

**Documentation of the campaign of the Institute of Political Science of the University of Innsbruck
and the Austrian media against Claudia von Werlhof,
professor for political science and women's studies –
and the following international solidarity movement in her support**

Innsbruck, April 2010

Claudia von Werlhof

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED:

Its about "Mother Earth", our planet herself!

"Dear Claudia, I am sorry for your trouble. It is true that several countries now have the technology to cause earthquakes. There was also what looked like a plasma streak in the sky over Haiti before the earthquake. However, these may have been unrelated, and if they were related we cannot be sure which country caused the quake. I have written about this and other new technologies in my book: "Planet Earth: The Latest Weapon of War". It is available in all Universities in Canada and is used as a text book in some U.S. Universities....

Dr. Rosalie Bertell".

The natural scientist, environmentalist, author and Right Livelihood Award (alternative Nobel prize) winner Dr. Rosalie Bertell sent me this note when I asked her about new insights into the earthquake of Haiti. I stepped in contact with her because of her lifework about military research and military experiments especially in the USA and the Soviet Union/Russia. She is known as a critic of their results. She sent me her book which was published 10 years ago. The book is scarcely known outside Canada and even less in the USA and the rest of the world because right after its publication the publishing house closed down and she got ill for a longer period of time. I strongly believe that worldwide everybody should finally read this book. It tells the history of experimenting with the planet itself since the fifties of the last century. Since then the military invented and tested technologies and weapon systems outdoors without any precautions. Perversely enough these experiments were based on the use of energies and "ways of life", namely the ecosystem of the planet itself, thus starting to destroy it from the outside as well as the inside. Planet earth is already sick. Together with Dr. Bertell we have to ask ourselves for instance how far the so called climate change is influenced by these developments and tests. I, therefore, understand the "global warming" more precisely now as "GLOBAL WARNING"! The earthquake weapon represents only one example of the horrible arsenal of (also) non-nuclear technologies for mass extermination. There are several others which could be called weapons of natural disaster or "ecology"- or "energy"-weapons and they even surpass the B and C weapons regarding their mass impact. In other words: We are literally thrown into a "world war" with and at the same time against the planet and all its present and future life - inside and outside of it - and at the same time we are kept in complete ignorance of this fact. To put it clearly: They are about to murder the Great Mother, the earth herself.

I have realized that the campaign against me was actually not only directed against me personally. My interview in "Der Standard", Vienna, was only an occasion for this campaign which put myself in the centre and the problems of the department at which I am working in the background. I was surprised about its vehemence especially in the second part of the campaign when the agitators obviously and consciously operated with dangerous misrepresentations and directly „ad hominem“. They have instead opened my eyes for what was really going on: it is about "mother earth", our wonderful planet herself. This dimension was new to me. Like many others I used to think that it is all about life on earth but not about the earth as the planet herself. This has now radically changed.

We clearly need a planetary "movement for mother earth, our planet". We also need scientists of each discipline who finally have to take care of the many questions that have been avoided to be asked - whether they want it or not. Every person -men and women worldwide- do certainly not want that life AND the planet herself is put at risk.

The cause of the campaign against C. v. Werlhof:

Interview in “Der Standard”, Vienna, 13./14.2.2010 (paper edition)

Capitalism, a project of destruction

The era of the western economy is ending, says Claudia von Werlhof, a critic of patriarchy. She is demanding a new subsistence economy and a new ethics. Irene Brickner asked her.

Standard: Further growth is supposed to be the way out of the crisis. You, however, see different necessities, right?

Werlhof: Growth is the opposite of a real help. I see the ‘West end’, the end of western modernity and of its promises. They were lies.

Standard: In the 1970ies prosperity for everybody seemed to be possible, at least in the rich parts of the world. An illusion?

Werlhof: Yes, because the project of modernity – its mode of production, its technology, its politics – is a project of world-destruction: We have to ask what has happened insofar as even the climate as a planetary phenomenon is changing.

Standard: So what happened?

