

**Nieuwsbrief 274**

*June 2024*

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**ASCA BORREL & ASCA AWARDS**

*VoxPop, Tuesday 25 June, 17:00-19:00 hrs.*

All ASCA members and friends are very welcome to join the final ASCA Drinks of the academic year 2023-24 in VoxPop. In addition to talking, gossiping, connecting and drinking, the 2024 SCA Awards Committee—Anne Greszta, Divya Nadkarni, and Gaston Franssen—will announce this year's winners!

**ASCA WORKSHOP: RESISTANCE, REFUSAL, AND FUGITIVITY**

This year's ASCA workshop takes place 5-7th June, on the timely topic of Resistance, Refusal, and Fugitivity. Questions of political power and its expression in social relations between different groups define the fundamental struggles of our moment. We invite you to participate in a riotously eclectic program that connects transnational scholars from different traditions and disciplines.

Our keynote panelists are Loyal Ftouni (University Utrecht), Nicholas Thoburn (University of Manchester), and Jia Tan (Chinese University of Hong Kong). There will also be space for less traditional conference activities, including film screenings, a skill share on carbon divestment at universities, and a room for reflection regarding Palestinian solidarity. Scholars at all levels are encouraged to join for robust but self-reflective presentations and discussions, and moments to socialize and meet thinkers from across the globe. The workshop is supported by ASCA and NICA.

**SHAHIN NASIRI (ASCA) WINNER PRAEMIUM ERASMIANUM DISSERTATION PRIZE 2024**

*Dissertation: Rethinking Freedom from the Perspective of Refugees: Lived Experiences of (Un)freedom in Europe's Border Zones Supervisors: Prof. dr. Yolande Jansen & dr. Daniel Loick*



*Rethinking Freedom from the Perspective of Refugees: Lived Experiences of (Un)freedom in Europe's Border Zones*, the dissertation defended by Shahin Nasiri at the UvA on September 13, 2023, is a pioneering contribution to contemporary refugee and migration studies. But maybe even more impressively, it also sheds new light

on a centuries-old philosophical debate on the nature of freedom. This a very crowded field, but Nasiri manages not only to formulate a convincing, distinctly new conception of freedom, one that challenges many old dogmas, but also to do so by reconstructing the self-understanding precisely of those people who are traditionally excluded from philosophical theorizing. Refugees, the thesis emphasizes, are neither passive victims, nor unbound heroes, but political subjects who develop their own distinct normative conceptions and worldviews, and freedom is a key concept for this, alongside and interconnected with equality and friendship.

Nasiri did phenomenological fieldwork, a method he partly develops himself in the thesis, in Lesbos, Athens and other places in Greece, combining this with working himself through difficult philosophical and legal theories about freedom. Elaborating the findings of the fieldwork as a reflection on the theoretical works discussed, the dissertation rethinks the notions of freedom and unfreedom with refugees. The refugees were interviewed in Lesbos and other parts of Greece, not 'pre-flight' or 'post-flight', but during their flight and their dwelling in the limbo in which they often find themselves for years. Nasiri thus makes the ideas of people who actually live in specific conditions leading in a very fruitful manner. The consistent and always very modest ways in which Nasiri worked throughout this whole process is simply admirable.

A central finding of the thesis is how refugees' notion of freedom stresses that this is not an abstract notion, but deeply interlinked with ideas and practices relating freedom, equality and friendship. People choose friends freely, differently from family. However, friends do come out of and keep forming part of one's life and form part of the web of one's life, as equals, and freedom is experienced in those relations. The last chapter marvelously develops the philosophical constellation of equality, friendship and freedom, in conversation with, and respectful towards, the notions of freedom of the refugees in Lesbos and Athens.

Nasiri's overall and combined academic and ethical commitment needs mentioning too, for it fits neatly with the kind of research the Praemium Erasmianum wants to encourage. While working on the (unfunded) thesis project, Nasiri and co-researchers, supported by a team of researchers on the ground in Iran, worked on a large report about the massacres that have been perpetrated by the Iranian regime in 1981 on political dissidents. Together with his co-authors, he published a large article in *Journal of Genocide Studies* based on that work in 2022, and received a lot of international press attention for it, which he all did aside from the work on the dissertation.

Nasiri's work, and his dissertation (soon to be published as a book), exemplifies the best traditions in critical philosophy, critical legal theory and social science.

(From the recommendation written by Yolande Jansen and Daniel Loick)

### **NEW SERIES: THE LONG COVID+ CONVERSATIONS**

*Organized by Eva Meijer, University of Amsterdam, online*

The Covid-19 pandemic caused a spur of philosophical reflection: about biopolitics, anti-vaxxers and vaccination freedom, global multispecies health and many other topics. Long covid, not so much. This is unfortunate, because it raises many philosophical questions. Phenomenological questions, concerning body and mind, rationality, and social isolation. But also political questions, concerning the lack of care in neoliberal societies, or solidarity. Making space for long covid in academia matters not only theoretically: a large number of philosophers, other academics, and students are ill long term or disabled permanently, but this is currently invisible in academic discourse and university policies.

