

ANIMALS AND EPIDEMICS



in Historical
Perspective

**(Hybrid) International Conference
Berlin March 30 – April 1, 2022**

The current debates about the origins and spread of COVID-19 illustrate how profoundly the lives of non-human animals and humans are intertwined. In a world that has reached a problematic intensity of anthropogenic influence on the ecological system, these entanglements are both matters of fact and concern. Whether bats, cats or mink are seen as causes or victims of the current global crisis, these entanglements raise the question of how the role of animals in the outbreak of past and present epidemics can be adequately narrated without falling back into a one-sided blame game or ignoring the agency of the animals involved. At the same time, epidemics and pandemics offer a lens for methodological reflections and empirical investigations into the historically variable relationships between non-humans and humans.

The conference will highlight the historically transformative power of pandemics and ask how pandemic events have affected the view on nature, animals and human cultures. It will pay special attention to the biopolitical practices and spatial impacts related to animals in epidemics and to the emergence of narrative tropes with, for example, racial and colonialist connotations. Taking cues from an animal studies perspective, it will furthermore discuss the specific materiality of diseases and what this means for scientific research.

The interdisciplinary conference brings together zoologists, historians of science and medicine, ethnographers and human-animal scholars to explore the potentials of a multispecies approach to assessing cultural, societal, epistemological and bodily vulnerabilities of societies in the past caused by epidemics.

ORGANIZERS:

Axel C. Hüntelmann, Institute for the History of Medicine, Charité Berlin //
Christian Jaser, University of Klagenfurt //
Mieke Roscher, University of Kassel //
Nadir Weber, University of Bern

CONFERENCE VENUE:

Freie Universität Berlin // Akademischer Senatssaal // Henry Ford Bau //
Garystraße 35 // 14195 Berlin and Online
<https://www.fu-berlin.de/sites/hfb/anfahrt/index.html>

CONTACT AND REGISTRATION: Olivia Mayer (olivia.mayer@aa.u.at)



CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30TH, 2022

INTRODUCTION

15.00 – 15.30 Axel C. Hüntelmann (Berlin), Christian Jaser (Klagenfurt), Mieke Roscher (Kassel), Nadir Weber (Bern)

Welcome: Animals and Epidemics in Historical Perspective

PANEL 1 **Multispecies Entanglements – An Interdisciplinary Approach to Epidemics**

15.30 – 16.15 Matthias Glaubrecht (Hamburg)

Waves of Wild Viruses - How we help Zoonotic Infectious Diseases to spark Pandemics

16.15 – 16.30 Coffee Break

16.30 – 17.15 Brett Mizelle (Long Beach)

Epidemics, the Mass Killings of Pigs, and the Challenge of Multispecies Justice

17.15 – 17.45 **Discussion Panel 1** (Chair: Christian Jaser)

19.00 Dinner

THURSDAY, MARCH 31ST, 2022

9.00 – 10.00 Eben Kirksey (Melbourne)

Keynote: The Emergence of COVID-19: A Multispecies Story

10.00 – 10.15 Coffee Break

PANEL 2 **The Biopolitics of Epidemics: Control, Discipline and the Animal Other**

10.15 – 11.00 William Riguelle (Louvain)

Legislation against Animals during Epidemics in the Cities of the Netherlands and Principality of Liege (1600 – 1669)

11.00 – 11.45 Dominik Hünninger (Hamburg)

Bugs, Worms and Dying Cattle. Multispecies Histories of Cattle Plague Outbreaks in the Long 18th Century

11.45 – 12.00 Coffee Break

12.00 – 12.45 Axel C. Hüntelmann (Berlin)

The Beast in the Mosquito. Researching Mosquitos and Flies in England, Germany and India around 1900.

12.45 – 13.45 Lunch

13.45 – 14.30 Matheus Alves Duarte Da Silva (St. Andrews)

A Global War against Wild Rodents? Imperial tensions, ecological anxieties, and the circulation of sylvatic plague (1927 – 1938)

14.30 – 15.00 **Discussion Panel 2** (Chair: Mieke Roscher)

15.00 – 15.30 Coffee Break

PANEL 3 **The Space of Animals in Epidemics and Society**

15.30 – 16.15 Carol Rawcliffe (Norwich)

'The Abominable Offence and Poisoning of the Air': Animals, Miasmas and Urban Epidemics in Late Medieval England

16.15 – 17.00 Saurab Mishrah (Sheffield)

Peasant Households, 'Public Cattle', and Healing Strategies in Late-Colonial India

17.00 – 17.45 Jules Skotnes-Brown (St. Andrews)

Rats, Race, and Forced Removals: Bubonic Plague in Port Elizabeth (Gqeberha), 1938

17.45 – 18.15 **Discussion Panel 3** (Chair: Nadir Weber)

19.30 Conference Dinner

FRIDAY, APRIL 1ST, 2022

PANEL 4 **Epoch-making? Animals, Epidemics, Time and Space**

9.00 – 9.45 Martin Bauch (Leipzig)

Of Marmots and Squirrels, Mice and Men – Plague Reservoirs in 14th Century Central Europe

9.45 – 10.30 Timothy P. Newfield (Washington)

Premodern Animal Plagues: Common but Enigmatic?

10.30 – 11.00 Coffee Break

11.00 – 11.45 Lucinda Cole (Urbana)

Cattle Politics, 1866: Anti-Contagionism and Cheap Lives

11.45 – 12.30 Delphine Berdah (Paris)

Veterinary Expertise, Public Health, and the Control of Animal Contagious Diseases in France and the UK, 1860 – 1960: The Example of Bovine Tuberculosis.

12.30 – 13.00 **Discussion Panel 4** (Chair: Axel Hüntelmann)

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch Break

14.00 – 14.45 Martin Ultrich (Nürnberg)

Final Notes: Epidemic Dancing and Musical Spiders: Tarantism and Zoomusicology

14.45 – 15.15 (Chair: Jeannette Vaught)

Final Discussion with coffee