Werlhof: It started in the 17th and 18th centuries with the emergence of modern natural sciences. They promised a new, affluent world – and the democratic distribution of wealth. This has been and is propaganda and even trade unions and the Left do not consider the problem of how this wealth is created: Capitalism is a mode of destruction.

Standard: A mode of destruction that started with industry?

Werlhof: Mentally it started much earlier, namely with the emergence of patriarchy 5-7000 years ago. In those times the idea of a “creation by destruction” has been invented. In contrast to the real course of things, where always female beings are the origins of life men have since then defined themselves as the real creators of life and wealth. I call this the “alchemical principle”. Since the 18th and 19th centuries this principle appears as a new technology, as machinery. This presupposes the dismemberment of nature’s matter, taking its life away and composing its parts in new ways.

Standard: For today you are criticising this form of hostility towards life referring to the example of the General Agreement on Trade in Services, GATS. Why?

Werlhof: The GATS-Agreement foresees the privatization of water, for example. In this case many people are going to die of thirst. And the cycle of water on earth is going to be destroyed because one cannot transport water unlimitedly. This is one example.

Standard: Where are the alternatives to the global market?

Werlhof: They lie in subsistence production. Only subsistence production can substitute capitalist commodity production. The movement of the Zapatistas in Mexico, for instance, does not want to co-operate with the State, but tries to build the economy from below.

Standard: Could this function in a centralized Europe as well?

Werlhof: In Europe you have to look at history, first of all. In the time of the peasant wars, for instance, people tried to find an exit. But this was impeded by violence, forcing people finally into working houses and factories. Besides looking at history we have to recognize our relationship with nature, as we do not know much any more about natural cycles and rhythms. We have to start with studying pre-modern views in order to help a new ethics to emerge. So that it would not happen any more what has happened in Haiti.

Standard: The earthquake?

Werlhof: Yes, it could have been an artificially produced one.

Standard: How that?

Werlhof: Within the HAARP-project, a military research centre in Alaska, there have been produced machines that are able to create artificial earthquakes. They are used in the search for oil-reserves which are supposed to exist also between Haiti and Cuba. The earthquake in Haiti could have been created mechanically in order to allow the US-occupation of the country.

Standard: Do you really believe this? It sounds like a conspiracy theory.

Werlhof: I do not believe anything, but it is a fact that the technology for artificial earthquakes exists. On the other hand: Publicly there is no discussion of such things at all.

Standard: A blind spot?

Werlhof: Yes, and not only in this case. The economic crisis is also not taken as a reason for changing things as well.

Claudia von Werlhof

On the witch hunt against me

Since the middle of February there has been a constant sort of witch hunt of the Austrian newspapers against me. The campaign has been going on for about 5 weeks. Obviously there is somebody, a group or several persons/groups at the same time behind it who want to do the biggest possible harm to me as a woman and as a social scientist, an academic and a teacher.

It started with an interview for the well known newspaper “Der Standard” in Vienna, in which several more or less well known people were interviewed about the economic crisis. I was chosen for an interview too. It appeared under the title: “Capitalism, a project of destruction”. I explained our approach of a “Critical Theory of Patriarchy” in a few sentences, there was not much space, of course. In the end I pointed to the international debate about Haiti and the rumours that the earthquake might have been produced artificially. After that I was accused of saying things that are not scientific and cannot be true. This accusation was made publicly by the director of the Institute of Political Science where I have been working for 21 years. He said that I damaged the institute by pointing to the international debate about the possible artificiality of the earthquake in Haiti.

From then on, in the rather polemical “scienceblogs.de” in which he published his statement, there were hundreds of comments published, 900 within a few days. All were negative and extremely aggressive, shouting at me as a “conspiracy theorist”, mocking at me as a woman, as a social scientist, as a teacher etc. Tendency: she is mentally ill and should be removed from her position. The extreme right party in Vienna (BZÖ) even formally accused me of being mentally ill in front of the public prosecutor in Innsbruck and

demanding I be removed from the University.

Who knows who really wrote the blog comments? When my students started to put their comments in the blog, they were removed almost immediately. Other people sent me their positive comments that were never published.