Long covid is not a new or unknown condition: it is a post-viral illness, similar to other multisystem diseases like ME/CFS, Lyme Disease, or Q-Fever Fatigue Syndrom – the + in the name of this series is meant to reflect this similarity and to invite those suffering from these and related conditions to join the conversations. However, because the majority of the patients are female and because patients cannot advocate for themselves (or only to a very limited degree), there is a lack of medical attention for and research about these diseases. This medical-political disinterest is interconnected with a lack of solidarity with those who are ill in academia, activism and society more generally. This series of online talks is meant to collectively investigate the philosophical meaning of long covid and similar conditions, in relation to phenomenology, politics, gender and other topics, and to contribute to a more caring status quo in academia and beyond. We invite abstracts for a series of short online presentations. All sessions will be recorded and available to watch later for those who subscribe. There will also be opportunity to connect and respond to the talks in written form. The format of the series might be updated as we go along, to be as inclusive and accessible as possible.

Possible topics for talks include:

- The phenomenology of long covid: feelings and affect, rationality and long covid, the distortion of experience in multisystem diseases.
- The language of long covid: the lack of a vocabulary to describe the experience of fatigue, brain fog, PEM and related symptoms, living without being able to communicate with others, possibilities for improving speaking about and with those who are ill.
- Medical gaslighting and medical misogyny.
- Long covid and invisibility, long covid and the media, (the absence of) narratives, stories and art.
- Long covid and gender, race, and socio-economic status.

- Long covid as a zoonosis, One Health, and multispecies health.
- Post-viral diseases and solidarity, relations to other long-term illnesses, intersections with other forms of marginalization.
- Long covid and social isolation, loneliness, and silence.
- Long-term illness and bureaucracy in neoliberal societies, including in academia.
- Care in academia and beyond.

The deadline for sending in abstracts/proposals for Fall/Winter 2024-2025 is August 1<sup>st</sup>. If you want to present, please send your abstract or idea for a conversation to: [asca-fgw@uva.nl](mailto:asca-fgw@uva.nl)

If you want to attend the talks or stay updated about the events, please email: [asca-fgw@uva.nl](mailto:asca-fgw@uva.nl).

### WATER JUSTICE IN PALESTINE

*Israel/Palestine Teach-in History is not Context, It's Reality* | Speakers: Muna Dajani (London School of Economics), Lamis Qdemat (Founder, Water Heroes and activist, Palestine) | Moderator: Margreet van Zwartveen (Professor of Water Governance, UvA and UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education, Delft) | 31 May, 13.30 - 15.30, REC A.207 (Roeterseiland).

[Roeterseilandcampus - building A](#)

This teach-in will raise awareness about the historical weaponisation of water by the Israeli state against the people of Palestine. Water injustice plays a longstanding role in settler colonial violence in Israel/Palestine. What is the impact of the devastation of Gaza's water and sanitation systems, the damage to agricultural land, the pollution of its groundwater and the blocking of water and food supplies? And what are the strategies and indigenous knowledge systems developed by Palestinians over decades of occupation? This event is organised in collaboration with IHE Delft Institute for Water Education and Wageningen University.

### ACADEMIC SOLIDARITY IN PRACTICE

Friday 31st at 4pm in L1.02 (LAB42, Amsterdam Science Park). To help us plan, please register in this link for in person attendance: <https://forms.gle/xGj57kShGu6yTrKD8> | Organized by the Academic Solidarity Nikhef group

We warmly invite you to this conversation by Omar Barghouti and Yolande Jansen. During the event we want to reflect and learn together how we, as academics, can take meaningful solidarity actions and stop complicity in the violation of human rights, specifically, in the context of Palestine.

### SELF-PORTRAITS OF CORAL

*Visual Archives and Radiation Ecologies in the Anthropocene* Lecture by Yuriko Furuhashi (McGill University) | Friday 31 May 2023, 4:30-6pm | F1.14 in Bushuis (Kloveniersburgwal 48). | For further information and registration, please contact Linda Kopitz: [L.Kopitz@uva.nl](mailto:L.Kopitz@uva.nl)

Media histories of coral reef science and resource extraction in the Pacific are intimately connected to the territorial expansionism of the Japanese and U.S. empires. In the 1930s, Japanese marine biologists began studying the living habitats of coral reefs at the Palao Tropical Biological Station in the island of Koror in today's Republic of Palau, while the island was occupied and governed by the Japanese empire. Their research on the symbiotic relationship between coral polyps and algae laid one of the foundations for the American science of nuclear ecology that developed out of the study of the irradiated atolls of the Marshall Islands, which the United States infamously used as a site of nuclear weapons testing in the 1950s. Focusing on the technology of radioautography that American scientists used to visualize radiation, I connect this transpacific history of nuclear waste to the colonial histories of coral reef science and guano mining. In doing so, I examine how this extractive process of image-making mediated by irradiated coral specimens contributed to the production of radiation and coral reef ecologies. Thinking about the nonhuman agents of knowledge production in relation to the colonial history of mineral extraction allows us to critically reflect on what I call the *underside of the Anthropocene*.

