



Hessisches Ministerium für
Wissenschaft und Forschung,
Kunst und Kultur



Social Contracts and Democracy in Times of the Anthropocene

Thinking Beyond Crisis

International Conference

December 16th – 17th, 2025

Venue: Hochschulzentrum Fulda Transfer, Heinrich-von-Bibra-
Platz 1a, 36037 Fulda

Tuesday, December 16th – 1st day of conference (10:00 – 19:15)

9:30 – 10:00 *Welcome and coffee*

10:00 – 11:30 **Opening: CO3 Roundtable “Social Contracts in Times of the Anthropocene - Thinking beyond Crisis”**

- Rui F. Carvalho (University of Coimbra)
- Emilia Palonen (University of Helsinki)
- Anna Björk (Demos Helsinki)
- Pınar Uyan-Semerçi (İstanbul Bilgi University)
- Ana Matan (Zagreb University)

Coffee Break

11:45 – 13:15 **Panel 1 – Conceptualising the Anthropocene**

- Christiane Kuller (University of Erfurt): Does the Anthropocene have a History? Historical Research in the Age of the Anthropocene
- Matthias Klemm (Fulda University of Applied Sciences): Anthropocene or Societocene?
- Claudia Wiesner (Fulda University of Applied Sciences): Crisis, Polycrisis, Anthropocene. Liberal Democracy under pressure
- Jamal Ali Bashir (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg): No Outside Left: Modernity, Externalities, and the Anthropocene

13:15 – 14:15 *Lunch Break*

14:15 – 16:00 **Panel 2 – Politics in the Anthropocene**

- Christina Fischer and Matthias Klemm (Fulda University of Applied Sciences): Micro-democratic practices in Moments of rupture: situational negotiation inside the U.S. Capitol
- Andrea Klinger (Friedrich Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg): Sentimental Populism in France’s Presidential Campaigns: Affective Polarization and the Crisis of Liberal Democracy in the Anthropocene
- Emilia Palonen (University of Helsinki): From politics of Climate in 2019 to Polycrisis in 2024: a comparative study of the European Parliamentary Elections
- Emre Erdoğan and Pınar Uyan-Semerçi (İstanbul Bilgi University): Thinking Beyond Crisis: Post-truth and Information Disorders for Rethinking Social Contracts and Democracy
- Aris Agoglossakis Foley (Amsterdam University and Leiden University): The death of the democratic nation? Dystopia and the network state

Coffee Break

16:30 – 18:00 **Panel 3 – Governing the Anthropocene**

- Pol Bargués (Barcelona Centre for International Affairs): Peace in the Anthropocene
- Igor Rogelja (University College London): The Anthropocene lag: extraction and democracy Southeast Europe
- Petteri Repo (University of Helsinki): AI and the Anthropocene – LLMs as Knowledge Producers
- Theresa Reinold (EDHEC Business School Nice): Social contract theory and multinational corporations in the age of the Anthropocene: Who’s sovereign now?

Coffee Break

18:15 – 19:15 **Roundtable “Adaptive Governance in the Anthropocene”**

- Pol Bargués (Barcelona Centre for International Affairs)
- David Chandler (University of Westminster)
- Jessica Schmidt (Fulda University of Applied Sciences)
- Claudia Wiesner (Fulda University of Applied Sciences)

Wednesday, December 17th – 2nd day of conference (09:00 – 16:45)

09:00 – 10:00 **Keynote Lecture – Elisa Randazzo (University College London) “Beyond Hope: Temporality and Hope at the End of the World”**

Coffee Break

10:15 – 12:00 **Panel 4 – Thinking Democracy in the Anthropocene**

- Kari Palonen (University of Jyväskylä): The Anthropocene Language: A Sign of Politicisation
- Jessica Schmidt (Fulda University of Applied Sciences): Liberal awakening and critical redemption: Mapping the crisis discourse of democracy in Anthropogenic times
- David Chandler (University of Westminster): After Representation? The Anthropocene and the politicization of everyday life
- Julia Feine (Stockholm University): Eco-political Responses to the Crisis of Democracy: A Critical Fantasy Studies Approach to the Anthropocene
- Caroline von Taysen (University of Westminster): Democracy in the Anthropocene - an Irresolvable Dilemma?

12:00 – 13:00 *Lunch Break*

13:00 – 14:45 **Panel 5 – New Conceptions of Democracy in the Anthropocene**

- Manish Dutta (University of Bremen): A critical re-imagining of democracy: Postcolonialism in democratic practices in the age of the Anthropocene
- Jan Groos (Kiel University): Alternative Environmentalism - Three Provocations for Democratic planning in the Anthropocene
- Ana Matan (Zagreb University): The Rest is Politics: The Strengths and Weaknesses of Democratic Innovations in the Anthropocene
- Hagen Schölzel (University of Erfurt): Gardening democratic practices
- Nathanaël Colin-Jaeger (Université Catholique de Lille): Accounting for Past Inequalities: Assessing the Fair Baseline for Dynamic Contracting

Coffee Break

15:00 – 16:45 **Panel 6 – From Social Contracts to Ecosocial Contracts**

- Nandor Knust (Fulda University of Applied Sciences) and Rosamunde Elise Van Brakel (Vrije Universiteit Brussel): The Ecosocial Contract and the Crime of Ecocide
- Elvis Ng’andwe (Fulda University of Applied Sciences): Recasting Social Contracts in Motion: Regional Integration, Refugee Protection, and Democratic Governance in the Anthropocene (The East African Community as a Lens)
- Tom Scheunemann (Fulda University of Applied Sciences): Fatal Forests - Forestry's Afterlife in the Anthropocene
- Cornelia Frings (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz): Distributive Justice in the governance of water resources in the Anthropocene
- Rui F. Carvalho (University of Coimbra): Visions of the Ecosocial Contract in Europe (and beyond): Theories and Policies to Confront the Polycrisis