

UTOPIAS and ECOLOGIES

Regional Networking
Workshop
for Utopian Scholars
and Creatives

30 November 2018

University of
Greifswald, Germany

Mit freundlicher  Sparkasse
Unterstützung der Vorpommern



For more information visit
botanik.uni-greifswald.de/uae

Keynote Lecture

BEYOND CONSUMERISM

A Utopian Perspective on Catastrophic Environmental Breakdown

30 NOVEMBER 2018

17:30–19:00

UNIVERSITY OF GREIFSWALD

DOMSTRASSE 9A

WITH WORKSHOP TOUR
AND RECEPTION

The looming prospect of eco-catastrophe in the mid- and late-21st century is the greatest problem humanity has ever faced. Avoiding this disaster involves shifts in politics, economics and in personal attitudes towards consumption, production and work. This paper focuses on the possibility of altering our attitudes towards consumer society in particular, and contends that historical arguments against luxury in 'utopian republican' texts of the 17th–19th centuries help to illuminate the part of our later modern problem, if not the solution. Suitably updated, ideas of voluntary simplicity can be wedded to the abolition of planned obsolescence in order to substantially modify existing patterns of consumption.

Gregory Claeys

Professor of the History of Political Thought
at Royal Holloway, University of London

Gregory Claeys won the 2018 Cantemir Prize for his recent book *Dystopia: A Natural History*. Other recent works include *Searching for Utopia: the History of an Idea* and *Marx and Marxism*. Claeys has (co-)edited *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature* and *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth Century Political Thought*. He received his PhD from the University of Cambridge in 1983 and has worked as a scholar in Canada, Germany, Australia, Japan, Vietnam, China, and the U.S. In 2015 Claeys was elected to the Academia Europaea, and in 2016 Chair of the Utopian Studies Society (Europe).

The workshop is supported by the Department of Ethics,
Theory and History of the Life Sciences.

Photo: European University St Petersburg