**Yuriko Furuhashi** is Associate Professor and William Dawson Scholar of Cinema and Media History in the Department of East Asian Studies at McGill University. Her first book, *Cinema of Actuality: Japanese Avant-Garde Filmmaking in the Season of Image Politics* (Duke University Press, 2013), won the Best First Book Award from the Society of Cinema and Media Studies. Her second book, *Climatic Media: Transpacific Experiments in Atmospheric Control* (Duke University Press, 2022) explores the geopolitical conditions underpinning environmental art, weather control, digital computing, and cybernetic architecture in Japan and the United States. She is currently completing a new book project, titled *Visual Grammars of Deep Time: Archipelagic Archives of the Anthropocene*, which examines sets of scientific atlases, photographs, and films of fossils, clouds, snow crystals, and corals in relation to the settler colonial histories of geosciences in Japan, the Pacific, and North America.

Co-organized by Carolyn Birdsall, Linda Kopitz and Alex Gekker and the [Sea Mediations Symposium](#).

<https://www.cities.humanities.uva.nl/news/asca-cities-seminar-session-self-portraits-of-coral-visual-archives-and-radiation-ecologies-in-the-anthropocene-by-yuriko-furuhashi-may-31/>

### PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORIES AND CULTURE:

#### PHENOMENOLOGY OF BLACK SPIRIT

Reading Group organized by Michael Thomas ([m.l.thomas@uva.nl](mailto:m.l.thomas@uva.nl)) Monday 3, 10, 17, and 24 June), 16.00–18.00.

This group examines texts that aim to expand and deepen our history of philosophy through an

engagement with the works of cultures that have been marginalized or erased from the Western European frame predominant in academic research. The works we read approach this task through a variety of methods. Some attempt to situate our understanding of philosophy in its historical context, drawing out the historicity of their principles and conclusion. Some restore the role of blackness and coloniality to our vision of allegedly neutral philosophical systems. In every case, we are interested in critical readings of works and ideas that help use trace the historical and cultural dimensions of “doing philosophy” in our attempts to enlarge our understanding of the philosophical enterprise, its conditions, and its effects. We will begin with a reading of Biko Gray and Ryan Johnsons’ *Phenomenology of Black Spirit*, which “studi[ies] the relationship between Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit and Black Thought from Frederick Douglass to Angela Davis.” Our first meetings will take place on Mondays in June. We’ll cover approximately 2 chapters per session. For registration, please follow this [link](#).

Future readings may include *Smash the Pillars*, a critical engagement with pillarization through Dutch decolonial movements, *Phenomenal Blackness*, an examination of the intersections of Black Thought of the 1960’s and Critical Theory, and work by Hongxuan Lin on the development of Marxist thought in the Dutch East Indies.

#### **FAIRNESS, ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY: FRICTION AND RECONCILIATION**

*Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 6 June: *Faculteitskamer Oude Turfmarkt 145* | *Speaker: Prof. dr. Linnet Taylor (TiU)*

*Contact: Tijn Smits - [t.m.smits@uva.nl](mailto:t.m.smits@uva.nl)*

The past few years have seen growing recognition that machine learning raises novel challenges for ensuring non-discrimination, due process, and understandability in decision-making. They have also witnessed an unprecedented increase in the complexity of machine learning models, which challenges efforts to address the concerns above. This chapter will focus on identifying these concerns (e.g. algorithmic bias and discrimination) and on the challenges met, but also posed by, their proposed solutions. The work of addressing fairness, accountability and transparency in machine learning systems takes place at the intersection of ethics, political philosophy, law and regulation, and social justice. There is perhaps no other object of multidisciplinary research that has generated so much contemporary conflict. In order to understand why, we will outline both the history of the debates that have arisen over fairness in relation to machine learning, and the worldviews that are coming into conflict. We will use the concept of levels of abstraction (Floridi, 2008) to consider the different conceptual levels these debates address, and to analyse why they are not easily reconciled. We will then outline possible ways to foster

generative, rather than destructive, friction around the concept of fairness, and how these conflicts can speak to each other in a useful way.

Dr. Linnet Taylor is Professor of International Data Governance at the Tilburg Institute for Law, Technology, and Society (TILT), where she leads the ERC-funded Global Data Justice project. Her research at TILT broadly focuses on how new sources of digital data are impacting governance, research on human and economic development, and political representation.

#### **LACAN AND QUEER THEORY**

*Queer Analysis Group organised by Misha Kavka and Diego Semerene* | *Thursday, June 6 at 18:00 - Discussion Session*  
*Location: OMHP room A 1.18C (Oudemanshuispoort, 1012 CN Amsterdam)* Text: Tim Dean’s “Lacan and Queer theory” [There is no need to sign up; in-person event. If you have no access to the text please email [d.semerene@uva.nl](mailto:d.semerene@uva.nl) requesting it by June 3]

#### **WHAT’S WRONG WITH ANTIRACISM**

##### ***Spinoza Lecture II by Paul C. Taylor***

*Second of two lectures by the current Spinoza Chair holder, Paul C. Taylor, Presidential Professor of Philosophy at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).* | *6 June 2024, 19:30-21:00, [Aula - Oude Lutherse kerk](#)*

Despite the failure of the racial reckoning to live up to its name, the idea that racism is objectionable remains a fixture of mainstream politics. Some people endorse the idea only in public, while refusing or ignoring it in private. Others extol the virtues of racism to anyone who will listen. But all of these people, committed racists and their fair-weather rivals alike, know what more ardent opponents of racism also know, even if they find the knowledge lamentable: promoting racism is a problem in what most people regard as polite company.

