The Bucerius Institute for Research of Contemporary German History and Society

Seminar
Lecture and Open Discussion

"Endangerment, Biodiversity and Culture"

Dr. Fernando Vidal

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Vasco Araújo, *Exotismo – Physiologus* (2014).
Sculpture (elephant foot, books).

At first glance, an Amur leopard, a Brazil-nut Tree, Bolivia's Carnival of Oruro, Cameroon's Ndai language, a Usambara Blue-bellied frog, the palm called *Masoala madagascariensis*, Nasca lines and geoglyphs in Peru, and Viennese coffee house culture have nothing in common. They nonetheless belong together, and not just because we can invent a category to encompass them. These animal and plant species, sites and buildings, cultural practices and languages have all been categorized as *endangered*. Lists of species in danger of extinction exist since the early 1960s; in more recent decades, foundations and international organizations have made it their mission to identify and list threatened instances of cultural heritage, both tangible (like buildings) and "intangible" (like artistic expressions and traditional systems of knowledge). In those contexts, *endangerment* appears mainly in adjectival form. Focusing on the noun, this lecture proposes to chart an "endangerment sensibility" that makes us perceive vast portions of the world as being in danger of extinction or destruction, drives a sense of urgency and citizenship, and sustains a desire to memorialize and preserve. The endangerment sensibility will be examined as a complex of historically situated concepts and practices, as well as of moral and epistemic values, emotions and interests, which work together as an individual and collective resource for apprehending the world at the level of symbols and action.

Wednesday, June 17th 2015
18:00 – 19:30

Room 305, Jacobs Building (Entry Floor), University of Haifa

The lecture will be held in English

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

For further information:
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