

**Nieuwsbrief 233**  
**September 2020**

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YouTube and practice micro-celebrity. The second type, the stories of *tagged bodies*, are stories about people who suffer from disenfranchised conditions and use Instagram to share (and tag) their personal experiences. The goals of this public storytelling are to fight stigmas and create communities. The last type is the stories of *ranked bodies*. These are the stories of people in financial distress who use crowdfunding sites such as GoFundMe to raise funds to pay for medical treatment. Overall, the dissertation argues that social media visibility and the socio-technical conditions of online popularity, tagging, and being ranked enhance but also diminish the political potential of illness storytelling.

**ASCA SUMMIT POSTPONED**

The annual ASCA Summit was initially scheduled for Friday, 25 September, but due to the COVID-19 situation, it has been postponed to Tuesday, 24 November in the hope that by then a meeting in person (or at least partially) will be possible. The Summit will consist of two or more panels that highlight an important or emerging theme in ASCA research (e.g. environmental humanities, decoloniality, critical animal studies, platformization, privacy, art & activism) or discuss aspects of doing research (e.g. research in pandemic times, diversity, valorization, research funding). We invite ASCA members to propose a panel about a theme/aspect you would like to present to and explore further with our community. The proposal may be fully worked out, with a set of speakers (from within ASCA), but may also be just an idea that we can then help you develop. Please send your proposals to [asca-fgw@uva.nl](mailto:asca-fgw@uva.nl) by 15 September 2020.

**ASCA PROGRAM 2020-21**

The ASCA program for the academic year has been updated on the website. Below are some highlights. In addition to these the Trans-Asia Cultural Studies Group; the Marxist Reading Group; the Neuro-aesthetics and Neuro-cultures Reading Group; and the Radical Right Reading Group will start soon. Contact the organizers if you want to be on their mailing list.

**ASCA THEORY SEMINAR: URGENT MATTERS**

*First session 1 October 2020, 16.00-18.00 hrs. | 5 November 2020, 17 December 2020, 11 February 2021, 8 April 2021, 27 May 2021*

What are the urgent matters of our time and how can we address them as cultural analysts? This is the

**DISSERTATION DEFENCE ROWAN PARRY**

***Parrhesia in the Age of the Ultra-Unreal: Independent Non-Fiction Filmmaking in 21st Century China***

Supervisors: Jeroen de Kloet and Esther Peeren, Agnietenkapel, 2 September 2020, 13.00 hrs.

This study asks how independent Chinese cinema speaks truth to power (or, in Michel Foucault's terms, engages in parrhesia) in contemporary China. Through four case studies, centered on the discourses used by independent Chinese filmmakers, the content of environmentally themed docu-fiction films, underground screenings in Beijing, and the dissemination of independent Chinese cinema at international film festivals, this study shows how independent Chinese cinema strategically engages with the complexities of contemporary China to carve out alternative spaces where official discourses are questioned and non-mainstream realities are represented.

**DISSERTATION DEFENCE: NATALIA SÁNCHEZ**

**QUERUBÍN**

***Illness Online. Popular, Tagged and Ranked Bodies***

Supervisors: Richard Rogers and Ellen Rutten. Aula, 16 September 2020, 14.00 hrs.

In my dissertation, I employ digital methods to examine how people use social media to speak about their illnesses, the types of stories they tell, and what telling these stories affords them. The results are three types of social media illness stories. The first type, the stories of *popular bodies*, are the stories of patients who vlog on

question that will be central to this year's ASCA Theory Seminar. Starting with the Covid-19 pandemic, which is not only a pressing social, political and cultural matter on a global scale, but has also caused drastic changes in how we do research, we will come together (online and hopefully at some point in person again) to think through the different issues that are converging with particular urgency in the present, as well as activist and artistic responses to these issues, through the lens of a series of theoretical paradigms, from decoloniality and critical race theory to intersectionality, the Chthulucene and new materialism. These paradigms are not necessarily new, but seem promising in setting out to address urgent matters not with haste, cynicism or nostalgia, but with a patient diligence or what Donna Haraway calls a willingness to "stay with the trouble." As she puts it, "staying with the trouble requires learning to be truly present, not as a vanishing pivot between awful or edenic pasts and apocalyptic or salvific futures, but as mortal critters entwined in a myriad unfinished configurations of places, times, matters, meanings" (*Staying with the Trouble*, p. 1). In addition, in their shared commitment to interdisciplinarity, these paradigms challenge the way in which, according to Daniel Fischlin, Ajay Heble and George Lipsitz in their 2013 book *The Fierce Urgency of Now*, "the scholarly categories favored by disciplinary knowledge teach us that there is a time and a place for everything – that people [and other lifeforms and materialities] need to be on time and stay in their place."