Why, then, has *anti-racism* fallen on such hard times? The familiar forms of anti-anti-racist backlash politics are easy enough to anticipate and explain. But anti-racist activity, especially as practiced by anti-racism experts and diversity consultants, has come under fire from a surprising variety of ideological directions. “What’s Wrong with Anti-Racism” will map and explore some prominent critiques of anti-racism and consider their significance for broader questions of social ethics.

##### **[Register for one or both lectures](#)**

Paul C. Taylor is the Presidential Professor of Philosophy at UCLA. He received his formal training at Morehouse College, the Kennedy School of Government, and Rutgers University. His research focuses primarily on aesthetics, philosophical race theory, American philosophy, and Africana philosophy. His books include *Black is Beautiful: A Philosophy of Black Aesthetics*, which received the 2017 monograph prize from the American Society for Aesthetics, and *Race: A Philosophical Introduction*. He is a

newly elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

### ARTISTIC RESEARCH WITH ANNE HOFSTRA AND GHITA SKALI

*Final session of the 2023-2024 academic year on Friday, 7 June from 13:00-16:00 in the VOX-POP. Contact: Pirilti Onukar <pirilti.onukar@student.uva.nl>*

In this session, we are welcoming Anne Hofstra and Ghita Skali, two thought-provoking artists with quite different practices and interests. [Read more](#).

### HEALTHY FUTURE SEMINAR

*We are delighted to invite you to the third, and last, Healthy Future Seminar of the Healthy Future Seminar Series: Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Matchmaking for a Healthier Future. The seminar takes place on the 7th of June at the Allard Pierson Museum from 13h-17h (drinks incl.).*

After two successful editions, on the topics of “(Online) Food Environments” and “Mental health and intergenerational transmission”, showcasing our two main sub-themes, this final seminar will spotlight two innovative Healthy Future projects and inspire future interdisciplinary collaborations within the Healthy Future theme through a matchmaking session.

Dr. Lisa Haushofer will represent her research group working on the “Re-authoring Meat Consumption Narratives: Combining Historical, Cultural, and Public Health Perspectives”-project. Followed by Dr. Catherine Volgenant and Dr. Sanne de Wit, who will present their research project “The ORAHabit-study: Addressing Knowledge Gaps in Oral Health Interventions”. Afterward, a matchmaking session will be led by Prof. Dr. Anniek de Ruijter and will allow participants to explore collaboration opportunities. Furthermore, we are excited to announce an upcoming midsize grant opportunity that could foster collaboration during our matchmaking session.

Join us for insightful presentations by these esteemed speakers and engage in stimulating discussions on pressing health-related topics.

To register for the seminar, fill out [this form](#)– by the 30<sup>th</sup> of May. Space is limited so we encourage you to register early.

### THIS IS NOT CHINATOWN

*The Experience of Chinese Students in the International Student City of Amsterdam*

*Test Screening, Discussion & Co-creation Session | Thursday, June 13, 2024, 15.00-17.00 hrs (with drinks from 17.00-18.00 hrs!) | Venue: BuzzHouse, Humanities Venture Lab, UvA, Oudemanhuispoort 4-6, Amsterdam.*

Program: Film screening (+/- 40'), discussion and co-creation (+/- 30'), reflection on international student life in Amsterdam (+/- 30')

Registration: Soon available at <https://bit.ly/this-is-not-chinatown-test-screening> (there are 40 seats available!)

*This Is Not Chinatown* is a documentary exploring the experience of six Chinese students living in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Meet Jinming, Yuyang, Patrick, Xinyu, Yuyue and Lixiang while they are sharing their personal stories with us. How do they think, feel and go about their daily lives in the international student city of Amsterdam, where nationalism is on the rise and Chinatown does not seem Chinatown?

Chinese students have become one of the largest groups of international students in the Netherlands, and the largest group from outside Europe. Currently, over 6.000 Chinese are studying in various Dutch cities, many of them in Amsterdam. How do these students experience the city? What challenges do they encounter while adapting to life in Amsterdam? How do they navigate living, studying, working and socialising in the city? How do they maintain their cultural identity far away from home? And do they feel at home in Amsterdam?

The film project *This Is Not Chinatown* is supported by the Centre for Urban Studies (CUS), Amsterdam Research Centre for Migration (ARC-M), Expertise Centre Humanitarian Communication (HUCOM) and Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA). The production has been largely funded by UvA's Urban Studies Seed Grant XL (Dec. 2021), which resulted in a collaborative research and documentary project developed by migration scholars [Maggi Leung](#) and [Özge Bilgili](#), film scholar-practitioner [Emiel Martens](#), filmmaker [Philip du Plessis](#), and the (then) student assistants [Aly Amer](#), [Yanbo Hao](#) and [Yiwen Wang](#).

