

Infrastructural memory: cultures of ecology and collapse

A workshop at the Käte Hamburger Research Centre global dis:connect

Infrastructure is commonly defined as the essential support that enables a system to function. This workshop, however, shifts the focus to consider what happens when infrastructure collapses, becomes obsolete or is destroyed. How might closer attention to infrastructural decline deepen our understanding of infrastructure not simply as something to celebrate or uphold, but as something marked by absence and interruption? Central to our conversations will be the role of memory in shaping and giving form to infrastructure.

In the humanities, memory has come to be understood mainly as interhuman communication, taking such forms as testimonies or oral history reports. How can the concept of memory be expanded to encompass infrastructural support? Can (derelict) infrastructure itself become a site of memory? If landscapes are sites of memory where history has already happened, what do landscapes and their shaping by infrastructure by human and more-than-human interactions remember? How does infrastructure serve the purpose of multidirectional remembering? In an era of climate catastrophe, how should we remember the extractive infrastructures that have shaped our present crisis? How do colonial logics of racialised dispossession endure into the present, either encoded in infrastructure or enabled by its absence? How do infrastructures exist as palimpsests, layered with conflicting memories and aspirations? Finally, as infrastructures decay, how can they be redeemed, repurposed or invested with new meanings?

This workshop brings together an interdisciplinary group of researchers to examine infrastructures as sites of absence and interruption, framing these discussions through the lens of memory. Drawing on the 'infrastructural turn' in the humanities and social sciences (Johnson and Nemser 2022), participants will engage with the many temporalities of infrastructure, moving beyond its conventional association with space. Of particular interest is 'the aesthetic life of infrastructure' (Rich et al. 2023), with our speakers exploring how infrastructure performs, is represented in culture or can be analysed in terms of affect, symbolism and embodiment.

Your participation is understood to imply consent to photographic and video recordings for internal purposes, scholarly communication and publicity.



LMU LUDWIG-MAXIMILIANS-UNIVERSITÄT MÜNCHEN

gd:c global dis:connect

Käte Hamburger Research Centre
global dis:connect

SPONSORED BY THE
Federal Ministry of Education and Research

Infrastructural memory

Cultures of ecology and collapse

Concept and organisation:
Shane Boyle
Gerald Siegmund

**15-16
May
2025**

Käte Hamburger
Research Centre
global dis:connect
LMU Munich
Maria-Theresia-Straße 21
81675 Munich
gdc@lmu.de

© Martin Battarino, Oscar Compañon, Meavelei Stephanie's Torres-06,
Architect: scurra, urt, Saur, Fujimori

Please register by 7 May 2025:
<https://www.globaldisconnect.org/registration/>

Your participation is understood to imply consent to the use of photographic and video recordings for internal purposes, scholarly communication and publicity.

Thursday, 15 May 2025

- 10:30 Welcome and registration
- 11:00 **Sabeth Buchmann, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna**
Painting in/as (post-)modern memory
- 12:00 **Aglaya Glebova, UC Berkeley and global dis:connect**
Light, heat, dust: the lives and afterlives of Soviet infrastructure
- 13:00 **Lunch**
- 14:00 **Matt Cornish, Ohio University**
Holzinger: care, climate, infrastructure
- 15:00 **Henriette Gunkel, Ruhr University Bochum**
Colonial infrastructural remains: on spectrality and memory work
- 16:00 **Coffee break**
- 16:15 **Spencer Adams, Rachel Carson Centre**
Continuity and transience: on the Antarctic infrastructures of global climate science
- 17:15 **End-of-day remarks**

Friday, 16 May 2025

- 9:30 **Ruth Schmidt, Justus Liebig University Giessen**
Remembering Laureion
- 10:30 **Pooja Nayak, Rachel Carson Centre**
Unmaking iron ore: emotions and infrastructures of mining closure in India
- 11:30 **Coffee break**
- 11:45 **Jörn Etzold, Ruhr University Bochum**
Remnants of extraction: the Ruhr region and Minas Gerais
- 12:45 **Lunch**
- 13:45 **Felix Hasebrink, Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg**
Picturing abandonment: toward an (infra)structural cinema
- 14:45 **Zara Dinnen, Queen Mary University of London**
The repair job
- 15:45 **Closing remarks**
- 