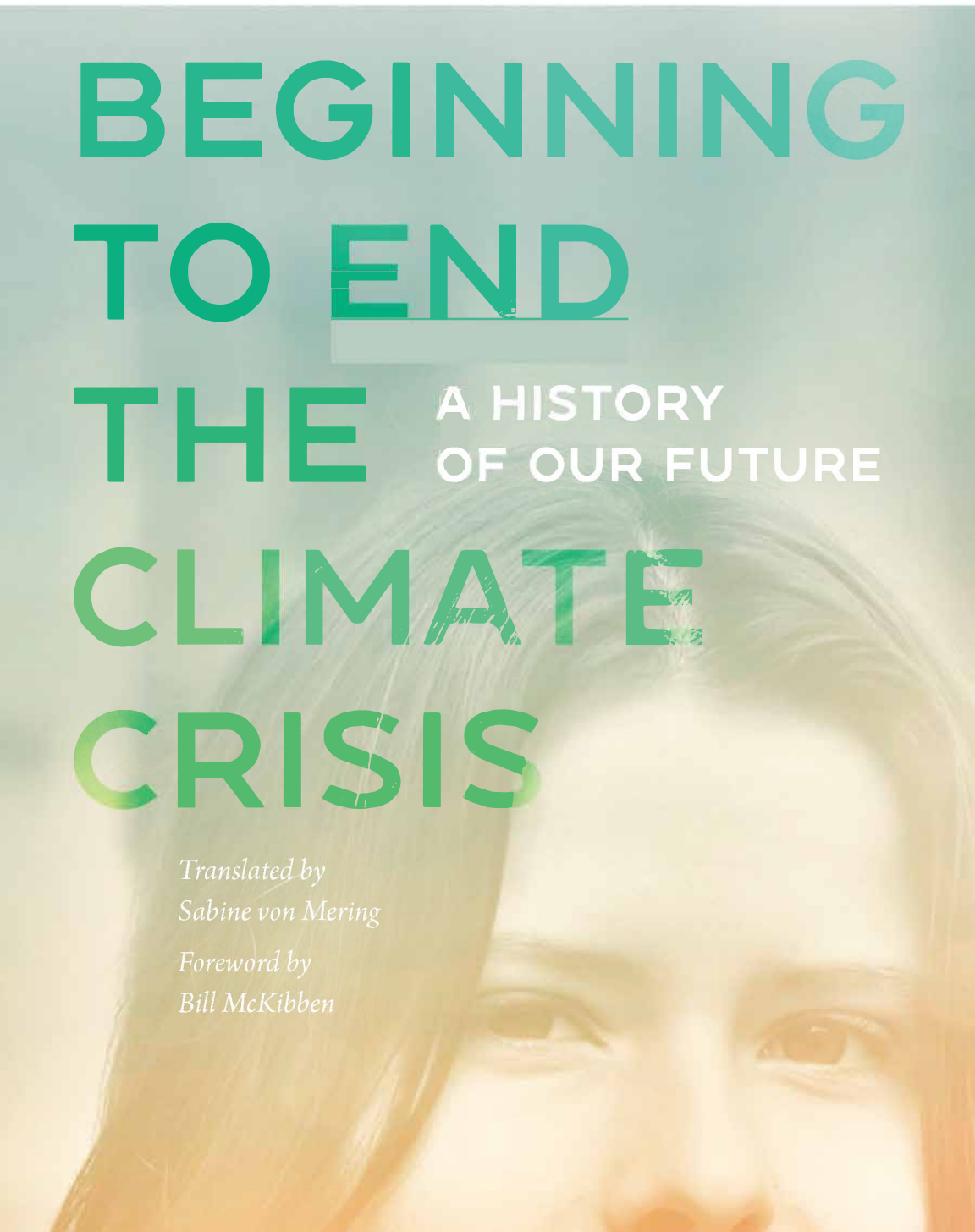


LUISA NEUBAUER &
ALEXANDER REPENNING

BEGINNING
TO END
THE A HISTORY
OF OUR FUTURE
CLIMATE
CRISIS

*Translated by
Sabine von Mering*

*Foreword by
Bill McKibben*



© 2019 J. G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, Stuttgart
First edition published 2019 by J. G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung
as *Vom Ende der Klimakrise: Eine Geschichte unserer Zukunft*
Brandeis University Press edition 2023
All rights reserved
Manufactured in the United States of America
Designed and composed in Arno Pro and
Brandon Grotesque by Mindy Basinger Hill