### SEXY BEASTS: MOTHERS, LIBIDO AND OTHER

#### GENDERED BEINGS

*ASCA/NICA Research Seminar organized by Catherine Lord, 7 June 2024, 14:00 -17:00 | Contact: C.M.Lord@uva.nl*

Is it not time to grow up and get over our mothers (and fathers), which means, should we not stop confusing the planet with Gaia, our 'Mother'? Or in terms of the repetition compulsions which psychoanalysis warns us are intractable, is this maternal identification really unavoidable? Or could we consider the nonhuman world to be full of sexy beasts, that is, multiple genders? The two readings of this session (more information to follow) will look at the knotty gender questions which help us consider what can be meant by "libidinal ecologies" (Pettman (2019).

### PARK CHAN-WOOK'S THE HANDMAIDEN: PERFORMING NOT-YET QUEERNESS TOWARD A UTOPIAN FUTURE

*Talk by Hee-seung Irene Lee (University of Auckland, New Zealand) | Queer Analysis Group organised by Misha Kavka and Diego Semerene | Tuesday, June 11 at 17:00 | Location: OMHP room C 2.17 (Oudemanhuispoort, 1012 CN Amsterdam).*

Park Chan-wook's *The Handmaiden* (아가씨, 2016) presents a fascinating case of transnational adaptation, inspired by the well-known Neo-Victorian novel, *Fingersmith* (2002), penned by Welsh writer Sarah Waters. Both the film and its source text narrate the tale of queer lovers navigating a hostile time and place, compelling them to live counter to their desires. Park's adaptation preserves the central dramatic conflict between societal norms and the inherent queer desire gradually unfolding for the two female protagonists. However, the film relocates Waters's original story of lesbian lovers from Victorian England to Korea under Japanese rule in the 1930s.

This paper explores how such a radical spatial and temporal shift, in the name of adaptation, imbues a sense of futurity in interpreting and envisioning the original novel's retrospective portrayal of immanent queer subjects from a 21st-century perspective. A prominent transformation in transposing the two Victorian heroines troubled with "the love that dare not speak its name" to colonial Korea involves the introduction of two distinct ethnic, national, and cultural identities, in addition to the novel's class division, positioning the film's heroines at opposite ends of the colonial hierarchy in the beginning. The film's three-part narrative effectively illustrates how Japanese noble lady Hideko and Korean handmaiden Sook-hee not only cross these divides successfully but audaciously engage with and transcend contextual and psychological obstacles, injecting a generic vitality into this mainstream film.

*The Handmaiden's* dislocation of queer desire bolsters cinema's capacity to reintroduce the openness of a future into the historical past when envisaging the un(der)represented desires in their hidden potentialities. With a focus on the film's desire to reshape the colonial past, which is steeped in violent patriarchal macromania and capitalist greed and its anticipation of what might be possible, this paper investigates how *The Handmaiden* embodies and performs the nexus of queerness, which José Muñoz describes as "the rejection of here and now and an insistence on potentiality or concrete possibility for another world" (*Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*, 2009, p.1). The film, by seamlessly integrating different cultural and historical visages and nuances, challenges conventional representations of queer subjects under a single identity and presents the futurity of queerness as a positive *excess* between history and possibility.

**Hee-seung Irene Lee** is a Korea Foundation Lecturer in Korean Studies at the University of Auckland. Irene completed her PhD in Film, Television, and Media Studies from the same university and has been teaching and researching contemporary Korean cinema and media, East Asian popular culture, screen adaptation, film theory, and critical theory.

## THE MATERIALITY OF AIR IN DINEO SESHEE BOPAPE'S AND ALEJANDRO RESTREPO'S INSTALLATIONS

ASCA Political Ecologies Seminar | Guest Lecture by Dr. Raffaella Occhietti | ASCA Political Ecologies Seminar is an annual research seminar co-directed since 2019 by Joost de Bloois and Jeff Diamanti | Contact [j.diamanti@uva.nl](mailto:j.diamanti@uva.nl) for readings. | 13 June 2024, 13:00 -15:00 | [BG 2](#) Room 008.

This research assesses the contribution of olfactive art, as an overlapping yet distinct form of art engaging with aerial issues, to the critique of Capitalocene. Air is increasingly sought as an allied medium in contemporary art, and particular attention has been given to atmospheric artworks that foster awareness on climate change through their staging and/or tweaking of air, for instance, by charging it in humidity, contaminating it, coloring it, etc. In this paper, I instead consider artworks that move away from technical restaging of air, thus mobilizing air as a total presence and phenomenon. Through the combined analysis of *Lerole: Footnotes (The Struggle of Memory against Forgetting)* (2017-) by South African artist Dineo Seshee Bopape, and *Musa Paradisiaca*, created by Colombian artist Alejandro Restrepo (1996; 2016; 2017), my aim is to show how these two seemingly very different installations foster a specific and poignant use of air in art. In both instances, the artists conjure up episodes of past colonial and neocolonial exploitation that resulted in violent deaths; both artists rely on olfactory elements, subtle or pungent, to reshape the exhibition space's atmosphere. My hypothesis is that by transcending an exclusive attention to smells and instead making these scents exude directly from materials that signal human death under exploitative and conquering logics, Bopape and Restrepo unveil the pervasive process of ripping open new commodity frontiers in capitalist world-ecologies. I propose to concomitantly rely on the concept of panarchy and its dual relations of remember/revolt to highlight how the artworks' reshaping of the composition of the exhibition space's air, through the emanations of organic matter and inorganic compounds, actively contributes to redefining a critical political ecology of air through art. Bio: Raffaella Occhietti is an art historian. She is a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Guelph, Canada, and a guest researcher at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Her postdoctoral research has been funded by the Fonds de Recherche du Québec – Société et Culture, and is now funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. She recently co-edited a special issue of *La Furia Umana – International Journal of the History and Theory of Cinema* on Donna Haraway's *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Her recent writing has appeared in *Espace Art Actuel*, *Senza Cornice*, and *Afterimage: Journal of Media Arts and Cultural Criticism*. Her current book project explores

