

DIE AMERIKAS: FORSCHUNGSKOLLOQUIUM ZU DEN AMERIKAS AUS KULTURWISSENSCHAFTLICHER SICHT

Donnerstag, 1. Juli 2021
18 Uhr c.t.
Online via Zoom

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***Amansar*, or How to Create Relations in the Brazilian Amazonia**

In the riverside communities of the Amazonian rivers, *brabo* (wild) and *manso* (domesticated) are two concepts that open and close worlds. In the Portuguese spoken in the Brazilian Amazonia, to be *brabo* means to be inexperienced and awkward: it is used to describe outsiders and recent arrivals to the region. To become skilled, adapted and discerning in a new environment, language or technique means to become *manso*. These concepts are used to describe humans as well as non-humans and applies to "cultural" as well as "natural" worlds. A fish that is *manso* has learned to evade the artifices of the fisherman. A rocky bend of the river that has been *amansada* no longer poses threats to a skilled navigator. *Amansar* describes a world of mutual transformation and relationships built anew that connect a subject and his or her environment.

The riverside communities of the Xingu basin in the Brazilian Amazonia know a thing or two about adaptation. They descend from indigenous people and rubber tappers who migrated from other parts of Brazil during the Rubber Boom (1870-1914) and had to learn to live in the largest rainforest in the world. Their way of life has been continuously upended by invaders, landgrabbers, neoliberal policies and most recently, climate change. Life in their "social" and "natural" environment is about learning to create new relations.

In this talk, I will offer a glimpse into how adaptation to the environment and of the environment is conceptualized in riverside communities of Amazonia. As is often the case in Amazonia, relations created by humans and animals do not easily fit the nature and culture distinction of modern Western thinking. I take this opportunity to think about the importance of building relations with the environment as an ontological alternative to a rigid conception of naturalism (Descola 2014) without the ambition of building a systematic approach to a particular way of being in the world. As the damming of the Xingu and road construction have upended the relationship to the natural environment in this part of Amazonia over the last decade, I pose that the question of adaptation should be seen as a continuum dotted by thresholds and breaking points.

Das Kolloquium findet im Wintersemester 2020/21 online über Zoom statt.

Um den Link zu erhalten und bei Rückfragen wenden Sie sich bitte an die folgende E-Mail-Adresse: carolin.luiprecht@campus.lmu.de

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