

# KOLLOQUIUM

Wintersemester 2023

**Power on the move:**

**looking at humanitarian logistics through a sociological lens**

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Social relations are logistical ones. Whether in the workplace, at home or in leisure spaces, we rely on, and are embedded in supply chains that organize global movements of people, resources, technologies, and ultimately, value. Logistics produces and orders social worth, 'differentiat[ing] groups' rights and rights to life on the basis of their relationship to systems of supply' (Cowen 2014: 5). Such ordering processes often concretize relations of power and reify colonial and racial hierarchies, but logistics-as-practice also challenges, produces and exposes new relations and dynamics that 'order' society (Bonacich et al. 2008; Khalili 2020). This presentation considers the curious case of 'humanitarian logistics', the culmination of relations and practices that constitute the global aid chain, in order to explore the latter claims and their implications. Drawing upon preliminary data with humanitarian logisticians located in Brindisi, this presentation promises to offer critical reflections about not only humanitarian practice, but social relations of power broadly construed that construct notions of 'place', mobility, and ultimately humanity in the contemporary world.

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