

**Historical Materialism Athens 2023  
20-23 April 2023 Panteion University, Athens**

**Call for Papers for the “Naturalising emergency: From the Environment to the City”  
stream**

**Deadline for abstracts: 31 December 2022**

**<https://conference.historicalmaterialism.org/event/4/>**

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The long-lasting socio-environmental crisis that we currently face goes hand-in-hand with the accumulation strategies, dispossession and privatisation processes of modern capitalism. But it also goes beyond the current trends. It is rooted in the concepts and processes of nature’s commodification and enclosure of the commons being vital for capitalism “ever since day one”. Therefore, current mainstream attempts “to save the planet and the climate” are pretty often -if not always- translated into renewed capital accumulation processes and capitalist class privilege preservation. Land grabbing, resource extraction, climate change, and mega-development projects all over the world are only some indicative examples of such inabilities to reverse the crisis dynamics. The result is a planetary emergency that threatens all present generations.

However, the idea of “emergency” is de-politicised by the dominant narrative and used to dictate future development, in a world where the “dangers” are presented as endemic and unavoidable. In short, as “natural laws” beyond our control, to which societies now have to adapt. Within this context, cities emerge as central loci for the experimentation and implementation of “adaptation” or “resilient” strategies to “cope” with any future crisis. The outcome is an urban development based on gentrification and touristification deepening social and economic inequalities, urban and energy poverty.

It is, then, only by addressing the social aspects of the current planetary emergency and exploring the theoretical, historical, and practical dimensions of capitalism’s alteration of the planetary environment, that we can develop the ecological and social resources for a new radical political praxis able to create a pathway towards a society dedicated to need rather than profit, human equality, solidarity, and socio-ecological sustainability. A new radical political praxis beyond the de-politicised practices of “adaptation”, “resilience” and “smartness”.

We, therefore, need interventions that seek to offer a better and in-depth attention as well as critical reflection on the above issues. We need to focus on the current socio-environmental movements, urban conflicts, and spatial transformations both empirically and analytically. We need to formulate a renewed right to the environment and the city.

We welcome submissions for panels and individual papers. Abstracts should be under 300 words and be sent to the Historical Materialism Athens 2023 call for papers (<https://conference.historicalmaterialism.org/event/4/>), indicating that it is a submission to the “**Naturalising emergency: From the Environment to the City**” stream. We stress that the conference will be in person. Panel chairs should be clearly indicated where appropriate.

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