#### **Session 1: COVID-19**

selections from Los Angeles Review of Books, Quarantine Files (zie: <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/quarantine-files-thinkers-self-isolation/>) en Critical Inquiry, Posts from the Pandemic (zie: [https://criticalinquiry.uchicago.edu/posts\\_from\\_the\\_pandemic/](https://criticalinquiry.uchicago.edu/posts_from_the_pandemic/))

#### **Session 2: Decoloniality**

Walter Dignolo, "Coloniality: The Darker Side of Modernity"

Sylvia Wynter, "The Ceremony Found"

#### **Session 3: Critical Race Theory**

Gloria Wekker, *White Innocence* (selection)

Saidiya Hartman, *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments* (selection)

#### **Session 4: Queerness/Intersectionality**

Kara Keeling, *Queer Times, Black Futures* (selection)

Cho, Crenshaw and McCall, "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies"

#### **Session 5: Environmental Humanities/Chthulucene**

Jennifer Wenzel, *The Disposition of Nature: Environmental Crisis and World Literature* (selection)

Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble* (selection)

#### **Session 6: New Materialism**

Anna Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World* (selection)

Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway* (selection)

The aim of the ASCA Theory Seminar is twofold:

First, we propose to explore broad theoretical and methodological paradigms, and discuss influential texts in relation to ASCA PhD projects. Participants of the Theory Seminar will become acquainted with current practices in cultural analysis and learn how to integrate them in their own work.

The second important aim of the Theory Seminar is community building. The seminar aims to bring together PhD candidates from the diverse disciplines within ASCA to learn about each other's research projects, struggles and joys, and to make new friends. To serve this latter purpose, each session will end in a café (now online) with (bring your own) drinks.

The ASCA Theory is a collective initiative of the PhD candidates and the ASCA directors. The ASCA directors, Esther Peeren and Jaap Kooijman, will be involved as 'guides', formulating a theme and selecting some of the readings. The sessions will be prepared and chaired by a team of (two to four) PhD candidates from different disciplines. They are expected to propose an additional reading and to show how the particular theoretical paradigm under discussion is of use to them in their project.

We want to create a regular group for all six sessions, so if you register you are making a commitment to participate in all the sessions. We recommend that all PhD candidates in their first and second year follow the ASCA Theory Seminar integrally. PhD candidates who are in their third year or further along are very welcome to join, too, as are ASCA staff members.

Please register for the ASCA Theory Seminar by sending an e-mail to Eloë ([asca-fgw@uva.nl](mailto:asca-fgw@uva.nl)) with a short summary of your project (no more than 100 words) and a first and second preference for the session you would like to be part of preparing/chaired before 15 September 2020.

#### **ASCA CRITICAL RACE THEORY SEMINAR**

Seminar organized and hosted by Praveen Sewgobind. To register, please send a message to [asca-fgw@uva.nl](mailto:asca-fgw@uva.nl). First session on Tuesday, 8 September 2020, 14:00-17:00 hrs. - Race, "race," and ethnicity. Following sessions on 22 September, 6 October, 20 October, 3 November, 17 November, 1 December, 15 December.

Hardly any topic conjures up more tension and discomfort than the combination of race/racism. The ASCA Seminar Series "Critical Race Theory" (CRT) is designed to offer an overview of this relatively new and burgeoning field.

Hardly any topic conjures up more tension and discomfort than the combination of race/racism. The very pairing of these two concepts is often considered a problematic move, although the latter obviously is derived from the former. Critical theoretical approaches to race seek to address the entanglement of race with lived social realities in which injustices and inequalities emanating from racial formations are profoundly consequential.

CRT is designed to offer an overview of this relatively new and burgeoning field, which emerged and developed in the United States at the end of the 20th Century. The seminar will investigate methodological and theoretical modes of evaluating race as a social construct. Moving beyond the American framework, many critical race theorists have been focusing on other parts of the world while integrating novel transversal configurations. In recent years these efforts by activists and academics have broadened and enriched this profoundly interdisciplinary field of study.

Often described as a movement rather than a scientific discipline, CRT asks us not only to critically address issues of racial injustice and racial inequalities, it importantly re-centres the focus on the immanence of power and privilege in social contexts. CRT touches upon and questions deeply ingrained ideological structures that inform our lives, such as meritocracy, individualism and universalism. Moreover, CRT urges us to reconsider the ways in which epistemology, ontology and colonialism are framed, as well as providing us with tools to assess diversity, identity, and intersectional politics.

