

Bellies, Bodies, *Policey*.

Embodied Environments between Catastrophes and Control

Joint conference of the Institutes of History at Tallinn and Tartu University and
KAJAK (Estonian Centre for Environmental History)

September 10-11, 2014 Tallinn
September 12, 2014 Tartu

Keynote:

Verena Winiwarter: "The body moves, though slowly, towards desire." (Theodore Roethke). Sensitive and toxic bodies in environmental history

„Environmental history goes through the belly“, said once Donald Worster, but not only that. The balance between the human bodies, their basic functions and needs (including spiritual), and the well-being of other life forms is a central issue of societal and environmental resilience. As such, it has always been an object of regulation and control on one hand, or a measure of catastrophes on the other. Bodies have always been both – physical realities and metaphors, objects of desire and of control. They produce and consume, devour and get consumed, feel and think but also exert calculated control over other human and non-human organisms. The failure to manage the needs of societies and environments results in catastrophes, the consequences of which are measured first and foremost through and by bodies.

In our joint conference we are linking different approaches toward the topic within and beyond the discipline of history:

1. Bodies as sources of
 - a) food, energy, economy: producing and devouring bodies, bodies as work force, work force as a contested resource. Dead bodies as a source of waste or raw material;
 - b) power (politics, demography, war): how politics manipulates human and animal bodies as resource in warfare; political regimes and rhetorics about organisms, reproduction and health;
 - c) knowledge: methodological aspects of archaeology, medicine, anthropology, demography and other disciplines that use bodies as a source material.

2. Vulnerable bodies between resilience and catastrophes:
 - a) Endangered bodies: humans and animals in the face of famine, frost, heat, pathogens, crop failure, war and climatic change.
 - b) Balancing bodies: factors of resilience, striking a balance between the needs of the body, soul and environment in changing circumstances.
 - c) Dissemination of new knowledge, technologies and organisms (species) to increase resilience.

3. Controlling the bodies:
 - a) Police ordinances concerning food, clothing, work power, health and sexuality: regulations concerning public health, the spread of diseases, surrogates and food additives; bodies as objects belonging to the state.
 - b) Religious regulations: taboos, education, social disciplining.
 - c) Medical regulations: how health and diseases were defined?
 - d) Individual systems of controlling the body: internalisation or resistance against regulations.

In the first days of the conference in Tallinn we will discuss general and methodological questions, while we will continue in Tartu with a more focussed view on early modern Baltic Sea region. Discussing the impact of police ordinances and environmental phenomena we aim to bring new aspects to the master narratives of different social phenomena (e.g. famine, serfdom, social disciplining etc).

The working language of the conference will be English in Tallinn and English or German in Tartu. You have 20 minutes for your presentation and 10 minutes for discussion. Please send an abstract (300 words) and your CV to Ulrike Plath plath@tlu.ee and Mati Laur mati.laur@ut.ee. Deadline for application is **January 15th**. We will inform you about the acceptance of your presentation by the beginning of February. There is no conference fee, but participants are expected to cover their travel costs to Estonia. Travel and accommodations costs within Estonia will be covered partly.

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