



# HUMANITARIAN STUDIES IN TODAY'S WORLD

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**Thursday, January 18, 2024, 6:15 pm, Uni Mail, room M 2193**

**MODERATED BY MONIQUE J. BEERLI, SENIOR LECTURER, GLOBAL STUDIES INSTITUTE AT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA**

**RESPONDENT: DR VALÉRIE GORIN, HEAD OF LEARNING AT THE GENEVA CENTER OF  
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Humanitarian Studies is often considered a field that has a core interest in (international) humanitarian action. The question is whether this is still appropriate. As the world is in turmoil, International Humanitarian Law is increasingly questioned for its power to legitimize and enable humanitarian action. Discussions within the humanitarian domain increasingly recognize a plurality of humanitarianisms, and further focus away from international actors. What does this mean for humanitarian studies?

In this talk, Dorothea Hilhorst of the International Institute of Social Studies will speak about the nature of humanitarian studies today. She views humanitarian studies as “The study of societies and vulnerable communities experiencing humanitarian crisis originating from disaster, conflict, refugee situations, and/or political collapse. It studies the causes and impact of crisis; how people, communities and authorities respond to them, including efforts for prevention and preparedness; how humanitarian action and other external interventions are organized and affect the recovery from crises; and the institutional changes that crises and crisis response engender”. In this view, it will be increasingly important to rethink our epistemologies, ethics, and methodologies to seek more meaningful contributions to our studies from different actors and angles.



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