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ASCA Program 2018-2019
Dear ASCA members, during the summer we will prepare the program for the next academic year. If you are planning to organize a seminar, reading group, workshop, conference or lecture series, please send a short announcement to Eloe at asca-fgw@uva.nl.

Dissertation Defence Lisanne Snelders
Hoe Nederland Indië leest. Hella S. Haasse, Tjalie Robinson, Pramoedya Ananta Toer en de politiek van de herinnering. (How the Netherlands Read the Indies. Hella S. Haasse, Tjalie Robinson, Pramoedya Ananta Toer and the Politics of Memory)
Supervisors: Thomas Vaessens, Yra van Dijk and Paul Bijl. 6 July 2018, Aula, 13.00 hrs.
The former Dutch colony in Indonesia (the Dutch East Indies) is continuously being brought back to life in Dutch cultural memory. This project examines the politics of this multifaceted memory in literary culture, in which affects such as nostalgia exist alongside guilt, anger and criticism. Which stories are read over and over again, and which are marginalized? How are memories employed to construct identities? Who appropriates literature and which different meanings are assigned to texts?
The central thesis is that the memory of the Dutch East Indies is compartmentalized, which means that various perspectives on colonial history are scarcely understood as an integrated whole but are rather placed into separate compartments. As a result, white Dutch perspectives, Dutch perspectives of colour (or Indo-European perspective) and Indonesian perspectives on colonial history are considered to be part of Dutch cultural memory to different extents. The project analyses this compartmentalization in several case studies of the reception and appropriation of the authors Hella S. Haasse (1918-2011), Tjalie Robinson (1911-1974) and Pramoedya Ananta Toer (1925-2006).

3 PhD Position Rural Imaginations
ASCA offers three PhD positions as part of the ERC Consolidator project Imagining the Rural in a Globalizing World/RURALIMAGINATIONS, led by Prof. Esther Peeren.
With globalization primarily considered an urban phenomenon, its impact on rural areas tends to be neglected. Tackling this blind spot is urgent as rural-urban divides persist and rural communities, notably in the 2016 Brexit vote and US election, claim their concerns about globalization’s effects are being ignored. RURALIMAGINATIONS focuses on the crucial role played by cultural imaginations in determining what aspects of contemporary rural life do and do not become visible nationally and globally, which, in turn, affects how the rural can be mobilized politically. Using a distinctive humanities approach, it examines prominent cultural imaginations of the rural in film, television and literature in the UK, US, Netherlands, China and South Africa, asking: 1) to what extent do these imaginations render globalization’s effects on the rural (in)visible? 2) what role do traditional rural genres and the feelings or desires they attach to the rural play in this making (invisible)? 3) how can new aesthetic repertoires highlighting the rural as a site of globalization and addressing rural-urban divides and inequalities be developed? The five subprojects conduct, in their national contexts, a narrative, visual and discursive analysis of post-2000 rural imaginations, guided by an innovative theoretical framework combining three concepts: the chronotope reveals what the imagined rural time-space renders visible and how it relates to urban and global time-space; spectrality gives access to what rural imaginations render invisible and to their haunting by traditional genres; and affect exposes how these imaginations attach feelings and desires to the rural, impacting its evaluation and political mobilization. The three PhD positions focus on imagining the rural in contemporary Dutch culture, British culture and American culture. Read more on: http://asca.uva.nl/phd/how-to-apply/3-phds-rural-imaginations/phd-rural-imaginations.html

2018 ASCA Awards
The ASCA Awards Committee – Boris Noordenbos, Nadia de Vries and Esther Weltevrede – awarded the 2018 ASCA Awards to Simon Ferdinand (dissertation), Daan Wesselman (article) and Leonie Schmidt (book).
**ASCA Dissertation Award 2018: Simon Ferdinand**
The 2018 ASCA Dissertation Award goes to **Simon Ferdinand**’s PhD dissertation with the catchy title ‘I Map Therefore I Am Modern: Cartography and global modernity in the visual arts’, supervised by Jeroen de Kloet and Esther Peeren.

Simon’s thesis contributes to the field ‘map art’ by studying how visual artists have used mapping for their formal and thematic substance. By recognising how mapmaking has been tied up historically with institutions and processes of global modernity, the thesis presents map art as a site to explore themes such as utopian urbanism, state formation, uneven development, positivist rhetorics of science and specialism and the calculability of society and space.

Through an analysis of works by six artists, the study makes two main arguments. The first is about how map art inscribes and challenges founding figures and narratives of rupture through which global modernity is typically imagined. The thesis develops an account of the modern ontology underlying cartography: the “ontology of calculability”, which renders the world as a measurable, malleable and as a uniformly extended objective space.

From this ontology, the study identifies map art’s significance in relation to broader shifts in contemporary mapping. The thesis makes a significant contribution by departing from existing accounts that claim that the value of ‘digital mapping’ mainly rests less in how it “takes the map back” from institutional control. This thesis argues that, despite prevailing ideas of discontinuity, digital mapping largely reproduces the modern ontology of calculability. The second main argument, therefore, is that map art’s most significant value instead rests in how it can imagine alternative ontologies of mapping.