contemporary art's ability to represent and confront the capitalist socio-ecological system.

## KANTIAN PHILOSOPHY TODAY

### *Amsterdam Kant Conference 2024*

The University of Amsterdam will commemorate the 300th birth year of Immanuel Kant by organizing a conference dedicated to the question: *what is the state of Kantian philosophy today?* | Amsterdam, 13-14 June 2024 | Please send any questions to [t.m.smits@uva.nl](mailto:t.m.smits@uva.nl).

Over the last three centuries, Kant's thought has proven to be a leading approach in various philosophical disciplines, from logic and epistemology to ethics and political philosophy. But what crucial questions in Kantian scholarship require special attention today? The conference will explore this question through two keynote lectures and four thematic panels organized around leading scholars in these fields. The panels will each open with a 30-minute introductory lecture by the main speaker, a 15-minute Q&A, three subsequent 15-minute presentations, and a final 30-minute Q&A.

#### Lectures

- Pauline Kleingeld (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen)
- Andrea Marlen Esser (Friedrich Schiller Universität Jena)
- Sorin Baiasu (University of Keele)
- Helga Varden (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign)
- Huaping Lu-Adler (Georgetown University)
- Andrew Stephenson (University of Southampton)

#### Presentations

- Carina Pape (Universität Hildesheim)
- Sebastian Orlander (University of Keele)
- Mario Schärli (Princeton University)
- Leon van Rijsbergen (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen)
- Stefano Pinzan & Roberto Mordacci (University Vita-Salute San Raffaele)
- Hein van den Berg (Universiteit van Amsterdam)
- Facundo Rodriguez (University of Cambridge)
- Nicholas Vrousalis (Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam)
- Marijana Vujosevic (Universiteit Leiden / Rijksuniversiteit Groningen)
- Vinicius Carvalho (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen)
- Garrath Williams (Lancaster University)
- Tijn Smits (Universiteit van Amsterdam)

#### Registration

Registration is free but required. The event is in-person only. The full, updated program can at all times be viewed at: <https://publuu.com/flip-book/455643/1041415>. Please register through the following

form: <https://forms.office.com/e/Qee0QaNvyg>

#### Organizing committee

Beate Roessler, Thomas Nys, Tijn Smits (contact person), Silene Gambino, Anna Beerends

## AGAINST CISNESS

### **A Masterclass and Lecture with Emma Heaney**

*Sex Negativity/Queer Analysis Collaborative Event* | Organisers: Marija Cetinić, Diego Semerene, Eliza Steinbock, Imogen Grigorovich | 14th of June 2024, 13:00-18:00 | [Oudemanshuispoort](#) OMHP, room C 1. Organizers' contact info: [m.grigorovich@students.uu.nl](mailto:m.grigorovich@students.uu.nl) | Registration deadline: 10 June 2024

The Sex Negativity research group, in collaboration with [ARC-GS](#), the Queer Analysis research group, NICA and ASCA welcomes NYU scholar Dr. Emma Heaney for a one-day masterclass and lecture event titled 'Against Cisness'. Following on the recent publication of Dr. Heaney's edited collection *Feminism Against Cisness*, the event sets the stage for imagining the future of feminist historical, theoretical, and political thought freed from the conceptual strictures of cisness: the fallacy that assigned sex determines sexed experience.

Working from trans historical archives and materialist trans feminist theories, Dr. Heaney explores the ways in which the social processes making cisness compulsory are also implicated in anti-Blackness, misogyny, Indigenous erasure, xenophobia, and bourgeois antipathy for working-class life. In her work, Dr. Heaney proposes a theory of sexual difference that rejects the narratives of cisness and calls for a feminism that does not depend on the ideology's counterrevolutionary pull. Taking up her call to action, we invite scholars and students of various backgrounds to join us for an interdisciplinary conversation aimed at rethinking how we conceptualise transness, sex and sexual difference.

**Emma Heaney** is a nationally recognized scholar of comparative literature, feminist studies and trans studies. Her first book, *The New Woman: Literary Modernism, Queer Theory, and the Trans Feminine Allegory*, (Northwestern UP 2017) traces the medicalization of trans femininity and the uptake of the resulting diagnostic in works of literature and theory. Dr. Heaney's recent edited collection, *Feminism Against Cisness* (Duke UP 2024), gathers essays by trans studies scholars that demonstrate the potential of feminist critique freed of the ideology that assigned sex determines sexed experience.

