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Kolloquium Barla und Lemke

Guest Lecture Earth as Home: Elements of a Planetary Political Theology

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Political theory is undergoing a “planetary” turn. The late Bruno Latour contended that if the human species is to save itself in the Anthropocene, it should start accepting the idea that it is permanently “locked down” within Gaia’s “critical zone” without possibility of escape. This view captures what I mean by “planetary turn”: the coming understanding of politics must take into account that the Earth is both our “home” *and* that the planet’s “habitability” for human and more than human species can no longer be taken for granted. In this talk I outline some lines of inquiry with regard to this emerging the idea of “home” at the planetary level of analysis. From Aristotle to Arendt, we are accustomed to contrast “the political” to the “private” dimension of the *oikos* or household. Yet, already in the wake of September 11, we have become aware of new governmental institutions that seek to provide for “homeland security” where the concept of “homeland” erases any clear distinction between what is domestic, what is public, and what belongs to “foreign relations.” The “global” use of extended home lockdowns under emergency powers to protect populations in the recent pandemic added more evidence to the unstable character of the traditional *polis/oikos* dualism. Here I examine the hypothesis that “the political” – at least in the West – has always stood under a more expansive idea of “home” that is planetary from the very start, and I explore its potential significance for a political theory of planetary “habitability.”