On the behalf of the committee, I would like to congratulate Simon Ferdinand on a profound contribution by departing from existing accounts that acknowledge that the author produced this remarkable work.

**ASCA Book Award 2018: Leonie Schmidt**
The 2018 ASCA book award is given to **Leonie Schmidt**’s monograph *Islamic Modernities in South East Asia: Exploring Indonesian Popular and Visual Culture*. Schmidt’s monograph investigates conceptions of modernity and Islam in popular culture from Indonesia, a country that is simultaneously Islamising and modernizing. Schmidt’s case studies are impressively diverse: they range from Islamic-themed television programs and Islamic rock music to religious self-help books and restyled shopping malls during the Ramadan period.

By no means does Schmidt question the compatibility of modernity and religiosity (Islam is modern, and in many of her case studies Islam is cool, too). Schmidt’s analyses show how different orientations of Islam and multiple styles of modernity struggle for hegemony or come to cohere in, sometimes unexpected, alliances (the phenomenon of “heavy metal clerics” is a case in point). Central in these pop-cultural expressions is the question what it means to be modern as a Muslim.

Schmidt’s study combines a keen eye for detail (fascinating, for instance, are her analyses of Arabic-themed motifs in the decorations of shops during Ramadan) with a carefully argued, and theoretically sophisticated, acknowledgement of the diversified forms that both modernity and Islam may take.

The relevance of this approach extends far beyond the specificity of the cases. Think, for instance, of the recently published report by The Netherlands Institute for Social Research, that concludes that Dutch Muslims are becoming “more religious.” Looming large over interpretations of this news (in right-wing politics and media) are notions about the supposedly anti-modern and anti-democratic threats posed by religion. In contexts like this, Schmidt’s exploration of
heterogeneous Islamic modernities adds a much-needed perspective.

**DEMOCRACY UNDER SIEGE**

*Digital Espionage and Civil Society Resistance*

4-5 July

The DATACTIVE project (ASCA) invites you to hear from leading experts on questions of digital espionage, cybersecurity and the protection of human rights in new technological environments. This public event at Spui25 aims to provide a global view of digital threats to civil society and discuss what can be done to fight back. It will be followed by a one-day workshop on 5 July featuring Evelyn Ruppert (Goldsmith), Chris Csíkszentmihályi (MIT & MITI Madeira), Anita Say Chan (University of Illinois) and the three mentioned below.

The most recent US elections, during which hackers exposed political parties’ internal communications, revealed the devastating power of digital espionage. But election meddling is only one aspect of this growing phenomenon. From Mexico to Egypt and Vietnam, human rights organizations, journalists, activists and opposition groups have been targeted by digital attacks. How can civil society defend itself against such threats?

Ron Deibert (University of Toronto) will present the work of the Citizen Lab, which has pioneered investigation into information controls, covert surveillance and targeted digital espionage of civil society worldwide. He will be in conversation with Seda Gürses (KU Leuven) and Nishant Shah (ArtEZ University of the Arts/Leuphana University).

**About the speakers:**

Ron Deibert is Professor of Political Science and Director of the Citizen Lab at the Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto. The Citizen Lab undertakes interdisciplinary research at the intersection of global security, ICTs, and human rights. Deibert is the author of *Black Code: Surveillance, Privacy, and the Dark Side of the Internet* (Random House: 2013), as well as numerous books, chapters, articles, and reports on Internet censorship, surveillance, and cybersecurity. He is a former founder and principal investigator of the OpenNet Initiative (2003-2014) and a founder of Psiphon, a world leader in providing open access to the Internet.

Seda Gürses is an FWO post-doctoral fellow at COSIC/ESAT in the Department of Electrical Engineering at KU Leuven, Belgium. She works at the intersection of computer science, engineering and privacy activism, with a focus on privacy enhancing technologies. She studies conceptions of privacy and surveillance in online social networks, requirements engineering, software engineering and algorithmic discrimination and looks into tackling some of the shortcomings of the counter-surveillance movements in the US and EU.

Nishant Shah is the Dean of Graduate School at ArtEZ University of the Arts, The Netherlands; Professor of Culture and Aesthetics of Digital Media at Leuphana University, Germany, and the co-founder of the Centre for Internet & Society, India. His work is informed by critical theory, political activism, and equality politics. He identifies as an accidental academic, radical humanist, and an unapologetic feminist, with particular interests in questions of life, love, and language. His current preoccupations are around digital learning and pedagogy, ethics and artificial intelligence, and being human in the face of seductive cyborgification.

**Registration:**

You can sign up for this program for free. If you subscribe for the program, we count on your presence. If you are unable to attend, please let us know via spui25@uva.nl.