**Eva Hayward** has taught as assistant professor in the Department of Media and Culture Studies at Utrecht University, the University of Arizona (USA) and the University of New Mexico (USA). A Fulbright Scholar (Austria), she has held postdoctoral fellowships at Duke University (USA) and Uppsala University (Sweden). Her research focuses on ecology, art, and trans studies.

**Maxi Wallenhorst** is a writer living in Berlin. Next to dance dramaturgy, translation, and art writing, Maxi works on dissociative poetics in capitalism. Recently, Maxi's essays have appeared in *e-flux* journal and in Elif Saydam's *Two Cents* (Mousse, 2022). In progress: A transvestite romance set in a half-allegorical '20s Berlin.

The event is open to RMA students, PhD candidates and academic staff. To register, please email Imogen Grigorovich ([m.grigorovich@students.uu.nl](mailto:m.grigorovich@students.uu.nl)), stating which part of the event you are interested in attending.

### ONTOLOGIES OF POWER

*Cosmologies Reading Group* – Time and Location: June 14th, 2024 – 4pm-7pm; [Bushuis/Oost-Indisch Huis F1.14](#) | To register and receive the readings, please contact: [h.h.kuipers@uva.nl](mailto:h.h.kuipers@uva.nl). | Organised by: E. Biolchini, J. Leeuwenkamp, H.H. Kuipers, and R. Gold

Cosmological thinking as it has been popping up in the humanities of late, offers some elbow room in the all too dominant, all too human modern ontology, or what John Law aptly calls the “One World World”. Finding its expressions perhaps primarily in anthropology and the study of non-modern ontologies, spearheaded by figures such as Claude Lévi-Strauss, and more recently Eduardo Viveiros de Castro and Eduardo Kohn, it has found or refound its ways to other fields as well including philosophy, notably Alfred North Whitehead’s cosmological process philosophy; politics, as with Isabelle Stengers and in her wake Bruno Latour’s cosmopolitics; technics, with for instance Yuk Hui’s cosmotechnics; but also the fields of cinema and literature where it sets out to open the way for non-representational sensibilities in attuning to more-than human worlds.

During this session, we will think with the violence of the modern cosmology, of the State and its institutions, of the one world-world and its effacing of others, and ask ourselves whether what we have so far been learning in the past sessions anywhere gives us some leeway, some sideway way to approach this.

We’ve selected some texts to help us with this, but perhaps we also just want to take the time and speak more with the forces surround us - the violence and brutality we have faced, and especially seeing it taking place on the student body.

Readings:

– Clastres, Pierre. 2022. “Copernicus and the Savages.” In *Society against the State: Essays in Political Anthropology*, First paperback edition, eight printing. New York: Zone Books.

– Vázquez, Rolando. 2012. “Towards a Decolonial Critique of Modernity Buen Vivir, Relationality and the Task of Listening.” *Denktraditionen Im Dialog: Studien Zur Befreiung Und Interkulturalität* 33: 241-252.

– Viveiros de Castro, Eduardo. 2012. “Immanence and Fear: Stranger-Events and Subjects in Amazonia.” *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 2 (1): 27–43.

### BOOK LAUNCH: THE ARCHITECTURE OF LONELINESS

*Reflections on Displacement and Welcoming* edited by Mieke Bal (Valiz 2024) | Book Launch on the Night of the Refugee Saturday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 16:00–20:00 | [Enter Enter – A Space for Books](#); Nieuwe Herengracht 11A, Amsterdam.

We have invited editor Mieke Bal and Adnan Mahmutovic for a conversation about the position of the ‘other’ in society and the invisibility of refugees, and Mieke Bal will show her short video ‘Refugeedom’.

*The Architecture of Loneliness*

- Contains contributions by: Ernst van Alphen, Mieke Bal, Lysiane Lamantowicz, Wahbie Long, Marie José Mondzain, and artworks by Lotte Lara Schröder
- Dives deeply in how we perceive loneliness, as a psychological, cultural and political phenomenon
- Encourages an open way to look at and interact with ‘the other’

• Advocates for sincere and meaningful gestures of welcoming ‘the other’, migrants and displaced people  
The aftermath of the Covid restrictions, mental problems, being confronted with the influx of people with a different background and culture, the alienation of ourselves and of others, not being able to relate to other people; these can all cause deep feelings of loneliness. What is loneliness, as different from solitude? Whereas solitude is a chosen condition that refrains from social relations, loneliness suffers from the lack of these. The three essays in this book each explore a side of loneliness, strongly connected to the encounter with the other.

South-African psychologist Wahbie Long lays out what kind of relationships to the outside world emerge from childhood experiences of playing and relating to others. He dives into the difficulty of not only encountering, but finding others. Long brings together a great many aspects that all contribute to the feeling of loneliness that characterizes the lives of migrants, asylum seekers, or refugees on the road.

French philosopher Marie José Mondzain uses the metaphor of architecture with its terms as threshold, doors, walls, windows, a bench in front of the frontal wall; elements that construct ‘home’, the architectural and emotional place where encounters can happen, where ‘strangers’ should be welcomed and trusted.