The seminar series is born out of and grounded in a dedicated anti-racist tradition, a practice that will be nurtured as the host is experientially aware of the necessity of creating safe spaces for people of colour in particular. A commitment to being empathetic and considerate given ubiquitous systems of oppression such as racism, sexism, and heteropatriarchy becomes a prerequisite for introspection and understanding. This, then, enables critiquing the status quos that perpetuate racist and other power structures. As CRT was mainly channelled through and by anti-racist activism, the productive intertwining of theory and praxis will be centre stage during our collaborative effort to come to terms with the challenging and fascinating dynamics of Critical Race Theory.

Each session will be introduced textually and/or visually by a set of relevant materials which can be found below. Rather than trying to solely disseminate knowledge on CRT, the seminar will stimulate participants to actively reflect on the materials presented by means of an alignment with their own contributions, which may stem from their own research. This could be another text or audio-visual material, or any other medium that would further the discussion on the particular subtopic of the session. To this end, two participants will be asked to volunteer to co-host one session, which will be coordinated with the host, Praveen Sewgobind.

As the seminar series is envisioned as a collaborative project, participants are warmly encouraged to initiate and organise the seventh session. Please contact the host so that we can embody and materialise this assemblage. Wholeheartedly following one of the aims of the general ASCA Theory Seminar, this seminar series foregrounds a social learning process highlighting community building. It aims to bring

together PhD candidates from the diverse disciplines within ASCA to learn about each other's research projects, struggles and joys, and to make new friends. To serve this latter purpose, each session will end in a café with drinks.

The seminar series will be structured as follows (all materials will be distributed after registration at [ascafgw@uva.nl](mailto:ascafgw@uva.nl)):

**Session 1: Tuesday, 8 September 2020, 14:00-17:00 hrs - Race, "race," and ethnicity**

Critical Race Theory came to fruition in an era during which many believed race was off the table. Terms such as postraciality and colour-blindness have become central in ideological and institutional positionings. However, from the perspective of many people of colour and critical whiteness theorists, constructs of race continue to operate relentlessly, often felt as the proverbial elephant in the room. In this first session we will come to terms with the history and emergence of Critical Race Theory and will specifically examine the divergent perceptions on and tensions between the notions of race and ethnicity. In a space where racial profiling is referred to as ethnic profiling, critically assessing the very terms that underlie CRT will be our starting point allowing us to dive into and discuss the vastness of the web of meanings spawned by the concept of race.

Materials:

Linda Martín Alcoff . *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self*. Oxford University Press, USA (2005) > Pages 179-223.

Audiovisuality:

Authors Robin DiAngelo and Ibram X. Kendi on how to become aware of privilege. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dteOQPzc\\_so](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dteOQPzc_so)

Further reading:

Joshua Glasgow, Sally Haslanger, Chike Jeffers, Quayshawn Spencer. *What Is Race: Four Philosophical Views*. Oxford University Press (2019).

*Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic NYU Press (2017).

**Session 2: 22 September, 14:00-17:00 hrs. Race and colonialism.**

In this session we will explore the extent to which and the reasons why colonial legacies often seem to be detached from racial configurations.

In settler-colonial spaces such as the United States or Canada CRT has firmly emanated from the nexus of race and colonialism. Scholars like Jacqueline Battalora and Ibram Kendi have pointed to the importance of understanding the wilful construction of whiteness and racial hierarchies that have shaped the making of contemporary nation-states such as the U.S. Colonial legacies, however, have deeply structured many other parts of the world where the interlocking of race and colonialism has been rather undertheorized. In this session we will explore the extent to which and the reasons why colonial legacies often seem to be detached from racial configurations. These formations can said to

have been structured as a global system of white supremacy that arose more than 400 years ago.

Materials:

George Yancy. *Look, A White! Philosophical Essays on Whiteness*. Temple University Press (2012). Pages 82-106.

Charles W. Mills. "White Supremacy." In *The Routledge Companion to the Philosophy of Race*. Paul C. Taylor (editor), Linda Martín Alcoff (editor), Luve Anderson (editor). Routledge (2017).

