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UNIVERSITÄT  
BERN

Berner  
Humangeographisches  
Kolloquium

BHK

04 April 2023

Prof. Dr. Miriam Tola (Université Lausanne)

**The Commons Reimagined (online only)**

02 May 2023

Dr. Thomas Smith (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)

**Manufacturing Nowtopia: Local economic  
democracy in the here and now**

23 May 2023

Prof. Dr. Rajani Bhatia (University of Albany)

**Resurgent white nationalist and ecofascist  
demographic anxieties: White space-making  
populationism in the Age of Climate Change**

Organized by the Research Units Social and Cultural Geography, Economic  
Geography, Critical Sustainability Studies and Political Urbanism and  
Sustainable Spatial Development in cooperation with the mLAB of the Institute  
of Geography, University of Bern.

[www.geography.unibe.ch](http://www.geography.unibe.ch)

**In Person und online**

12:15h – 13.45h

GIUB, Hallerstr. 12, Raum 002

Zoom <https://unibe-ch.zoom.us/j/65818493290>

04 April 2023

*Prof. Dr. Miriam Tola | Universität Lausanne*

**The Commons Reimagined (online only)**

Once dismissed as a remnant of the past or a tragic form of resource management, over the last three decades the commons have been taken up in political theory and social practice as a form of self-governance that is neither public nor private. Drawing on feminist political ecologies, this lecture examines situated commons in Rome, Italy, that center place-making practices of reclaiming and repairing bodies, spaces and ecologies. It explores limits and possibilities of how bottom-up commoning projects can contribute to the decommodification of increasingly gentrified urban spaces.

02 May 2023

*Dr. Thomas Smith | Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München*

**Manufacturing Nowtopia: Local economic democracy in the here and now**

What beliefs are reinforced when it is said that we live at a time of 'post-industrial capitalism' or in 'consumer societies'? To what extent can communities be involved in producing the things they need? And what difference would it make if production was democratically controlled? This colloquium contribution will set out from these questions, drawing from an ongoing Marie Curie project looking at the emergence and relevance of alternative production networks (APNs) in the wake of COVID-19. 'Taking back the means of production' has long been a rallying cry for those radically dissatisfied with mainstream economic practices. However, current debates around the future of the economy are often framed through the binary of public and private ownership, neglecting other real manufacturing alternatives which are being enacted at various scales by communities on the ground. These include industrial commons, worker-recovered factories, prosumer networks, Community Supported Industry, and open fabrication facilities. The conceptual relevance of the idea of 'nowtopias' will be discussed through the lens of this ongoing project, and related to current debates on socio-ecological transformation, (post-) growth and economic localisation.

23 May 2023

*Prof. Dr. Rajani Bhatia | University of Albany*

**Resurgent white nativist and ecofascist demographic anxieties: White space-making populationism in the Age of Climate Change**

Demographic anxieties over a century old related to white "race suicide" and eugenics have resurfaced in the form of "The Great Replacement" conspiracy theory. Propagated by media and cultural influencers such as French nationalist, Renaud Camus, and U.S. Fox News talk show host, Tucker Carlson, the theory is also touted by Far-Right political parties in Europe and violent ecofascists such as the 2022 shooter in Buffalo, New York. According to the theory, liberal elites are strategically orchestrating mass immigration of non-white peoples to replace white populations on the decline. "The Great Replacement" fuels an eco-fascist narrative that justifies anti-immigrant policies, border securitization, and violence against racialized groups, whose very presence "threatens" (white) Euro-American landscape and cultural ecologies. It interprets population aging in the global North as an existential threat to whiteness. The futures imagined invoke "great" pasts that must be made again, requiring space and mobility controls to protect "white" natural and cultural environments, which entrench reproductive hierarchy and oppressions of various kinds. I draw on the concept of geopopulationism developed in conversation with feminist geographers to explicate "Great Replacement" inspired agendas as a contemporary form of population control aiming to produce or optimize spaces to contain or exclude, surveil, and regulate particular bodies.