Towards a post-apocalyptic environmentalism?
Responses to loss and visions of the future in climate activism

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The environmental movement has long been dominated by apocalyptic images of future catastrophes. This discourse is today challenged by the rise of ‘post-apocalyptic’ environmentalism based on the experience of irreversible or unavoidable loss. This discourse is neither nourished by a strong sense of hope, nor of a future disaster, but a sense that the catastrophe is already on-going and unstoppable, thus provoking the question of what makes activists mobilize in the absence of hope. In my talk I explore the notion of post-apocalyptic politics by focusing on how the utopias brought into play by activists are deployed in political mobilizations. I focus on two cases of climate activism – the Dark Mountain project and the International Tribunal for the Rights of Nature (ITRN) – and argue that their mobilizations are possible through what I call the paradox of hope and the paradox of justice. I end by contextualizing post-apocalyptic environmentalism in relation to the recent wave of global climate-related protest.

Carl Cassegård is professor of sociology (University of Gothenburg). He is the author of Youth Movements, Trauma and Alternative Space in Contemporary Japan (2014) and Shock and Naturalization (2007), and has co-edited Climate Action in a Globalizing World (2017).

- Language: English
- No Prior registration necessary, but please bring the event flyer with you and show it at the entrance of the Library. The flyer can be downloaded at ICC webpage.
- This lecture is organized by Professor David H. Slater (FLA)

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