Audiovisuality:

M. NourbeSe Philip reads "Discourse on the Logic of Language" from *She Tries Her Tongue*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=424yF9eqBsE>

### **SURVEILLANCE AND PRIVACY STUDIES READING GROUP**

*First session 10 September 2020, 14:00 hrs. Location: Oude Turfmarkt 145, 2.04 A. Coordinated by Hao Wang. If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Hao at <damon.z.wang@gmail.com>*

During the first session after the summer we will discuss four chapters of Ruha Benjamin's book *Race After Technology* (2019): Chapter 1, Engineered Inequality; Chapter 2, Default discrimination;; Chapter 4, Technological Benevolence; Chapter 5, Retooling solidarity, reimagining justice.

### **ASCA CITIES SEMINAR: (POST)PANDEMIC URBANISM**

*Semester 1 dates: Friday, 18 September 15:00-17:00 hrs.; 23 October; 20 November; 11 December. See full programme: [www.cities.humanities.uva.nl](http://www.cities.humanities.uva.nl). Organisers: Carolyn Birdsall, Alex Gekker and Thijs Jeursen*

*Contact: [c.j.birdsall@uva.nl](mailto:c.j.birdsall@uva.nl) / [a.gekker@uva.nl](mailto:a.gekker@uva.nl)*

In the 2020-21 ASCA Cities seminar, we will consider recent developments in urban life in the wake of the ongoing global pandemic. In taking up this theme, we are particularly interested in examining the intersections between digital technologies and contemporary urban environments, from the vantage point of creative, cultural, aesthetic and political practices.

The seminar will take stock of lived experiences in global cities today, with urban inhabitants subject to varying degrees of social-distancing restrictions, often violently enforced, and with crucial aspects of urban lives and livelihoods halted, slowed or intensified. For some, the pandemic prompted a rapid switch to 'remote' work, education, and leisure, accompanied by surges in digital gaming and content-on-demand consumption. Meanwhile, existing processes of urban datafication and 'smart city' infrastructures have been crucial to making contact tracing a viable option independent of citizen consent. With current warnings of a prevalent "pandemic shock doctrine" (Klein, 2020), how can we make sense of the 'viral' city and uneven distributions of risk, exposure and (im)mobility? What alternative visions are being generated for inclusive

urban recovery, from the local to planetary scale? What role do digital media play in visually narrating 'urban crisis' and subsequent reclaiming of urban space, for instance, in public protest? And what kinds of inventive methods are being developed to address the current predicament in artistic and cultural practice?

Engaging with and expanding on such questions, the seminar seeks to analyse contemporary cities by exploring a diverse set of topics, case studies and geographical locations. We will consider, for instance, recent work on "playful digitality" and online communing in global gaming cultures (Jeursen, 2020), and digital intimacy in "platform urbanism" (Barns, 2019), amidst calls for "radical care perspectives" (Fitz/Krasny, 2019), "patchwork ethnography" (Günel et al., 2020) and a sensitivity to "our tools for urban listening" (Mattern, 2020). In doing so, we are not only responding to issues of digital urbanism in the (post)pandemic situation, but also invested in a critical re-assessment of our chosen approaches for the cultural study of cities today.

### **AESTHETICS AND POLITICS IN CRITICAL THEORY**

*ASCA Reading Group organized by Ben Moore, Marc Farrant, and Steyn Bergs. The first meeting of the 2020-2021 academic year will take place on Monday, 14 September, 16:00-18:00 hrs.*

This reading group will explore a selection of seminal, and some lesser-known, works within twentieth and twenty-first century critical and cultural theory, with an emphasis on the intersection between the aesthetic and the political. Walter Benjamin famously argued in the conclusion of his 'Work of Art' essay of 1936 that one of the dangers of fascism is its 'aestheticizing of politics', and that communism must respond by 'politicizing art'. As our contemporary political moment comes to increasingly resemble the conjuncture at which Benjamin was writing in the 1930s, we will ask how the relationship between politics and aesthetics has been theorised by thinkers since, and how we might use their work to analyse and rethink that relationship today.

We plan to meet once a month in the afternoons for two hours (provisionally on Mondays but subject to change). Our first few sessions will be dedicated to reading and discussing foundational texts in modern Western thought on the interrelations between the political and the aesthetic, starting with excerpts from Kant's Critique of Judgement. Subsequently, we aim to organize sessions this year around particular themes such as: critique, feeling/affect, and resistance. The direction of our reading is open and flexible, however, and depends partly on the interests of the participants. We aspire to keep discussions open and informal, and all staff and graduate students, from inside or outside the UvA, are welcome to take part. Research Master students who take part in the group will be eligible for 2EC via NICA.

The first meeting of the 2020-2021 academic year will take place on Monday, 14 September, 16:00-18:00 hrs.

