

## ‘Navigating Interdisciplinarity’

A joint workshop by the Kaete Hamburger Centre for Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic Studies (CAPAS) (Heidelberg), Marsilius Kolleg (Heidelberg) & Kaete Hamburger Kolleg: Cultures of Research (c:o/re) (Aachen)

19-20 January 2022, Marsilius Kolleg Heidelberg

Interdisciplinarity has long been championed as the go-to solution for meeting today’s global challenges. Supposed to both harness the strength of individual disciplines and transcend their perspectives, it is deemed to provide more comprehensive and complementary analysis. However, there are concrete challenges to realize goal-oriented interdisciplinary cooperation as in many cases neither goal nor method of interdisciplinary inquiry are clearly defined or agreed upon. This leads to a considerable gap between ideal and practice. Against this background, this workshop organised by three interdisciplinary institutions – the Kaete Hamburger Centre for Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic Studies (Heidelberg), Marsilius Kolleg (Heidelberg), and Kaete Hamburger Kolleg: Cultures of Research (Aachen) – takes up the promise and problems of interdisciplinarity itself. The aim is to identify challenges as well as solutions for conducting joint research endeavors of societal relevance.

The questions this workshop seeks to address include: Where is interdisciplinarity warranted; where may a disciplinary approach be preferable? What makes interdisciplinary work succeed or fail? How do we negotiate diverging criteria of validity of knowledge? *Navigating Interdisciplinarity* seeks to actively engage with and reflect on theoretical and practical problems of interdisciplinarity and collectively develop guiding tools for the interdisciplinary space. A special focus will be on a set of overarching concepts that are of particular relevance for the participating institutes: **security, complexity, and collapse.**

### Schedule

#### Thursday, 19 January 2023

12h30 – 13h30	Lunch
13h30 – 14h00	Introduction: Foregrounding interdisciplinarity
14h00 – 15h30	Session 1: Concepts and metaphors of interdisciplinarity
15h30 – 16h00	Coffee break
16h00 – 18h00	Session 2: Interdisciplinarity-Lab: Security – complexity – collapse
19h00	Workshop dinner

#### Friday, 20 January 2023

09h00 – 10h00	Reflection on Interdisciplinarity-Lab results
10h00 – 10h15	Coffee
10h15 – 12h00	Session 3: Negotiating criteria of validity
12h00 – 13h00	Concluding plenum session
13h00 – 14h00	Lunch

Thursday, 19 January 2023

**12h30 – 13h30 Lunch**

Task: Participants are invited to exchange their experience with interdisciplinary work. What value do they see in it? Where has it been successful? Where has it failed?

**13h30 – 14h Introduction: Foregrounding interdisciplinarity**

What conceptions of inter/ trans/ post-disciplinary work exist? How do these differ and compare in terms of theoretical ambition, method and measure of success? Pragmatic 'task-based' cooperation on the one hand stands against the rejection of any pre-defined disciplinary boundaries, e.g. by Actor-Network-Theory (ANT), on the other. Consequently, the desired results may differ widely from 'comparison', 'synthesis' and 'integration' to describing non-disciplinary 'actants'.

Method: Plenum session

**14h– 15h Session 1: Concepts and metaphors of interdisciplinarity**

Interdisciplinarity inevitably operates via metaphors of transition/ transgression ['Redeweisen des Ueberschreitens'], such as 'migration', 'translation', 'trading zones' (Galison, 1997), or 'boundary objects' (Star and Griesemer, 1989). These often in turn derive from metaphors for the disciplinary organization of knowledge: from 'territorialisation', 'specialisation' to 'division of labour'.

Method: Working groups

- 1) What metaphors/ images come to mind when framing interdisciplinary work? What kind of exchange(s) do they permit or limit?
- 2) What would ideal interdisciplinary collaboration look like to me? What positive experiences have I had?
- 3) What difficulties have I encountered in interdisciplinary practice – for example, regarding questions of legitimacy, problem construction or forms of collaboration?

**15h – 15h30 Feedback from Working groups (plenum)**

**15h30 – 16h Coffee break**

**16h – 18h Session 2: Interdisciplinarity – Lab: Security – complexity – collapse**

This session will use three exemplary meta concepts of particular relevance to the workshop partners that are subject to diverging disciplinary interpretations but may also form the basis for joint research endeavors.

Method: World Café in three rounds

- 1) What is my definition of the concept in question?
- 2) How do I use this or related concepts in my work?
- 3) What possibilities and limitations does this notion entail for interdisciplinary work?
- 4) What may it tell us about the conception of interdisciplinarity itself [eg. securitisation vs transdisciplinary security]?

**19h Workshop dinner**

Friday, 20 January 2023

**9h – 10h Reflection on Interdisciplinarity-Lab results (plenum)**

**10h – 10h15 Coffee**

**10h15 – 12h Session 3: Negotiating criteria of validity**

Do individual disciplines share an understanding of knowledge? How can overarching goals be made compatible with different epistemological criteria of validity? Can we find shared values such as, for example, *evidence*, even if different conceptions and methodologies exist thereof?

Method: Gallery work with coffee + working groups

**12h – 13h Concluding plenum session**

Q: How has my understanding of interdisciplinarity changed over the workshop? What hopes and challenges do I see for the future?

Method: Postcards (lessons learnt & outlook)

**13h – 14h Lunch**