

[Uniting Ecology and Civilization: Histories, Theories, Futures](#)

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Call for Papers

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Subject Fields:

Contemporary History, Environmental History / Studies, Humanities

Uniting Ecology and Civilization: Histories, Theories, Futures

An international workshop to be held in Beijing

at Renmin University of China

June 11-14, 2020

Co-Sponsored by the Center for Ecological History, Renmin University of China, Beijing, and the Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society, Munich

In the 1970s a German philosopher coined the phrase “ecological civilization,” which has now become popular in many parts of the world, not least so in China. How might the humanities help us achieve that vision in the future, and what ideals should modern societies adopt in relation to the natural world? Can the science of ecology offer guidance to philosophy, governance, economics, technology, or the design arts? We also hope to address how the ancient cultural ideal of “dominion over nature” has informed past civilizations and what might be its relevance in the so-called “ Anthropocene.” Another cultural ideal we want to consider is “sustainability”—its shifting meaning, promise, and application. And then there is the ideal we might call “recovering the wild,” as it was enunciated by Henry David Thoreau among others, meaning to infuse civilization with a love of wild, unmanaged nature. Can that ideal help civilizations address the loss of biodiversity and the destruction of such natural ecosystems as the rainforest and coral reefs?

The keynote speaker will be Dr. Christof Mauch, director of the Rachel Carson Center. Other opening remarks will be offered by Donald Worster of Renmin University of China.

The conference will be open to all ranks, from graduate students to senior professors, and to all who can address the conference themes in praxis or in theory. Participants will be selected competitively. Those interested in attending should send a one-page proposal (or about 300 words) and include a title and a one- or two-page CV. ***The deadline for consideration is 1 January 2020.*** Successful proposals will be announced around 1 February 2020, and complete drafts of papers (minimum of 5,000 words in English or the equivalent in Chinese characters) will be required by 1 May 2020. All papers will be circulated to the participants in advance and will not be orally presented in full during the conference.

Travel expenses for scholars living outside China will be paid by the Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society. Scholars living within China should depend on their own universities for covering travel expenses. For all participants, hotel expenses for three nights will be covered by Renmin University. Travel support for multi-authored proposals selected for inclusion will be limited to one person only.

The last day of the conference will be devoted to a field trip to the Great Wall of China. Participants are also encouraged to use this travel opportunity to explore the magnificent capital city and other parts of the People's Republic of China.

Send proposals in English to this email address at the Rachel Carson Center:
conferences@rcc.lmu.de.

Copies should also be sent to each member of the program committee:

•Christof Mauch, mauch@lmu.de

Director of the Rachel Carson Center and Professor of American Studies, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich

•Mingfang Xia, xiamingfang2@vip.sina.com

Director of the Center for Ecological History, Renmin University of China, and professor of history in the Qing Institute

•Shen Hou, houshen@ruc.edu.cn

Deputy Director of the Center for Ecological History and associate professor of world history at Renmin University of China.

•Donald Worster, dworster@ku.edu

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