Due to COVID-19, this first meeting is scheduled to take place via Zoom, though we hope to resume meeting physically at the UvA as soon as possible. Furthermore, in early 2021, we are planning to organize a small workshop/symposium which will be closely related to the topic of the reading group, and in which participants may take part.

To participate, please send an e-mail to Ben Moore (B.P.Moore@uva.nl), Marc Farrant (m.w.farrant@uva.nl) and Steyn Berghs (s.berghs@vu.nl). You will be sent a pdf copy of the readings and added to the reading group's mailing list.

### **GENDER AND PHILOSOPHY READING GROUP**

*In the first semester of 2020-2021, the reading group focusses on conceptualizations of masculinity and masculinities. Meetings are monthly on the second-to-last Friday of the month, 16.00-18.00 hrs., Amsterdam time. The location is online. Please email Alex (a.thinius@uva.nl) at any time to participate, co-organize, or receive more information.*

*The plan for the first semester is: 18 September: Stoltenberg / Bordo; 23 October: Connell; 20 November: Hearn; 18 December: Curry.*

The readings are selected around the following host of questions: How should we conceptualize masculinity? Should we adopt a pluralist conception of masculinities and what would that be? What sort of thing is masculinity and where (if at all) is the difference to maleness, manliness, or manhood? Should we conceptualize masculinity as something that a person has or as something else? What is its relation to domination? What is its relation to bodily characteristics of what sort? How does masculinity relate to men both individually and at the aggregate level? Is there a racialized/classed/etc. dimension to masculinity? What sort of normative stances can or should we take towards masculinities?

### **MOVING IMAGES: PRESERVATION, CURATION, EXHIBITION**

The first session of this seminar organized by Giovanna Fossati and Floris Paalman will be held on Friday, 25 September, at the Eye Filmmuseum (IJpromenade 1 - Room at the Top), 14:30-16:30 hrs. Our special guest is Christian Olesen (Utrecht University/University of Amsterdam).

We are happy to announce that the session scheduled on 25 September will happen in a semi-in-person manner. We will convene at Eye Filmmuseum (Room at the Top) with a capacity of 20 seats (max.) due to the Corona measures. We will also stream the session to those who cannot be present and/or fit.

This session will be inspired by the exploratory sound and sampling work Olesen has recently been doing, as part of a project that combines film sounds and field recording to explore (neo-)cinophile viewing habits and film sound as a source for film/media historians. See abstract and bio on the [website](#). Upon request suggested readings will be sent to you.

Please RSVP to EyeAcademic@eyefilm.nl and indicate if you intend to attend the meeting from home or in person. Once we know who will follow from home, we will share a Zoom-link.

Registrations are on a first-come, first-served basis so register early and please let us know if you cannot make it after all.

Before the meeting, please check Eye's Corona measures here: <https://www.eyefilm.nl/en/about-eye/news/eye-is-open>

### **CRITIQUE(S) OF VIOLENCE**

*A series of online-events organized by Daniel Loick*

In the winter of 1920/21, Walter Benjamin penned his "Critique of Violence," a short essay which, despite (or perhaps because of) its apodictic style, its opaque use of metaphor, and its erratic argumentation has lost none of its fascination today. During the last 30 years, it has become a common point of reference for an array of academic disciplines that are concerned with scope, shape, and function of the different forms of violence associated with the modern nation state. The years 2020/21 mark the 100th anniversary of the writing and publication of this radical and timely essay. This event series takes up this occasion to explore its philosophical validity and political relevance for today.

Although Benjamin's essay is thematically extremely rich and linguistically ambitious, the focus of these events is on the concrete political, legal, and social issues it addresses. His opening question: "whether violence, as a principle, could be a moral means even to just ends" poses an obvious challenge to the state's claim to a monopoly on the use of force. Following Kant's deontological moral philosophy, Benjamin unsparingly scrutinizes all forms of violence and in particular its use for legal purposes. Against the ideological, or as Benjamin says, "mythical" perpetuation of violence through law, he follows a Jewish-messianic tradition by aiming at a non-statist form of commandment that can be seen as opposing or distancing itself from the state. The "Critique of Violence" thus not only formulates a fundamental critique of state-sanctioned violence in all its different forms, it nothing less but re-conceptualizes the foundational categories of the occidental legal and political tradition. Finally, Benjamin demands from us to think a fundamental social transformation that does not merely replace the holder of state violence but rigorously overcomes state power and the violence it depends on; hence to invent a new form of non-coercive community.

