/nature divide, and ecosocialist discussions of the 'metabolic rift.' Participants will address various aspects of this 18th century philological tradition, including its disparate reception by 20th century thinkers like Whitehead, Adorno, Simondon, Deleuze, Latour, Haraway, and Glissant.

With

Astrid Deuber-Mankowsky
Patrick Eiden-Offe
Christiane Frey
Hanna Hamel
Alexandra Heimes
Patrick Hohlweck
Thomas Khurana
Ross Shields
Gabriel Trop
Johannes Wankhammer

An ICI Event in cooperation with the German Department of Princeton University and the Leibniz-Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung (ZfL)

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Department
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20-21 June 2024



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ICI Berlin, in English

Programme

20 June 2024

14:00 Introduction

14:20 – 16:00 Session 1:
Zedler, Herder, Goethe

16:00 – 16:20 Coffee Break

16:20 – 18:00 Session 2:
Moritz, Humboldt

18:00 Reception

21 June 2024

Morning Coffee

10:00 – 12:00 Session 3:
Adorno, Marx, Moore

12:00 – 13:00 Lunch Break

13:00 – 14:30 Session 4:
Position Papers

14:30 – 14:45 Coffee Break

14:45 – 16:15 Session 5:
Position Papers

16:15 – 16:30 Coffee Break

16:30 – 18:00 Session 6:
Position Papers

18:30 Dinner