Some of the comments also mentioned feminism, women's studies, eco-feminism and that I was doing away with them by proving that they are really completely useless, crazy and unscientific as I ventured into fields outside of my discipline. All natural scientists would say that there are no artificial earthquakes at all possible, and as I am not a natural scientist or geo-physicist, I could not have an idea at all of what I was talking about, much less about HAARP, the military research center in Alaska that is active in realizing the experiments in question. According to them this would not be true at all and ridiculous to even mention etc. I answered the attacks with an "Open Letter to Mr. K." (the first letter of the Name of the director of the Institute of Political Science), asking him to say how I could have damaged the institute by using my right to speak out freely.

In the meantime I have gotten a lot of information from all over the world about these experiments, and especially also from biologist, chemist and environmentalist Dr. Rosalie Bertell who got the Right Livelihood Award for her work in 1986 and who wrote: "Planet Earth. The Latest Weapon of War", the result of her lifelong research about the history of HAARP and related developments. In this book she states that artificial earth quakes are part of the new techniques of non-nuclear planetary mass destruction and a dangerous manipulation of the planet itself, as developed by the military. After I had asked her for more information about Haiti on the 22nd of March she wrote:

Dear Claudia,

I am sorry for your trouble. It is true that several countries now have the technology to cause earthquakes. There was also what looked like a plasma streak in the sky over Haiti before the earthquake. However, these may have been unrelated, and if they were related we cannot be sure which country caused the quake. I have written about this and other new technologies in my book: "Planet Earth: The Latest Weapon of War". It is available in all Universities in Canada and is used as a text book in some U.S. Universities. You might be able to get a copy in Europe. Otherwise I could send it to you ...

Dr. Rosalie Bertell

I had asked Rosalie Bertell because, in a second round which started shortly after our international conference "Ways to a New Civilization" with German speaking participants at the beginning of March, a new wave of "information" started about me and what I had presumably said: From one day to another all the newspapers in Austria said the same thing, namely that I was definitely accusing the US-Government and – Military for having really produced the earthquake in Haiti! This of course was a big and consciously produced lie. Even the newspaper "Der Standard" in which my interview had appeared said this without considering that this "news" contradicted the interview they themselves had printed. I informed the different media about the fact that this was wrong information. They simply went on doing it. No chance to change it. This lasted for about two weeks and produced an amount of about 20.000 comments in the internet worldwide!

It was a very dangerous situation, as this way I was "set free" vulnerable to any attack or threat. It felt like being beyond law, justice and the guarantee of personal security. It was like living in a totalitarian state, face to face with invisible powers that are beyond any control. And really, I was threatened in various and dangerous ways. I got ill for a while.

And again, a huge wave of horror comments about me were produced and repeated. Even a wild idea about an "eco-feminist theory about earthquakes" was invented, and I was supposed to have accused "the men of destroying the world".

Since then in my Institute I have been refusing to do administrative work as long as they maintain that I am damaging the Institute. Only 1 person of about 30 declared himself to be on my side. It feels as if fascism is already next door.

I turned to the president of the University of Innsbruck as he has to act to protect me publicly, and I turned to the chief editor of "Der Standard", a woman, who had been lying to me. I got no answer at all about the

background of this openly violent campaign.

Our group of PhD students has published a letter of support as I was practically denied the right to free speech and to publish the results of independent research and teaching. The students defended our new theoretical approach of the “Critical Theory of Patriarchy”.

Now we are going to ask the participants of our conference to do something, and there are two international Letters of Solidarity ready, signed by many intellectuals from around the whole world, one coming from Mexico – including even the signature of Immanuel Wallerstein from Yale University – the other one from the United States.

I had to think hard to understand what was going on and why. My impression is that there are specific people with specific interests around me, in this country and overseas trying to do harm to me so that nobody will listen to me any more. But since they were constructing and “inventing” me as a sort of monster-stereotype that in reality has nothing to do with me, I learned that – paradoxically – it is in fact not me who is important in this case. What was and is important is instead that they are trying to hide by the scandal around me what really is at stake: The attacks on Mother Earth and her use for the wars, the catastrophes and the politics of terror to come!