Many of the topics raised by Benjamin in his essay a century ago are of pressing urgency today. States have aggregated unprecedented amounts of violence and seem to be less and less capable to contain or mitigate it by means of democratic control or judicial oversight. Mass incarceration, police brutality, internment and deportation, and military interventions are but the most visible instances of state-inflicted violence; which in

addition often works hand in hand with extra-legal forms of violence against marginalized and vulnerabilized groups. Benjamin's text provides useful tools to describe, evaluate, and overcome unnecessary or illegitimate forms of violence.

At the same time, a multitude of political movements has formed to protest these forms of violence. Among them are prison abolitionist groups, the Black Lives Matter movement or refugee and no border activism. These groups often do not simply reject contemporary instances of violence, but at the same time try to come up with alternative models of political autonomy, conflict resolution and criminal justice beyond the state and legal coercion. Many of the motifs present in Benjamin's text resonate in the demands of these movements.

This series is not "about" Benjamin's essay in the narrow philological sense. Rather, it attempts to bring together scholars from different regional and theoretical backgrounds and invites them to address the topics present in it from their own political and philosophical perspectives, utilizing conceptual tools developed in their respective theoretical traditions and fields of activity. Benjamin's essay thus does not serve as the basis for philological exegesis, but as an inspiration and starting point to explore the question of violence from several locally-bound taxonomies.

Technics

The project consists of two parts: A series of seven online or hybrid events, each featuring one guest speaker, addressing one aspect of state-inflicted violence, taking place between October 2020 and March 2021, and a workshop in '21 with multiple speakers, addressing the question of abolitionist alternatives.

All events will be streamed live online. Insofar as the situation permits, some events will also take place on location in Amsterdam. Watch out for information on short notice.

Contact: Daniel Loick, d.loick@uva.nl.

The series is supported by the Philosophy Department of the University of Amsterdam, the Philosophy & Public Affairs Group, the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA), the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Analysis (NICA) and the Goethe-Institute Amsterdam.

Critique(s) of Violence – program:

\*all events start at 18.00 hrs.\*

8 October 2020: "Bloody power over bare life" – critique of borders (Natasha King, Dijon)

5 November 2020: "A ghostly presence in the life of civilised state" – critique of the police (Vanessa Thompson, Frankfurt/Oder)

3 December 2020: "The great criminal, however repellent his ends" – critique of the production of criminality (Koshka Duff, Nottingham)

15 January 2021: "The injunction becomes inapplicable" – critique of penal law (Geoffroy de Lagasnerie, Paris)

4 February 2021: "For with mere life, the rule of law over the living ceases" – sacrificial partisanship (Banu Bargu, Santa Cruz)

4 March 2021: "An upheaval that this form of strike not so much causes as consummates" – forms of social transformation (Eva von Redecker, Verona)

12-13 March 2021: "Deposition of Law" – Alternatives beyond state violence (speakers and format tbc)

#### NIAS STUDIES OF BELONGING CONFERENCE

We are delighted to announce that the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences will be hosting a conference on Studies of Belonging from 9 to 11 June 2021 in Amsterdam.

This 3-day conference aims to set the agenda for future interdisciplinary, international collaborations that bring together a broad variety of perspectives on the issue of belonging. For this conference we welcome proposals from scholars and cultural practitioners.

The definition of 'Studies of Belonging' will deliberately remain open as this concept can apply to a vast range of phenomena, and the conference will be built around six topical threads:

- Place-attachment and Mobility
- Community-life and Isolation
- Practices of Belonging
- Borders and Boundaries
- Seeking Refuge
- Identity, Inequality and Politics

For more information on the topics and how to apply please visit our website <https://nias.knaw.nl/news/call-for-proposals-nias-conference-2021/>

#### GLOBAL PUBLISHING AND THE MAKING OF LITERARY WORLDS

##### *Translation, Media, and Mobility*

*AILC/ICLA Early Career conference, 4-6 June 2021.*

This online conference joins theoretical issues addressed by scholars and editors with practical workshops in global publishing led by publishers from the US and other parts of the world. We expect this conference will break new ground intellectually as its practical publishing sessions offer information and advice to the next generation of scholars who face the ongoing challenges of a shrinking job market and complex publishing landscape.

This 3-day online conference will accommodate 250 registered early-career participants (pre-tenure, post-doc, senior graduate student level) from around the world. Registration requires uploading a book description and, if desired, also an abstract for a panel discussion on one of the conference themes. A \$50 fee covers the entire conference, including one-on-one coaching sessions offering publishing advice on the participant's submitted book description.

