

## Conference “**Contemporary Umwelt Analysis: Applications for Culture and Ecological Relations**”

18 -19 April 2023, University of Tartu, Estonia

### **Call for Papers**

Umwelt analysis, initially proposed by Jakob von Uexküll, revolutionised studies on animal behaviour and perception by targeting them as semiotic phenomena, that is, as based on meanings and signs. In the Institute of Umwelt Research in Hamburg, of which Uexküll was the director, umwelt theory served as a shared theoretical ground for research on topics as diverse as the umwelten of fighting fish to the training methods of guide dogs. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the scope of umwelt theory has vastly expanded, both in terms of disciplines – ranging from anthropology to ecology – and the phenomena that are addressed with the help of the theory. Novel theoretical connections and disciplinary embeddings, as well as new changes in the lifeworld itself, bring along new challenges and questions: how to fit umwelt theory with existing methodologies and theoretical backgrounds of various other disciplines, how to make it a working analytical tool in the context of human-induced environmental change, and what are the methodologies that have been developed since the times of Uexküll that would help to conduct empirical analyses of animal umwelten today.

To scrutinise these questions, the Department of Semiotics at the University of Tartu will organise a conference *Contemporary Umwelt Analysis: Applications for Culture and Ecological Relations* on 18 – 19 April 2023. We will especially look for contributions on the following topics:

- umwelt analysis across disciplines (ecology, anthropology, literary studies, economics, etc.);
- umwelt analysis in different applications, methods, and fieldwork;
- human and animal umwelten in the era of anthropogenic environmental change;
- contemporary developments in umwelt thinking.

### **Keynote speakers:**

Carsten Herrmann-Pillath, University of Erfurt, Germany

Morten Tønnessen, University of Stavanger, Norway

Kalevi Kull, University of Tartu, Estonia

Interested parties are welcome to submit their abstracts of max. 300 words by 31 January 2023 to [riin.magnus@ut.ee](mailto:riin.magnus@ut.ee) for a 15-20 min. presentation. Notification of acceptance will be given by 27 February 2023. Abstracts should be sent as Word .doc or .docx files, with the e-mail subject line "Umwelt analysis". Each abstract should contain:

1. the title of the paper;
2. the name of the author(s) (surname, given name);
3. affiliation and country of residence;
4. email address;
5. an abstract of max. 300 words;
6. a short bio note of max. 50 words.

Organised by the Department of Semiotics, University of Tartu: Kalevi Kull, Riin Magnus, Timo Maran, Nelly Mäekivi, Lona Päll, Silver Rattasepp, Siiri Tarrikas.

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