

The Return of the Wolf to Germany: mapping extraordinary affective encounters

Initiative: "Originalitätsverdacht?" Neue Optionen für die Geistes- und Kulturwissenschaften (beendet)

Ausschreibung: Komm! ins Offene...

Bewilligung: 08.05.2019

Laufzeit: 1 Jahre

For about 20 years now, wolves have been returning to Germany where they had been extinct since the 1800s. Although encounters are still rare they are happening - as evidenced by hundreds of sighting reports gathered by the 'Wolfskontaktbüro Lausitz' in Saxony (the main body of data for this project). Interestingly, after more than 100 years of absence, neither wolves nor humans know how to (re)act in such situations. Therefore, this project asks a fundamental question: What happens in these extraordinary affective encounters? Conceptually, the individual narrative reports to this question are organized and analysed by focusing on affects and related concepts from feeling and emotion on a micro-level, to sentiments and emotion repertoires on a meso-level, to affective arrangements on a macro-level. The resulting essay will discuss these issues within the context of contemporary Germany as an affective society that has to be conceived increasingly as a more-than-human society with the return of the wolf and other processes of rewilding.

Projektbeteiligte

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Wolves, ecologies of fear, and the affective challenges of coexistence.