More information: <https://globalpublishing.princeton.edu/>

## ON STRIKES AND CRITICAL THEORY

*Call for Papers Critical Times. Abstracts (400 words) are due on 15 October 2020, and those invited to submit full papers for peer review will have a 1 May 2021 deadline for paper submission.*

Articles should be approximately 10,000 words, including notes; shorter contributions should be 2,000-5,000 words, including notes. Inquiries and submissions should be sent to Susana Draper or Samera Esmeir at CFPcriticaltimes@berkeley.edu.

Modern labour strikes became a strategy of the working class with the onset of the industrial revolution, and they have been deployed since to both revolutionary and reformist ends. But much has changed in the practice of strikes since the period of their modern intertwinement with wage labour. Worldwide, there are many strikes today that betray novel logics and stage new political practices. In recent years, a transformation of the political and conceptual landscape of the word “strike” has taken place; new strikes draw on and depart from the more traditional senses of the word, which has been historically linked to wage labour. In Latin America, recent feminist strikes have focused on questions of social reproduction, debt, unwaged labour, and gender violence. In the U.S. and France, immigrants and other racialized communities have organized strikes under the title “A Day Without Us.” In the Middle East and South Asia, there have been revolutionary strikes, but also hunger and prison strikes, as well as strikes for bread. Worldwide, youth and indigenous communities have organized around the idea of a global climate strike, and students have been striking against tuition hikes or for free education. Meanwhile, from East Asia to Africa, many forms of traditional labour strikes continue to take place. These various strikes have not necessarily belonged only to organizing on the left; some strikes are detached from any form of traditional progressive politics, and others are declared by state authorities in order to prevent public gatherings and protests. The strike, in other words, has become an organizing concept for a range of distinct political actions in a changed world.

This special issue of *Critical Times* aims to explore contemporary strike actions as they draw on and depart from the longer inheritance of political strikes or of proletarian or revolutionary general strikes (to deploy Georges Sorel’s and Walter Benjamin’s distinction). We invite submissions that aim to contribute to the critical theory of strikes by considering strike actions from different corners of the world that are not necessarily tied to wage labour. We particularly welcome philosophical/theoretical contributions that are also grounded in concrete strike practices and actions.

How is the proliferation of contemporary strikes to be apprehended? What kind of political practice do these strikes initiate? What work does the word “strike” continue to do today in different languages? And how do we explain the word’s use to describe an ever greater number of actions that were previously conceptualized

otherwise? How does calling an action a strike inflect the action itself? If the industrial world that originally gave political meaning to strikes has been restructured by other capitalist logics, including neoliberalism, what are the experiences and horizons that give meaning to strikes, including traditional strikes, today? What political possibilities do new kinds of strikes offer in a world in which the political spaces of collective organization have been shrinking? What forms of life, injustice, and oppression do these strikes make legible? Are we witnessing a new formation of the strike, one that is the product of our times even as it continues to operate under a centuries-old organizing concept? Is the language of success or failure adequate to assess these contemporary actions, or do these strikes call for political vocabularies that move beyond the grammars of instrumental politics? Might contemporary strikes uncover both the limitations and the possibilities of previous strikes? Finally, how would a critical theory of our times reflect on this moment of strike-action? And what do contemporary strikes reveal about our particular historical-political juncture?

These are some of the questions that we would like to address in this special issue of *Critical Times*. We invite full-length scholarly essays as well as shorter contributions that report and reflect on particular strikes. We also invite shorter theoretical reflections on the status of strikes today.

To view/download a flyer for the Call for Papers: On Strikes and Critical Theory, please click [here](#).

*Critical Times*, a project of the International Consortium of Critical Theory Programs, is a peer reviewed open access journal published by Duke University Press with the aim of foregrounding encounters between canonical critical theory and various traditions of critique emerging from other historical legacies, seeking to highlight the multiple forms that critical thought takes today.

## FRENCH INSTITUTES FOR ADVANCED STUDY FELLOWSHIP

Call for applications 2021/2022

The French Institutes for Advanced Study Fellowship Programme offers 10-month fellowships in the four Institutes of Paris, Lyon, Montpellier and Marseille. It welcomes applications from high level international scholars and scientists primarily in the fields of the social sciences and the humanities (SSH).

Deadline: 15 September 2020, 15:00 hrs. Paris time.

For the 2021-2022 academic year, FIAS offers 31 fellowship positions: 17 in Paris, 5 in Lyon, 6 in Marseille and 3 in Montpellier.

