

BERLIN WORKSHOP

Contested Futures in World Politics: Institutions, Actors, and Objects

Thursday 24.11.2022 and Friday 25.11.2022

Oyoun | Kultur NeuDenken | Lucy-Lameck-Straße 32, 12049 Berlin

Conveners: Tobias Berger, *Freie Universität Berlin*; Alejandro Esguerra, *Universität Bielefeld*; Henrike Knappe *Technische Universität Berlin*
Sponsoring: The Cluster of Excellence "Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)"
Timeline: Extended abstracts or full papers until 18.11. 2022

The future as a distinct frame through which politics is enacted has become an increasing concern of scholars across the social sciences (Granjou *et al.* 2017; Oomen *et al.* 2021; Andersson 2018). International institutions and organizations provide a prime entry for the study of anticipatory world politics (Berten and Kranke 2022). In such organizations actors perform "future practices" (Knappe *et al.* 2019), i.e. the diverse ways of making futures by articulating images and narratives, policies or socio-technical artifacts that structure present decision-making (Oomen *et al.* 2021) and will have lasting effect in and for the future. Future objects such as metrics, war games or climate models figure prominently in these politics of anticipation (Esguerra 2019). At the same time, capacities for present future-making are highly unevenly distributed, giving rise to various contestations over competing narratives of the future. These narratives are developed against the backdrop of long-standing powerful temporal registers (e.g. "developed", "underdeveloped", "progressive", "backward" etc), which are closely intertwined with historically-grown, global hierarchies (Berger, 2021). Contemporary contestations over future(s) in world politics both reproduce and challenge these registers, thereby becoming part of larger processes of global temporal politics.

This workshop invites papers and talks that engage with contested futures in world politics from a variety of theoretical perspectives, focusing on international institutions and organizations, transnational actors ranging from youth movements to technical expert communities as well as socio-material objects that are instrumental in bringing about specific images of the future. Our aim is to facilitate a dialogue among these scholars by establishing a space for the inquiry and exchange.

Practicalities

- Please circulate your written input by Nov. 18th the latest.
- We have allocated for each paper 45min. 15min for your presentation and max 10min discussant input.
- SCRIPTS covers travel/hotel as well as the coffee breaks. Participants are asked to pay for their dinner themselves.
- Workshop language is German, but feel free to switch to English at any time.

Contested Futures in World Politics: Institutions, Actors, and Objects

12:30 – 12:45 Introduction
*Tobias Berger, Freie Universität Berlin; Alejandro Esguerra, Universität Bielefeld;
Henrike Knappe Technische Universität Berlin*

Making the Future of Europe

Chair: Henrike Knappe

12:45 – 14:15 Shaping a changing world: the EU's foresight activities and its quest for strategic autonomy
Thomas Müller, Universität Bielefeld; Disc. Ana Werkstetter, Freie Universität Berlin

A "Race to Zero" – The low Carbon – Future as a "Finish Line"? Discursive Transition Themes in UK and EU Policy Papers
Alina Ober, Universität Bielefeld; Disc. Anna Holzscheiter, Technische Universität Dresden

14:15 – 14:45 *Coffee Break*

Future Objects and Visions in International Institutions

Chair: Tobias Berger

14:45 – 16:15 Remote Origins and Multiple Speculative Futures: The Rise of 'Scenario Thinking' in International Institutions
Laura Birnbaum Pantzerhielm, Technische Universität Dresden; Disc. Alina Ober, Universität Bielefeld

Realizing the Future: Transformation Pathways in Global Biodiversity Governance
Alejandro Esguerra, Universität Bielefeld; Disc. Matthias Kranke, Universität Kassel

16:15 – 16:30 *Coffee Break*

16:30 – 17:15 Future/s of Education: competing visions between the OECD and UNESCO
Ana Werkstetter, Freie Universität Berlin and Walter Fritsch, Humboldt Universität Berlin; Disc: Thomas Müller, Universität Bielefeld

18:00 *Dinner: Myxa Berlin, Lenaustraße 22, 12047 Berlin*

Friday, 25.11.2022

Youth, the Future, and World Politics

Chair: John Berten

09:30 – 11:00 Climate Justice and Youth Representation
Henrike Knappe, Technische Universität Berlin; Disc. Laura Pantzerhielm, Universität Dresden

Youth and the Contestation of the Future
Anna Holzscheiter, Technische Universität Dresden; Disc. Alejandro Esguerra, Bielefeld Universität

11:00 – 11:30 *Coffee Break*

Claiming Future Authority

Chair: Laura Pantzerhielm

11:30 – 13:00 Transformative Constitutionalism as Postcolonial future-making?
Tobias Berger, Freie Universität Berlin; Disc. John Berten, Bielefeld Universität

Authority through the future: Prognostic expertise in global governance
John Berten, Bielefeld Universität and Matthias Kranke Universität Kassel; Disc. Tobias Berger, Freie Universität Berlin

References

- Andersson, Jenny (2018) *The Future of the World: Futurology, Futurists, and the Struggle for the Post Cold War Imagination*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Berger, Tobias (2021) 'The 'Global South' as a relational category – global hierarchies in the production of law and legal pluralism', *Third World Quarterly* 42(9): 2001-2017.
- Berten, John and Matthias Kranke (2022) 'Anticipatory Global Governance: International Organisations and the Politics of the Future', *Global Society* 36(2): 155–169.
- Esguerra, Alejandro (2019) 'Future objects: tracing the socio-material politics of anticipation', *Sustainability Science* 14: 963–971.
- Granjou, Céline, Jeremy Walker, and Juan Francisco Salazar (2017) 'The politics of anticipation: On knowing and governing environmental futures', *Futures* 92: 5–11.
- Knappe, Henrike, Anne-Katrin Holfelder, David Löw Beer, and Patrizia Nanz (2019) 'The politics of making and unmaking (sustainable) futures: introduction to the special feature', *Sustainability Science* 14(4): 891–898.
- Oomen, Jeroen, Jesse Hoffman, and Maarten A. Hajer (2021) 'Techniques of futuring: On how imagined futures become socially performative', *European Journal of Social Theory*.