**ReFOCUS: THE FILMS OF RACHID BOUCHAREB**

*Call for Contributions*

Rachid Bouchareb was born in Paris in 1953 to Algerian parents and became one of France’s first French filmmakers of North African descent. While his career now spans over thirty years and his diverse films have garnered both mainstream and critical success, including three Oscar nominations, there exists no book-length study (in French or English) on Bouchareb’s body of work. The director’s films are remarkably varied in their themes, formal elements, and narrative settings, from Senegal, England, Vietnam, and Algeria, to France, Belgium, Turkey, and the United States. While diverse in many ways, Bouchareb’s films are also linked by certain key concerns: the mixing of cultures, engagement with contemporary political issues and debates, immigration, and identity, among others. The director achieved national and international recognition for *Indigènes/Days of Glory* (2006) and *Hors-la-loi/Outside the Law* (2010), which both examine France’s colonial ties to North Africa, yet Bouchareb’s cinematic corpus extends well beyond this framework, and the full range of it has not been considered at length. In addition, Bouchareb’s work as a producer is an important yet often overlooked part of his career that merits critical attention.

We invite abstracts (~300 words) for essays on the work and career of Rachid Bouchareb to be published as part of an edited volume in the Edinburgh University Press ReFocus series (series editors are Robert Singer, Ph.D. and Gary D. Rhodes, Ph.D.). The volume seeks to highlight connections between Bouchareb’s films, with a special emphasis on his lesser-known and understudied films (such as his shorts and made-for-television films), to explore key influences on his output, consider theoretical approaches to his work, and shed new light on well-known films like *Indigènes* and *Hors-la-loi*. 
Topics may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Cinematic aesthetics and influences, including genres (road movies, film noir, spaghetti westerns, war films, gangster movies) and the work of other directors (such as Martin Scorsese and Sergio Leone);
- Interest in the United States: American landscapes, spaces, and cultures; American cinema;
- Mapping Bouchareb: theoretical approaches and critical frameworks;
- Transcultural/cross-cultural elements (American/African American cultures, others);
- Women and gender dynamics and/or female centred films;
- Political engagement (in his films and with regard to his career more broadly);
- Use of space(s): cities/urban spaces, francophone and other spaces;
- Water in Bouchareb’s work;
- Use of the same actors/actresses in different films; relationship with his actors (such as Jamel Debbouze, Sami Bouajila, Roschdy Zem); collaborations with co-writers and coproducers (Jean Bréhat);
- Work as a producer (feature films, téléfilms);
- Projects outside of feature films and téléfilms, such as his collaborations with historian Pascal Blanchard (Frères d’armes – 50 short films made to be diffused on television);
- Your Suggested Topic/Area of Interest;
- Essays that focus on films other than Indigènes and Hors-la-loi are particularly welcome.

Essays included in this refereed volume will be approximately 7,000 words referenced in Chicago style. The deadline for abstracts (~300 words) is 1 September. Please send abstracts and a short bio as a single attachment to both volume editors, Leslie Kealhofer-Kemp and Michael Gott: lkealhofer@uri.edu and gottml@ucmail.uc.edu. The essays would be due by 1 May 2019.

**“JEAN D’ALEMBERT” RESEARCH CHAIR**

In partnership with Université Paris-Saclay, the Paris Institute for Advanced Study is offering two 6-month chairs for high level international researchers in the humanities and social sciences (HSS): one during the academic year 2018-2019, and one during the academic year 2019-2020.

The Paris-Saclay – Paris IAS “Jean d’Alembert” Research Chair gives a researcher the possibility to work on a project in the following fields: “Markets, businesses, work and innovation”, “Heritage, culture and knowledge”, or “Sciences and society”. He or she will benefit from the work conditions and the scientific environment of the Paris IAS and will collaborate chiefly with laboratories of the Université Paris-Saclay.

Deadline for applications: Friday, 31 August 2018, 15:00 hrs. CET (Paris, France time).

Applicants may request a 6-month residency starting - either 1 January 2019 - or between 1 September 2019 and 1 January 2020.


**SYMPOSIUM FOR ODD RESEARCH**

The Centre for Aliiative Research (CenAR) cordially invites you to our 2nd annual Symposium for Odd Research. Friday, 2 November and Saturday, 3 November 2018; Prague, Czech Republic.

Abstract deadline: 1 August 2018 Registration fee: €25. CenAR, founded in 2009, is an independent, informal research centre with a focus on the indefinable and the unpredictable.

The Symposium for Odd Research is a yearly CenAR event devoted to instances of what we call “odd research”. The term is a wide definition that includes many things from memory studies to ghosts to live performance. The members of our network get together to share and discuss such research or artistic projects in unusual settings. You can join our network by taking part in a CenAR event, such as this one.

This year, Odd Research guests have an opportunity to join us on Friday, 2 November for an evening stroll through the Vyšehrad cemetery – one of the oldest cemeteries in Europe – to take part in the Czech celebration of All Souls’ Day.

To apply, please send a presentation abstract (max 500 words) and a CV (along with any questions) to cenarinfo@gmail.com.

Submission deadline is 1 August 2018.

We hope to see you there! www.aliatology.com.