Claudia von Werlhof, Innsbruck 27.3.2010



UNIVERSIDAD DE LA TIERRA EN OAXACA, A. C.

Oaxaca, Oax. March 23, 2010

Rektor der Universität Innsbruck
Prof. Dr. Karlheinz Töchterle
Innrain 52
A 6020 Innsbruck / Austria

We have known for a long time the academic work of Claudia von Werlhof, professor in the Institute of Political Science in your university. Some of us have had the honor and the pleasure of knowing her personally. We had recognized in her a solid scholar, a brilliant public intellectual and a radical, innovative thinker. This has been explicitly recognized by some of the most important thinkers of the XX century, like Ivan Illich, who mentioned his conversations with Claudia as a source of inspiration for his research on gender. Claudia's ideas are discussed today all around the world, in the most diverse settings. Her brilliant and rigorous studies on Latin American campesinos are still a landmark in peasant studies. Claudia's contributions to our theoretical and historical knowledge in many areas have been explicitly recognized for a long time. Google reports almost a 100 000 quotes/citations...

The current campaign against Claudia, disqualifying her informed opinions and even her mental health or her capacity as a professor, are outrageous and preposterous. However, they should be taken seriously, as the expression of a current mood in certain circles of public opinion, mostly associated with neoliberalism and often conveying a kind of anti-intellectualism.

We want to explicitly side with Claudia and offer her all our support and solidarity.

Sincerely,

Gustavo **Esteva**, Chairman of the Board. With

Fatma **Alloo**, Tanzania Media Women's Association (TANZANIA)

Manolo **Callahan**, University of California (UNITED STATES)

Oliver **Fröhling**, Universidad de la Tierra en Oaxaca (MEXICO),

Arturo **Guerrero**, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social (MEXICO)
Peter **Horsley**, Massey University (NEW ZEALAND)
Pat **Lauderdale**, University of Arizona (UNITED STATES)
Sylvia **Marcos** (MEXICO),
Michal **Osterweil**, University of North Carolina (UNITED STATES)
Jean **Robert**, Universidad de Morelos (MEXICO),
Savysaachi, Jamilia Millia Islamia (Central University) (INDIA)
Derek **Shaw**, University of British Columbia (CANADA)
Aseem **Shrivastava**, Nordic College (NORWAY)
Monty **Neill**, National Center for Fair & Open Testing (UNITED STATES)
Harry **Cleaver**, University of Texas (UNITED STATES)
Raymundo Sánchez **Barraza**, Universidad de la Tierra en Chiapas (MEXICO)
George **Caffentzis**, University of Southern Maine at Portland, Maine (UNITED STATES)
Immanuel **Wallerstein**, Yale University (UNITED STATES)
Genevieve **Vaughan**, www.gift-economy.com. (UNITED STATES/ITALY)
Bernedette **Muthien**, „Engender“, 031-555 NPO, www.engender.org.za Cape Town (SOUTH AFRICA)
Danica Borkovich **Anderson**, Forensic Psychotherapist/CEO, The Kolo: Women’s Cross Cultural Collaboration, International USA Based NGO, www.kolocollaboration.org
Edward M. **Oberweiser** (USA)
Elaine **Charkowski** (USA)
Corinne **Kumar**, World Courts of Women, (INDIA / TUNESIA)

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March 23, 2010

Rektor der Universität Innsbruck
Prof. Dr. Karlheinz Töchterle
Innrain 52
A 6020 Innsbruck / Austria – Europe

Dear Rektor Töchterle,

We, Profs. George Caffentzis and Silvia Federici and many other concerned people listed below, are writing to you because we are deeply disturbed by the defamatory campaign that has been waged against our esteemed colleague, Prof. Dr. Claudia von Werlhof, ostensibly generated by remarks she made in the course of a published interview with a journalist of “Der Standard”. We are especially appalled by the threats that have been made to her academic position and to her personally. We have been also concerned by the manner in which her comments have been misrepresented in the media. It is difficult for us to understand how a statement she made concerning the status of public debate could be cast as a conspiratorial theory as it has been by the press.

