

Fellows

Elisabeth Weber

IFK_Gast des Direktors

Duration of fellowship

01. October 2021 bis 31. January 2022

Elisabeth Weber

PROJECT TITLE

Breath, World, Cosmos.»Plant Humanities« and the Translation of North-American Indigenous Thought

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The translation of North-American indigenous thought by the Potawatomi writer and biologist Robin W. Kimmerer places the cosmogony of plants at the heart of a cosmology of kinship and reciprocity. On the other side of the globe, Emanuele Coccia's *The Life of Plants* proposes to »reopen the question of the world« through the deceptively simple, yet radical fact that living beings breathe because of plants. Through plants' generation of the atmosphere, their very being is both planetary and cosmogonic. My project seeks to foreground the »epistemic disconcertment« (H. Verran) between these two knowledge traditions. Isabelle Stengers's concept of cosmopolitics and its emphasis on »divergences« will be crucial for the methodological appraisal of epistemic disconcertment and the difficulty of translation. Concrete instances of such disconcertment emerge in the understanding and practice of reciprocity and in the relationship with fire.

CV

Elisabeth Weber is Professor of German and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She is an instructor for the »Foundations in the Humanities« Prison Pedagogy Correspondence Program, based at the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center at UC Santa Barbara. She also teaches for the Scholars at Risk Network USA. Currently she is IFK_Guest of the director.

Publications

Kill Boxes. Facing the Legacy of US-Sponsored Torture, Indefinite Detention, and Drone Warfare, [ohne Ort] 2017; (Hg.), *Living Together. Jacques Derrida's Communities of Violence and Peace*, New York 2013; *Verfolgung und Trauma. Zu Emmanuel Lévinas' »Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence«*, Wien 1990.