

ZIRS



Zentrum für Interdisziplinäre Regionalstudien
der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg



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Call for Contributions: “Multi-crisis around the World: Perspectives from the Social Sciences, Environmental Sciences, and the Humanities”

22nd International Summer School of the Graduate School Global and Area Studies, Leipzig
University in cooperation with the Centre of Interdisciplinary Regional Studies (ZIRS), Martin Luther
University, Halle-Wittenberg

Leipzig, 24 - 26 June 2024

Research Context of the Summer School

Over the past decades, the annual summer school of Leipzig’s Graduate School Global and Area Studies has established itself as a productive meeting place for interdisciplinary discussion on transnational, transregional, transcultural, and global encounters and entanglements as well as a space to reflect on new trends in globalization research both in a historical and in a contemporary perspective. The 2024 meeting, which is organised in close cooperation with the Centre for Interdisciplinary Regional Studies (ZIRS) at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg and the Research Centre Global Dynamics (ReCentGlobe), addresses questions of multiple crises and the role of social sciences and humanities.

Since the 1990s, the globalisation narrative, propagated by media, governments and academia, has familiarised us with the idea that everything in the world is somehow connected to everything else. Its simple promise that closer transnational ties would lead to a peaceful world order, steady economic growth, and thus prosperity for all has proven to be an illusion. This prosperity and stability of course did not reach many parts of the world or certain communities.

The world is changing dramatically, and our societal understanding of globalization is changing with it: military conflicts, trade wars, and the Covid-19 pandemic have lead some companies to shorten global production chains to a bare minimum. At the same time, new inequalities are emerging, which are not just wealth disparities, but also inequalities in the extent to which people are affected by climate change and dwindling biodiversity. These multiple crises and challenges are not receding. They intersect, making them all the more complicated to understand and tackle. Moreover, “global”

challenges play out differently in various communities around the world. The terms poly-crises and multi-crises were coined to describe the simultaneity of global political, economic, and social crises.

These diverse, overlapping and mutually exacerbating crises are perceived as a condensed and seemingly insurmountable challenge. This multi-crisis is part and parcel of (new) global dynamics, which we understand as transforming and ordering dialectics produced by numerous competing globalizing projects. These globalizing projects do not emerge from an assumed centre in the global north, but are created by diverse actors in different world regions and on different scales. Globalizing projects can cooperate or compete with each other, or alternatively develop in parallel and without major contact or even strive for a decoupling of certain transregional interdependencies. The interplay and competition between these globalizing projects create highly complex globalised realities which in recent years have resulted in (the perception of) a multi-crisis, that can only be solved through interdisciplinary cooperation and through the integration of numerous regional perspectives.

This summer school consequently focuses on critical approaches in the humanities as well as the social and environmental sciences to multiple crises in all regions of the world. It investigates how multiple crises are perceived, experienced, and managed very differently in different regions of the world. Overcoming Eurocentric and mono-disciplinary perspectives on how crises intersect and how societies perceive their causes and solutions is a necessary first step to solving them in a way that is equitable and accountable.

The summer school provides participating PhD candidates with an opportunity to engage in an intense exchange with fellow PhD candidates and postdocs from different disciplinary and institutional backgrounds on topics of common interest and to network across disciplinary, as well as geographical, boundaries. Thus, we invite with great enthusiasm young researchers from all over the world whose research interests are related to the focus of this year's summer school.

Thematic Focus of the Summer School

We welcome papers that focus on various (perceived) crises and their intersections such as involuntary migration, the erosion of social cohesion, political revolutions, health, economic crises, geopolitical crises such as inter- and intra-state conflicts, and environmental crises such as the loss of biodiversity, the supply of energy sources, and climate change. Importantly, we invite authors to reflect on the interlinkages between the individual crises as well as different perceptions and interpretations of these crises in different communities at regional, national, transnational and global levels. We are particularly interested in experiences and perceptions of multiple crises and global dynamics, both from a contemporary and historical perspective. Questions to be addressed could include but are not limited to:

- How are people experiencing the multi-crisis in different regions of the world and how is the multi-crisis playing out or perceived differently in different world regions or societies? What can be learned from actors from alleged peripheries of the globalized world?

- What is the temporality of the multi-crisis and what is its periodization? In other words, does it describe a longer state or a short moment of urgency, and when did it start?
In how far can we learn from historic crisis situations and how can we extrapolate solutions for contemporary crises? Are there new elements of crises we experience today?
How can the multi-crisis be disentangled or reversed? How do actors from diverse regions react to and attempt to solve converging crises? How are “experts” in government, business, etc. trained to recognize and manage crises?
- How do divergent crisis narratives and different perspectives on the causes of (multi)crises affect societies?
- How can disciplines help us or hinder in the analysis of unfolding global crises? How can we facilitate the necessary cooperation between different academic disciplines and enable the integration of insights from different fields of research?
- How can academia contribute to the transition to a more just global world order?

Sequence of Events of the Summer School

The summer school is organized into panels of 3–5 presentations each. Additionally, invited keynote speakers will introduce main aspects of the general theme. At the end of the summer school, a final discussion will bring the major findings together.

Young researchers can apply to hold individual presentations or to organize a panel. In the latter case, researchers are invited to submit applications containing a description of the panel’s main goals and its relevance to the overall topic of the summer school, plus a list of possible speakers with an indication if they have already agreed or have to be contacted after the acceptance of the panel. The selection of the panel will be undertaken by the organizing team.

The conference language is English, but contributions in German are also welcome.

Individual time slots will be assigned by the organizers of the summer school, with preferences of participants being taken into consideration. In addition, active participation in the discussions of the summer school is expected.

Application

Early career researchers interested in the topic are cordially invited to submit an application either for a panel proposal or an individual paper presentation for the summer school. The application should include:

- Personal details, academic status, and relevant academic affiliation.
- For panel proposals: a description (300 words) of the panel’s main goals and its relevance to the overall topic of the summer school, plus a list of possible speakers.

- For individual paper presentations: an abstract (300–500 words), together with an explanation of its connection to the ongoing dissertation/project as well as its relevance to the overall topic of the summer school.

via e-mail to the organizing team: phd@uni-leipzig.de

Application deadline: **01 May 2024**

Authors of accepted papers will be informed no later than 1 June 2024. A maximum of 20 papers will be selected. In order to prepare for academic comments, submission of the paper (10 pages) is expected by **10 June 2024**. The paper will be pre-circulated and should fit within a presentation of 15 minutes.

Organizational Issues

Conference fee & accommodation: The participation fee is EUR 50. This fee covers all costs for conference material, refreshments during the breaks, lunch meals, as well as participation in the welcome reception. The Graduate School will cover the costs of accommodation in the hotel.

Participation certificate: Following successful participation in the summer school, it will be possible to receive a certificate from the Graduate School Global and Area Studies.

ECTS: You can also earn ECTS credits for the Summer School (3 ECTS for continuous participation in the summer school). The acceptance of credits is the responsibility of your home university.

Childcare: For all events, childcare will be provided. Registration is requested (by 20 May) at the above-mentioned address.