Sadly enough, the response which Prof. Werlhof’s interview has received verifies the central point that she made in it, which has been lost in the verbal blustering her detractors have indulged in. That is, in the growing climate of political intolerance it is increasingly difficult to bring to the public’s attention any view not aligned with the dominant accounts.

As an illustration of her point, Prof. Werlhof noted in her interview that no consideration had been given in the media to the possibility that the Haitian earthquake may have been artificially produced. Such concern is not unjustified, considering that the existence of technologies capable of triggering earthquakes has been widely acknowledged by scientists, for many years now, at least in the United States. [See for example, James Glanz’s June 24, 2009 NY Times article entitled „Deep in Bedrock, Clean Energy and Quake Fears“ on the recognition of the connection between human activities and earthquakes, „Planet Earth: The Latest Weapon of War“ by Alternative Nobel Prize winner Rosalie Bertell which deals with the possible military uses of such technologies].

Like Prof. Werlhof, we are not interested in belaboring this point. Instead, our concern is that a public intellectual of the caliber of Professor Werlhof is being smeared both in the media and in her own institute for deploring the narrowness of publicly sanctioned debate. Such an attack, especially when coming from academic authorities, is not only an act of injustice. It is also an egregious violation of the principle of academic freedom that protects scholars’ search for truth.

As the Rector of Innsbruck University, we therefore appeal to you to defend Prof. von Werlhof’s right, as an academic and as a citizen, to bring to the public’s attention debates about hypotheses that diverge from the mainstream narrative without fear of reprisals and character assassination. Let us not forget that it is society that suffers when such a right is violated.

In pressing this demand, we also wish to remind you that Prof. von Werlhof is an internationally admired public intellectual who through her writings and lecturing has given a major contribution to feminist theory and to our understanding of the relation between women and the environment. Thus, in our eyes the reaction that has met her interview in “Der Standard”, is simply outrageous and damages the reputation of her detractors not Prof. Werlhof’s.

We look forward to your prompt action on this urgent matter concerning academic freedom.

Sincerely,

Prof. George **Caffentzis**, Department of Philosophy, University of Southern Maine, Portland, Maine 04104-9300, USA (caffentz@usm.maine.edu)

Prof. Emerita Silvia **Federici**, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY (Silvia.Federici@hofstra.edu)

Signatories

Christy **Amschler**, M.A.; Los Angeles, CA, USA

Danica Borkovich **Anderson**, Forensic Psychotherapist/CEO, The Kolo: Women’s Cross Cultural Collaboration, International USA Based NGO, www.kolocollaboration.org

Chhaya **Datar**, Professor of Women’s Studies at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India.

Massimo **De Angelis** (University of East London, UK)

Michel **Chossudovsky** (Centre for Research on Globalization, Canada)

Patrick **Gun Cuninghame** (Tenured Profesor, Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana, Mexico City, Mexico)

Professor Emeritus Roxanne **Dunbar-Ortiz** (California State University, USA)

Gustavo **Esteva** (Universidad de la Tierra de Oaxaca, Mexico)

Nick **Faraclas** (University of Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico)

Ferruccio **Gambino** (Department of Sociology, University of Padova, Italy)

D'vorah J. **Grenn**, Ph.D. Co-Director & Core Faculty Women's Spirituality MA Program
Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, Palo Alto, California

Andrej **Grubacic** (San Francisco Art Institute, USA)

Kay **Keys**, Ph.D., Austin, TX, USA

Prof. David **Laibman** (Brooklyn College and Graduate School of the City University of New York, USA)

Linda **Lancz** (USA)

Dr. Les **Levidow** (Senior Research Fellow, Open University, UK)

Prof. Peter **Linebaugh** (University of Toledo, USA)

Prof. Dr. Maria **Mies**, FHS Köln, Germany

Monty **Neill** (Director, Fairtest, USA)

Andrea **Nicki**, Department of Women's Studies, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC (CANADA)

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Louise M. **Paré**, Ph.D. Center for Women's Spirituality Education and Empowerment
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Lydia **Rule**, lydiarule@40aol.com (USA)

