

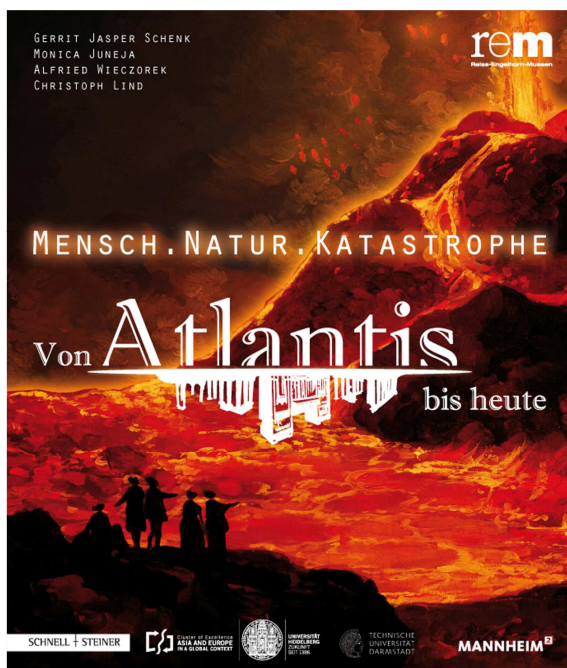
BOOK REVIEW: WICZOREK A., SCHENK G. J., JUNEJA M., LIND C. (EDS.) (2014), *HUMAN. NATURE. DISASTER. FROM ATLANTIS TILL TODAY [IN GERMAN]*, SCHNELL UND STEINER, REGENSBURG, GERMANY

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Abstract. The present article is a review of the book: Wiczorek A., Schenk G. J., Juneja M., Lind C. (Eds.) (2014), *Human. Nature. Disaster. From Atlantis till today* [in German], Schnell und Steiner, Regensburg, Germany, ISBN 978-3-7954-2880-8, 280 pages.

Key words: disaster, image, exhibition.



In the introduction it is explained that the catastrophe is occurring because of the affected people. The media contributes to the connection of observers. From this point of view we can see the same division of the stakeholders as in Fingerhuth and Koch (1996) namely experts, active affected people and passive observers, which the author also used in describing a multicriteria decision system. Further the introduction describes the disaster between

nature and culture: natural disaster and social disaster. The four elements from mythology (fire, water, earth, air) which are connected to religious rituals, are dual, both heritage but rendering vulnerability. People are building settlements where they should not. The elements are for example present also in Art Nouveau architecture decoration.

Catastrophe occurs also through memory of former ones. The word catastrophe in the Greek drama meant change of side. Disaster in Latin meant unstar. Vesuvius in eruption deals with the sublime and the beautiful as Edmund Burke saw it. The image of catastrophe can be seen along these lines. The violence of nature, for example threatening sea, can attract viewers. In the 19th century photographing catastrophes was seen as a subject for photography, still young that time, and not as catastrophe tourism as it is today, when only legitime media representatives can take photos without affecting the sensibility of the residents. The „biggest around the earth experiment“ was the eruption of Krakatau in 1883 (100 years after Laki, at the same location as Tambora). „The public was thirsty after reports and explanations of the bizarre sky phenomenon and the exotic

catastrophes on the other side of the earth". The bells of Plurs: Schenk presents a combination of images before and after, which can be unfolded. This was a catastrophe of the 17th century. The (self-)reconnaissance connects curiosity, enjoyment of the show, horror. The hidden is unhidden. Catastrophe images are an own genre. These try to keep the moment of a catastrophe placed firmly in space and time with the visual means of the epoch. We can see this in the engravings on Piranesi or in the early stereo images (Bostenaru, 2012). Before and after is a genre of catastrophe photography. It is used also for other ruins, not only for those from catastrophes, example Rome of yesterday, for example if we connect with the observation above on Piranesi and consider the project „Rome was!“ of Langenbach (2019).

The chapter „An idyll is put to grave“ presents the mountain fall of Goldau in 1806. The government of Schwyz prohibited the production of images. This was happening not only because of piety but also in order to raise money for catastrophe help in a targeted way through authorised images: „Drawings and descriptions for support of the remaining suffering ones were given to be printed [the so called „Schuttbuch“] 1807 Karl Zay. The families kept together as in catastrophe films. At the turn of the millennium there were several catastrophe films from Hollywood which presented the expert, the scientist, not being allowed to evacuate for the predicted catastrophe in order to not create panic, helping then.

Together instead of alone is described in the book through crisis rituals in order to fight against catastrophes. This chapter is signed by Schenk and Birken. The rituals include penitence and processions. Evocation comes to help. We mentioned before memory. Memory rituals are not anymore for the practical overcoming of the catastrophe but

they have an integration effect on group identity and solidarity. Catastrophes are repetitive - scientifically there is a recurrence time. Through these rituals the events come into the collective memory and this can lead to avoiding risks and prevention. We can compare it to the rituals of the death in the books on the Bellu cemetery (Hostiuc, 2012, 2014, 2022) - ex. The perception of the ruin as a monument, lieux du mémoire. The Storm refers to hurricane Katrina. See also as hint of the author Solnit (2010). E. Rohland talks about a half value time of the remembering of catastrophe, as the nuclear matter is divided for reproduction. After 35 years (a generation) a catastrophe hole is created (the catastrophe is not anymore perceived) and this is why rituals are necessary.

This review is done as part of the documentation for the project Future on the past, PN-III-P4-PCE-2021-0609.

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