



Workshop: Breedism and Racism. The Ideological Use of the Animal Body since 1800

July 3 – 5, 2024

**Historisches Kolleg
Kaulbachstraße 15
80539 München**

The workshop examines racialized practices generated by animal breeding that affected both animals and humans, categorizing, qualifying, and quantifying their abilities and performances. Dogs, horses, and other species served as essentialized markers for the ideas of “pure blood” and the connection to a perceived “homeland”, not only during the era of National Socialism. Throughout the 19th century, the century in which animal breeding became institutionalized, nationalist aspirations increasingly found an animal foundation. The eugenics movement, in particular, which gained prominence in the early 20th century, was rooted in the belief that the human race could be improved by selective breeding. Eugenics aimed to promote the reproduction of individuals with desirable traits while discouraging or preventing those with perceived undesirable traits from reproducing.

The connection between (political) racism and breeding was first addressed by Enrique Ucelay da Cal in 1992. He demonstrated how genealogies were used to create specific types of animals that were then intended to be associated with a particular place. Breeding allegedly “superior” animals to control allegedly “inferior” humans marked as racialized, according to da Cal, involved an “intentional blurring of the boundaries between human and animal.”[1] The racial/racist paradigm was linked to a notion of capability and performance, which also co-constructed the “other”, the “excludable”.

The workshop will pick up on da Cal's analyses and widen it by using theoretical concepts of historical animal studies, gender studies, critical race studies as well as approaches offered by the history of science, ideas and the body. It asks how material-semiotic nodes, that determine how the boundaries (for example, between human and animal, but also between “race” and “breed”) are drawn and endowed with meaning through social and bodily interaction. Breeding “superior” animals is thus considered the performative tool through which semiotic projections of racial differences were solidified and embodied. This intersectional perspective seeks to understand how different forms of bias and prejudice overlapped, ultimately influencing the experiences of both animals and marginalized human communities. For this, the workshop brings together researchers who look at the relationship between animal breeding and racism from 1800 to the present from different spatial and temporal perspectives on the question.

[1] Da Cal, Enrique Ucelay. 1992. “The Influence of Animal Breeding on Political Racism.” *History of European Ideas* 15 (4–6): 717–25.

Program:

Wednesday, July 3, 2024

14:30–15:00 *Mieke Roscher* (München/Kassel)
Welcome and Introduction

Section I: Eugenics and Breeding: Hereditary Discourses

Chair: *Mieke Roscher* (München/Kassel)

15:00–16:00 *Bert Theunissen* (Utrecht/Netherlands)
Livestock Breeding, Eugenics, and Racism: Birds of a Feather?

16:00–17:00 *Tom Quick* (Maastricht, Netherlands)
Karl Pearson and the Making of a 'New Race' at the Start of the Twentieth Century

17:00-17.30 Break

Keynote: Chair: *Christof Mauch* (München)

17:30–18:30 *Sandra Swart* (Stellenbosch/South Africa):
Keynote: The Dogs of Apartheid: Race, Breed and Power

from 18:30 Reception in the Garden Hall of the Historisches Kolleg

Thursday, July 4, 2024

Section II: Finding Origins: Nationalizing Breeding

Chair: *Gabriel Rosenberg* (Durham, NC/USA)

9:00–10:00 *Sophie Küsterling/Christina Späti*, (Luzern/Fribourg, Switzerland)
Of Cattle and Men: The Search for Racial Origin in 19th Century Switzerland and Austria

10:00–11:00 *Jadon Nisly-Goretzki* (Kassel)
Degenerated Strains of Peasants and Cattle: Breeding Practices and Enlightenment Thought in Farm Account Books ca. 1750-1850

11:00–11:30 Coffee Break

11:30–12:30 *Ulrike Heitholt* (Kassel)
„Rasse“ and German Cattle Breeding in the 19th Century

12:30–14:00 Lunch Break

Section III: Breeding Racism: Colonial Legacies of Breeding

Chair: *Sandra Swart* (Stellenbosch/South Africa):

- 14:00–15:00** *Dennis Yazici* (Passau)
Between „raceless“ Cattle and „Pedigree Herds“. The Entanglement of Cattle Breeding and Racism in Colonial Namibia (1890-1925)
- 15:00–16:00** *Matilde Cassano* (Milan, Italy)
Taming Eastern Africa. Farming and Breeding during the Italian Colonization.
- 16:00–16:30** Coffee Break
- 16:30–17:30** *Anne D. Peiter*, (La Réunion),
Made big / Made small. On the History of Cattle Breeding and Racism in the Context of the Genocide against the Tutsis of Rwanda
- 17:30–19:00** Apéro in the Garden Hall of the Historisches Kolleg

Friday, July 5, 2024

Section IV: Spatializing Breed: Hybridizations

Chair: *Bert Theunissen* (Utrecht/ Netherlands)

- 9:00–10:00** *Christina May* (Halle a. d. Saale)
The universal Cattle – Concepts of Body and Landscape in the Breeding of Harz Red Cattle
- 10:00–11:00** *Monica Vasile* (Maastricht, Netherlands)
Breeding the Przewalski’s Horse: Hybridization, Wildness and Genetic Diversity in the History of a Zoo-based endangered Species
- 11:00–11:30** Coffee Break
- 11:30–12:30** *Gabriel Rosenberg* (Durham, NC/USA)
Closing Comments
- 12:30–13:00** Final Discussion
- ca. 13:00** End of the Conference

There is some limited space for guests to attend the workshop. To participate, please send an email to Elisabeth Hüls (elisabeth.huels@historischeskolleg.de)