Prof. Kathy **Russell** (State University of New York at Cortland, USA)

Nawal **el Saadawi** (writer, Egypt)

Devi **Sachetto** (Department of Sociology, University of Padova, Italy)

Dr. Erella **Shadmi**, peace and feminist activist, Beit Berl College, Israel

Prof. Annette **Kuhn**, Historikerin, em. Univ. Bonn mit Schwerpunkt

Frauengeschichte, Vorsitzende des Haus der FrauenGeschichte e.V. und Initiatorin der
Annette-Kuhn-Stiftung, GERMANY

Dr. Vandana **Shiva**, Physikerin/Ökologin, New Delhi, INDIA

Response of the Rector of the University of Innsbruck

University of Innsbruck
The Rector

Dean Faculty of Political Science and Sociology
Univ.-Prof. Dr. Fritz Plasser

Director of the Institute of Political Science
Univ.-Prof. Dr. Ferdinand Karlhofer

Director of the Research Platform
Univ.-Prof. Dr. Brigitte Mazohl

Editor in Chief "Der Standard"
Dr. Alexandra Föderl-Schmid

14. April 2010

Dear Sir/Madam,

In the last weeks and months the political scientist Claudia von Werlhof caused a vehement discussion in different media (and the internet) by an interview in the daily "Der Standard" February 13th, 2010. Professor Werlhof takes a critical look at the phenomenon of capitalism and identifies destruction as its moving force. This approach refers, last but not least, to the Austrian economist and theorist Joseph Schumpeter, who postulated a "creative destruction", being the essence of capitalism. He thought of this term as a positive force which – to put it simply – leads to the questioning of the parameters of the underlying frame work, in order to get rid of outmoded ideas and thus to develop something new.

In contrast to Schumpeter my colleague Werlhof points out – to put it simply again – that this "destruction" is to be seen as counterproductive as it leads to a permanent aggravation of the framework-parameters. As proof of this potential of negative destruction she describes the HAARP – project which is being developed in the USA. Influencing the climate and causing earthquakes seem to be some of its possible outcomes.

In this respect Claudia von Werlhof was not correctly quoted from her interview, and the above mentioned discussion sparked as she was accused of having said as a matter of fact that the USA have artificially caused the devastating earthquake in Haiti for their own political and economical benefit. This is simply not true because C. von Werlhof only explained that there are technologies which could be able to influence nature accordingly.

There is an already ongoing international (scientific) discussion about the HAARP and similar projects and their possible consequences.

The most substantial point for me as a scientist and the rector of the University of Innsbruck is the following: Everybody is free to agree or disagree with the comments and estimates of colleague Claudia von Werlhof. As a matter of fact the freedom of speech and the freedom of science and research are essential for our society in Austria as well as in any other democratic country. This is explicitly guaranteed in the laws of the Staatsgrundgesetz (Art. 17 StGG) and in the Universitätsgesetz (§2 Abs.1, UG 2002).

It is obvious that such provocative theses cause an opposing reaction which was probably intended. They create a valuable discussion which seems to be contributory considering the development of our society. It is an interesting question to ask especially whether capitalism needs destruction in order to create something new. We have to ask ourselves how far it is allowed to go and if the resulting development is a positive or negative one. People will produce better and worse arguments, more realistic and more unrealistic ones. The judgement lies in the eye of the beholder. This leads us back to the freedom of speech.

Furthermore, it is completely out of place when colleague Werlhof is directly or indirectly called sick or crazy and when even her retirement is requested. These incidents went beyond what is permissible and are not tolerable for a scientist in a free society. Professor Werlhof has presented her approach for an important discussion. It is her right to do so, and it does not harm the University of Innsbruck. She has provoked a discussion and now has to defend her position. She has to do this only within a socially justifiable frame of argument and counterargument. Defamatory statements and personal attacks are unacceptable.

Yours sincerely,

o. Univ.- Prof. Dr. Karlheinz Töchterle

Rector

Final remark:

Until the beginning of May 2010 this letter has not yet been published by "Der Standard", Vienna.