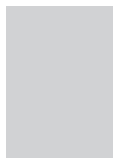
For permission to reproduce any of the material in this book,
contact Brandeis University Press, 415 South Street, Waltham MA 02453,
or visit brandeisuniversitypress.com

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA

Names: Neubauer, Luisa-Marie, 1996– author. | Repenning, Alexander,
1989– author. | Von Mering, Sabine, translator.
Title: Beginning to end the climate crisis : a history of our future / Luisa
Neubauer and Alexander Repenning ; translated by Sabine von Mering.
Other titles: Vom Ende der Klimakrise : eine Geschichte unserer Zukunft.
English
Description: Brandeis University Press Edition. | Waltham, Massachusetts:
Brandeis University Press, [2023] | Translation of: Vom Ende der
Klimakrise : eine Geschichte unserer Zukunft, 2019. Includes biblio-
graphical references. | Summary: “A call to action for young people
to respond to the climate crisis from two of the most prominent and
successful young German climate activists”— Provided by publisher.
Identifiers: LCCN 2022045507 | ISBN 9781684581474 (Paper) |
ISBN 9781684581481 (e-book)
Subjects: LCSH: Environmentalism. | Global warming.
Classification: LCC GE195.N47513 2023 | DDC 333.72—dc23/eng20221219

5 4 3 2 1

COVER IMAGES *front* Luisa Neubauer, 2021, photo by Oğuz Yılmaz
back photograph of Alexander Repenning



This book was printed by Sheridan Books
using Natures Book Recycled text stock with
30% post-consumer waste (PCW) content.

CONTENTS

Foreword by Bill McKibben *xi*
Preface to the English Edition *xiii*
Translator's Note *xvii*

INTRODUCTION 1

Alarmism? Hamburg 2050 6
What Does the Science Say? 7
Let's Stop Making the Same Mistakes Over and Over Again 8
We Are Possibilists 8
An Invitation 9

1 OUR FUTURE IS A DYSTOPIA 10

The Future Is No Longer a Promise 13
Our Lives in a Multi-Optional World 14
We Are Part of the Problem 15
Nauru: The Canary in the Coal Mine 17

2 BECAUSE YOU ARE STEALING OUR FUTURE 22

A Scientifically Founded Fear of the Future 24
This Crisis Could Have Been Prevented 26
Not a Brave New World as We Like It 30
A Global Question and a Globalized Generation 31
Humanity Has a Deadline 32
Who Is Stealing Our Future? 33
The First Steps of a Marathon 37

- 3 WE LACK A UTOPIA 40**
The End of History? 42
No Planet B 43
Lack of Imagination 46
- 4 THE CLIMATE CRISIS IS NOT AN INDIVIDUAL CRISIS 48**
The Luxury of Riding a Bicycle 53
Green Guilt 54
Shifting Baselines 55
- 5 THE CLIMATE CRISIS IS A CRISIS OF RESPONSIBILITY 57**
Demanding Responsibility for the Future 61
The Parable of Mourning the Future 63
Institutionalizing Responsibility for the Future 64
- 6 THE CLIMATE CRISIS IS A CRISIS OF COMMUNICATION 66**
This Is Your Crisis, Too 67
A Problem of Vividness? 69
Frames Instead of Facts 70
Calculated Uncertainty 72
Beyond Our Imagination 75
The Climate of the Media 77
How Do We Get Out of It? 80
- 7 THE CLIMATE CRISIS IS A CRISIS OF FOSSIL CAPITALISM 81**
The Fateful Belief in the Market 83
A Price Tag on Nature is Supposed to Save Us. Seriously? 87
The First Time as Tragedy, the Second Time as Farce 90