The call is open to all disciplines in the SSH and all research fields. Research projects from other sciences that propose a transversal dialogue with SSH are also eligible. Some of the four IAS have scientific priorities they will focus on more specifically.

The Fellows will benefit from the support and conducive scientific environment offered by the IAS, in

an interdisciplinary cohort of fellows and in close relation to the local research potential. The fellows will be free to organize their work and conduct research as they wish.

All IAS have agreed on common minimum standards, including the provision of a living allowance (NET 2,700€ per month), social security coverage, accommodation, a research budget, plus coverage of travel expenses.

FIAS awards fellowships to outstanding researchers of all career levels, from postdoctoral researchers to senior scientists. The minimum requirement is a PhD + 2 years of research experience at the time of the application. Exception will be made for scholars with a Master + 6 years of full-time research experience after the degree (PhD training will not be considered in the calculation of experience).

Researchers from all countries are eligible to the Programme but they have to have spent no more than 12 months in France during the three years prior to the application deadline.

Applications are submitted online via [www.fias-fp.eu](http://www.fias-fp.eu) where, you will find detailed information regarding the content of the application, eligibility criteria, and selection procedure.

The call is open from July 2020 to 15 September 2020, 15:00 hrs. GMT.

- Application deadline: 15 September 2020, 15:00 hrs. (Paris, France time)
- September-November 2020: Double peer review
- November 2020: Preselection by the FIAS Selection Committee (communication of preselection results)
- January 2021: Selection by the four IAS and communication of results

For more information on the Programme, please consult our website: [www.fias-fp.eu](http://www.fias-fp.eu)

### **FUNG GLOBAL FELLOWS PROGRAM 2021/22**

Princeton University is pleased to announce the call for applications to the Fung Global Fellows Program at the Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies (PIIRS). Each year the program selects scholars from around the world to be in residence at Princeton for an academic year and to engage in research and discussion around a common theme. The number of candidates hired will depend on the qualifications of the overall applicant pools. Candidates will be considered in two categories: (1) Postdoctoral research associates who received their doctorate from an institution outside of the United States and who, at the time of application, do not hold a tenure-track faculty appointment; (2) Early-career scholars employed outside the United States who have a faculty appointment, a professional research appointment, or are an established independent scholar in the designated theme of the program. Early-career scholars will be appointed at the rank of Visiting Research Scholar.

During the academic year 2021-22, the Fung Global Fellows Program theme will be “Sustainable Futures.” We welcome applicants from all disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields – humanities, social science, natural science, engineering, technology, law, architecture – to examine varied notions and workable practices of sustainability. We define sustainability expansively. What does economics teach us about inclusive growth, equality of opportunity, minimizing negative externalities, and the costs of low growth for job creation and skill acquisition? How can countries, individually and collectively, leverage ecological sciences and engineering to scale energy sources that are both sustainable and practical, encourage environmentally sound consumption patterns, promote resource renewal and protect biodiversity? What would sustainable global integration look like, and how would countries get there? How is understanding the behaviour of complex systems crucial to sustainability? How can architecture and engineering build residences, workplaces, cities, and exurbs in smarter ways? What can countries learn from sociology about supporting family structures, kin networks, and community institutions? How might information science and technology render virtual public spheres civil while keeping them open, and promote a sense of shared truth? How can societies use political science to improve governance, raise political participation, and manage a wide diversity of views that healthy societies must have? Above all, how can countries create and propagate consensus narratives of sustainability that balance interests?

Applications are due on 16 November 2020 (23:59 hrs. EST). All candidates must reside outside the United States. To be eligible, post-doctoral applicants must have completed all requirements for their Ph.D. by 1 September 2021 but cannot have more than two years of postdoctoral experience prior to the start of the appointment, 1 September 2021. If a postdoctoral candidate has turned in a final draft of their dissertation but not yet completed their Ph.D. before the start date, they may be temporarily appointed as a Senior Research Assistant with a 10% reduction in salary. Upon providing verification of their Ph.D. degree, they would then be promoted in rank and salary. Early-career scholars must have received their Ph.D. or equivalent no earlier than 1 September 2011. Fellowships will be awarded on the strength of a candidate’s proposed research project, the relationship of the project to the program theme, the candidate’s scholarly record, and the ability to contribute to the intellectual life of the program.

Postdoctoral scholars may apply at: <https://www.princeton.edu/acad-positions/position/16742>

Early-career scholars may apply at: <https://www.princeton.edu/acad-positions/position/1682>