



SEISMIC SHIFTS

INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES ON MOUNTAINEERING

23. - 26. November 2023
Technische Universität Dresden, Germany

Organisers: Sven Leuckert & Franziska Röber

In a salute to Edmund Hillary and the explorers of the past, Richard Banks laments that George Mallory's famous reason »because it is there« has ceased to be a good enough reason behind ascending the highest peaks in the world. He seems to mourn a time when man-against-nature and the mystery that shrouded the routes up to the major peaks characterised climbing; a time that stands in sharp contrast to contemporary mountaineering. After all, nowadays the routes are established, the technical difficulties are reduced, and virtually everyone with enough money and time can pay a guiding service to be led up the mountains. Nevertheless, assertions of the heroic act of climbing, of strive and hardship – all attributes which have governed (self-)descriptions of all kinds of exploration – and the discourses that underpin them still play a significant role in drawing audiences and inspiring new practitioners. Despite such claims, (high-altitude) mountaineering as a sport has continued to rise in popularity (Schöffl 2022), with the 21st century marking a range of dichotomies and cultural, political, and social shifts: While climbing and popular accounts of ascends are still considered the preserve of men, recent decades have seen a rise in female mountaineering; while the sport draws attention to the global South, where the world's highest mountains are located, it has also become a fundamentally capitalist enterprise; while it promises physical benefits, it is also a highly risky activity; and while it has the potential to propel social change, it is also still subject to substantial social barriers.

The inter- and transdisciplinary conference ›Seismic Shifts: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Mountaineering‹ held at TU Dresden intends to shine a light on the various dichotomies and shifts that characterise mountaineering and the study of mountaineering in the 21st century, particularly in the humanities and the social sciences. Such shifts occur, for instance, in terms of perspectives (e.g. from the northern hemisphere to the global South), in terms of the voices in mountaineering and mountaineering studies (e.g. with regard to gender; Apollo 2021), and in terms of knowledge transmission (e.g. with regard to the language(s) of mountaineering and cultural products).

We invite contributions from cultural studies, historical science, literary studies, linguistics, media studies, sociology, and related disciplines that engage with mountaineering in any way relevant to the overall theme of the conference.

CALL FOR PAPERS

We welcome submissions for contributions (20 minutes for presentation + 10 minutes for discussion) addressing one or more of the following aspects:

- mountaineering and cultural memory,
- mountaineering and gender,
- mountaineering and ageing,
- (social) media representations of mountaineering,
- travel writing and mountaineering,
- language variation and multilingualism in mountaineering,
- mountaineering terminology,
- further topics that relate to the conference theme.

Please submit your abstract of max. 500 words (including references) via e-mail to

 seismicshifts2023@tu-dresden.de

The deadline for your submission is April, 14th 2023.

Notification of acceptance will be sent out by 28 April 2023.

Please note that we intend to publish an edited collection based on this conference. Please let us know in your submission e-mail if you would be interested in being part of this publication project.

References

Apollo, Michal (2021). "There is Greater Gender Equality in Mountaineering Research." *Current Issues in Tourism* 24(22): 3121-3126.

Schöffl, Volker (2022). "Introduction." In Volker Schöffl, Isabelle Schöffl, Christoph Lutter, & Thomas Hochholzer (eds.), *Climbing Medicine: A Practical Guide*. Cham: Springer, 1-9.