8 THE CLIMATE CRISIS IS A CRISIS OF PROSPERITY 93

- But We Are Doing So Well, Aren't We? 94
- We Are Living at the Expense of Others 97
- Voluntary Self-Deprivileging 99
- Doughnut for Future 102
- The "Good Life" as a Constitutional Goal? 103
- For a Green New Deal 105

9 THE CLIMATE CRISIS IS A CRISIS OF JUSTICE 107

- The Price of Fossil Prosperity 109
- Intergenerational Justice 111
- Carbon Justice 112
- A Sexist Crisis 115
- Who Is Being Held Accountable? 117
- The New Social Question? 118

10 EDUCATE YOURSELVES! 121

- The Gap Between Knowledge, Perception, and Action 122
 - 1. Educate Yourself about How to Educate Others 124
 - 2. Tell the Truth, the Whole Truth 125
 - 3. Educate (Yourself) about the Beginning of the End 126
 - 4. Spread the Word 128
 - 5. Educate Yourself about Each Other 129

11 START DREAMING! 130

- 1. Moral Stretching Exercises 135
- 2. Looking Back from the Dystopian Future 136
- 3. Imagine! 140
- 4. Think Utopian 142

12 GET ORGANIZED! 145

Sorry, I Don't Have Time to Protest 148

Why Organize? 151

3.5 Percent 152

1. Discover the Why 152

2. Open Your Eyes 153

3. Team Up and Look Out for Each Other 155

4. Copy from Each Other 155

5. Come to Stay 159

6. Make Demands of Those around You 160

Epilogue 162

Acknowledgments 165

Notes 167

ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND TRANSLATOR

LUIA NEUBAUER, born in Hamburg in 1996, is among the most prominent representatives of the German climate activist movement. In 2018 she met the Swedish student Greta Thunberg at the UN Climate Change Conference and then co-founded Fridays For Future with other activists in Germany. Since then, Luisa has mobilized hundreds of thousands of people for numerous demonstrations, met various heads of state and government, and participated in the world climate conference in Madrid and Glasgow and the world economic forum in Davos. Luisa completed a bachelor's degree in geography in 2019 and is currently completing a master's in resource analysis and management at the Georg-August University in Göttingen. In July 2021 she published the book *Noch haben wir die Wahl* [We Still Have a Choice] together with journalist Bernd Ulrich of the German weekly *Die Zeit*. Her most recent book is *Gegen die Ohnmacht: Meine Großmutter, die Politik und ich* [Against Powerlessness: My Grandmother, Politics and Me], co-authored with her grandmother Dagmar Reemtsma. She is the host of the Spotify Original podcast "1.5 Grad" (1.5 degrees), and she lives in Berlin.

ALEXANDER REPENNING, born in Hamburg in 1989, is a comprehensivist, facilitator, and writer engaged for climate justice since 2015. With a bachelor's degree in social sciences from the Humboldt-University of Berlin and a master's in economics at the Cusanus Hochschule für Gesellschaftsgestaltung (Cusanus University for Shaping Society), he has been active in pushing political participation and global learning and has written about the climate crisis, postcolonial perspectives on volunteering for development, concrete utopias, and the student movement in Chile. He has published book chapters, articles, blog posts and other writings for *attac* and the blog *Postwachstum* [Degrowth]. He is currently working as education manager at Right Livelihood, the so-called Alternative Nobel Prize, connecting activism and academia and creating learning formats for system change. He lives in Annecy, France.

SABINE VON MERING, PhD (translator), is professor of German and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and also director of the Center for German and European Studies at Brandeis University. She is a core member of the Environmental Studies Program at Brandeis and a long-time climate activist with 350Mass and NoCoalNoGas.