



KÄTE HAMBURGER CENTRE
FOR APOCALYPTIC AND
POST-APOCALYPTIC STUDIES



UNIVERSITÄT
HEIDELBERG
ZUKUNFT
SEIT 1386

Critical Theory at the Endgame

February 18th, 2026

Ehem. Senatssaal - Neue Universität

Is there a dialectics of the apocalypse? This workshop takes this question as its point of departure to rethink the place of the end of the world within Critical Theory. Rather than approaching the apocalypse as pure catastrophe or as a residual religious motif, it treats it as a political and historical figure through which the violence embedded in the continuity of capitalism and in modern forms of rationality becomes legible. Grounded in the tradition of the Frankfurt School and brought into dialogue with feminist, post-colonial, peripheral, queer and anti-racist perspectives, the workshop examines the political uses and risks of apocalyptic thinking today, asking whether it can still interrupt dominant narratives and reopen historical possibility, or whether it has been absorbed into the ideological repertoire of neoliberalism and contemporary authoritarianism.

Program

- 10:00 – 10:15 **Opening Remarks**
Bruna Della Torre (CAPAS)
- 10:15 – 10:45 **CAPAS and Critical Theory**
Robert Folger (CAPAS)
- 10:45 – 11:00 Break
- 11:00 – 13:00 **Permanent Catastrophe and Contemporary Environmentalism**
Carl Cassegård (Göteborgs Universitet, Sweden)

Apocalypse and Fetishism. Automatic Subject and Nocive-Liminal Use Value in the Current Civilizational Crisis

Emilian Ortega (Universität Heidelberg/CAPAS)

Pausing the World: Benjamin's Apocalypse in the Dynamics of Impasse

Jenny Stümer (CAPAS)

13:00 – 14:30 **Lunch Break**

14:30 – 16:30 **From Damaged Life: Critical Theory and Subjectivity in Catastrophic Capitalism**

Jordi Maiso (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain)

Pushing What Is Falling: Authoritarian Tendencies at the Endgame of a World That Never Was

Cristina Catalina Gallego (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain)

The World Is Not Given. Thinking the End of the World from Günther Anders to Davi Kopenawa

Marc Berdet (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

16:30 – 16:45 Break

16:45 – 18:15 **Keynote Lecture**
Existential Problems and the Politics of As-If – From Late to Last Capitalism

Stephan Lessenich (Director of the Institut für Sozialforschung, Frankfurt am Main)