

**International Symposium
Nantes, June 8th-10th 2016**

The End of the World, a Universal Imagination

Call for papers

Myths related to the end of the world are numerous and have resulted in a significant literature. The expression of this universal fear can indeed take various forms: myths, religious beliefs, cosmological systems, fiction, etc. Some aspects of ecological thought themselves derive their origins and paradigms from this collective imagination and contemporary environmental concerns can often be re-read in the light of stories or representations dating back to ancient times.

In the West, the only myth of Atlantis invented by Plato has given rise to many interpretations and continues, even today, to power all fantasies and hypotheses, whether more or less likely. In any case it attests to the age and permanence of this questioning. It has its counterpart in other traditions, in the same way as the almost universal myth of the Flood or the engulfing of the world. Many other legends tell of comparable episodes, sometimes in a prophetic dimension.

The history of religions should also be put to use. At the level of the news, certain doctrinal positions which can lead to extreme behaviour are not unconnected with the old forms of millenarianism and messianism. The belief in the Apocalypse surpasses the boundaries of the cultural and religious traditions from which it sprang and resurfaces regularly in the most varied forms.

At the historical and political levels, the paradigm of the end of empires or the end of civilization joins this anguish of a collective end. In the Western world, the fall of the Roman Empire, just as much a historic event as a continually rewritten disaster scenario, raises the return to chaos or barbarism as the horizon of established political or social systems and resembles a prediction of the end of the world susceptible to fuelling the discourse of the proponents of the theory of decline.

Members of the scientific committee will consider all proposed papers which permit an illustration or rereading of these questions. All historical, philosophical, anthropological, sociological or cultural perspectives are welcome.

Papers (20 minutes maximum) will be presented in French or English.

Scientific Committee:

Presidents:

- Pedram Khosronejad (Institut du Pluralisme Religieux et de l'Athéisme, Nantes)
- Nicolas Roussiau (Université de Nantes, Laboratoire de Psychologie des Pays de la Loire).

Members:

- Christine DUMAS-REUNGOAT (Département d'Études Anciennes / Centre de Recherches Archéologiques et Historiques Anciennes et Médiévales-Centre Michel de Boüard, CNRS-Université de Basse-Normandie, Caen).
- Andrew GREGORY (Department of Science and Technology Studies, University College, London/ United Kingdom).
- Christiane GRUBER, (Department of History of Art, University of Michigan/ USA).
- Claire GUIU (Institut de Géographie et d'Aménagement Régional / Espaces et Sociétés, CNRS-Université de Nantes).
- Asqar MONTAZEROLQAEM (Department of History, University of Isfahan/ Iran).
- Yoann MOREAU (Institut Interdisciplinaire d'Anthropologie du Contemporain, CNRS-EHESS, Paris).
- David MORGAN (Department of Religious Studies, Duke University/ USA).
- Annick PETERS-CUSTOT, Département d'Histoire / Centre de Recherches en Histoire Internationale et Atlantique, Université de Nantes).
- Bernadette RIGAL-CELLARD (Département des Études des Mondes Anglophones / Cultures et Littératures des Mondes Anglophones, Université de Bordeaux-Montaigne).
- Pierre VACHER (Département des Sciences de la Terre et de l'Univers / Laboratoire de Planétologie et Géodynamique, CNRS-Université de Nantes).
- Sophie VERNICOS (Institut de Géographie et d'Aménagement Régional / Espaces et Sociétés, CNRS-Université de Nantes).

Proposed papers should be sent to Atlantys@univ-nantes.fr before December 15th 2015.
The Scientific Committee will announce the proposals selected by January 5th 2016 at the latest.