

From crisis to resilience

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The organisers of this workshop tell us in their invitation and overview that they will let a comment from Mike Davis hold the place of a specific sense of 'crisis'. The comment runs as follows: 'Our analogue minds simply cannot solve all the differential equations generated by the incipient fragmentation of the Eurozone or a blown gasket in the Chinese growth engine. While the explosion on Wall Street in 2008 was more or less accurately foreseen by various experts, what is now rushing towards us is well beyond the prediction of any Cassandra or, for that matter, three Karl Marxes'. Yet whether this comment actually can or should be allowed to hold the place of a specific sense of crisis seems to me to be a rather crucial point, for it takes us to the heart of the problem of the category 'crisis': that what was once a category central to critical theory and radical politics has become a category central to political administration. Or, to put that another way: a once revolutionary category has become counter-revolutionary.

'Crisis' has been subsumed under 'emergency', 'emergency' subsumed under 'planning', and 'planning' subsumed under 'resilience'. And the logic of resilience, it turns out, is that 'what is now rushing towards us' can be managed through the '4Ps' of contemporary political discourse: it can be planned for, prepared for, prevented and pre-empted. *Pace* Davis, there are countless functionaries of state and capital predicting what might be rushing towards us, which *we* might wish to call crisis but which *they* now call emergency, and which they have measures in place to control. These measures are understood as 'resilience' and they take us to the heart of the problem of 'constitution': *the* constitution as a structure of power and *our* constitution as subject-citizens.