French psychoanalyst Lysiane Lamantowicz discusses a form of loneliness that we see all around us: the consequences of social networks on the internet. Although it seems that we are part of a crowd, that we have many ‘friends’, we are in reality alone in front of a computer screen. What is the effect on how people can still relate to the intricacies of real life? In our current harsh political climate this book encourages a heartfelt interest and connection with your ‘neighbour’, close and far.

## PRECARIOUS COLLECTIONS AND DATA COLONIALISM

On Tuesday 18 June 2024, 15:30-18:30 at VOX-POP, together with Ofri Cnaani (artist and researcher) and Noa Roei (LCA), Annet Dekker is organising a masterclass + public lecture around the notion of "precarious collections and data colonialism".

All welcome, but please register if you want to come in the afternoon ([adekker@uva.nl](mailto:adekker@uva.nl)). Hoping to see you :)

### Masterclass with Ofri Cnaani and Annet Dekker 15:00 – 16:30

In recent years, developing critique from scholars and digital activists has focused on the problematic idea of progress that is often presented in relation to computation. This critique proposes that recent technological solutions, which are often based on data extraction, relate to colonial practices and forms of representation. The term "data colonialism" argues that the tech ecosystem has extended the technical and architectural infrastructure of colonialism through contemporary technologies that are often based on data extraction, as well as the use of proprietary software, corporate cloud services, and centralized internet services to control and trade. Recent publications propose that aspects of colonialism, including dispossession of land and property, exploitation of labor, and the exercising of extraterritorial governance, are being replicated and often amplified by a new ruling class of information capitalism in the technosphere. This afternoon seminar will focus on aspects of digital colonialism in memory intuitions including museums, archives and libraries. Though reading and study of some exemplary cases, we will consider the colonial conditions of cultural institutions in the age of algorithmic governmentality.

To obtain 1 ECTS for this masterclass students will read three texts and write a review of the masterclass in which they reflect on the concept of digital colonialism in cultural institutional contexts. **Registration is required:** get in touch with Annet Dekker if you're interested in joining this masterclass ([adekker@uva.nl](mailto:adekker@uva.nl)).

### Public lecture/discussion with Ofri Cnaani and Noa Roei 17:00 – 18:30

In the alarming phenomenon of endangered cultural heritage, whether through loss, neglect, or environmental catastrophe, institutions often turn to digital solutions for the preservation of knowledge and the repair of contested pasts. The notion of Digital Afterness explores how the loss or removal of physical artifacts can both engender and reveal intricate frameworks of lingering colonial residues that proliferate throughout the techno sphere. Using the notion of Afterness, Cnaani will explore how the demise of cultural collections due to climate crisis, governmental apathy, and the ravages of political violence can be traced back to the colonial practices that originally gave rise to their conditions of existence. Afterness critically engages with the state of

incompletion that follows the dissolution of an institutional site, asking: in the collapse of spatial infrastructure, how do the orders and relations that shaped and conditioned its existence live on, mutate into new forms, or even multiply? Driven by a specific interest on how such violence continues to reverberate through pervasive techno-financial infrastructure, she thereby asks how we might envision and facilitate alternative routes for the use of these collective resources.

**Ofri Cnaani** is an artist and researcher. Cnaani writes about data and coloniality, institutional practices in the algorithmic turn, and performance as a model to create critical technology. She is a visiting professor at the Institute of Visual Culture, TU Wien, Austria. Cnaani's work appeared at Tate Britain, UK; Venice Architecture Biennale; Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC; Inhotim Institute, Brazil; PS1/MoMA, NYC; BMW Guggenheim Lab, NYC; and Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, among others. She is the co-organizer of 'Choreographic Devices', an annual choreographic symposium at ICA, London, and recently completed a project at the International Space Station.

This event is made possible with the support of Netherlands Institute for Cultural Analysis (NICA).

## RESISTING RACIAL CAPITALISM: AN ANTIPOLITICAL THEORY OF REFUSAL

Lecture by *Ida Danewid* (Sussex) in the *Abolition Democracies seminar* organized by *Safae El Khannoussi el Boudrin, Daniel Loick and Oscar Talbot* | 18 June 2024, 17:00 -19:00 | [Oudemanshuispoort](#) Room A 008

What does freedom mean without, and despite, the state? *Ida Danewid* argues that state power is central to racial capitalism's violent regimes of extraction and accumulation. Tracing the global histories of four technologies of state violence: policing, bordering, wastelanding, and reproductive control, she excavates an antipolitical archive of anarchism that stretches from the favelas of Rio de Janeiro to the borderlands of Europe, the poisoned landscape of Ogoniland, and the queer lifeworlds of Delhi. Thinking with a rich set of scholars, organisers, and otherworldly dreamers, *Danewid* theorises these modes of refusal as a utopian worldmaking project which seeks not just better ways of being governed, but an end to governance in its entirety. In a time where the state remains hegemonic across the Left-Right political spectrum, *Resisting Racial Capitalism* calls on us to dream bolder and better in order to (un)build the world anew.

*Ida Danewid* is a social and political theorist based in the Department of International Relations at the University of Sussex. Her research interests are in anticolonial and black radical thought, gender studies, and global political economy. *Ida's* work has previously appeared in *European Journal of International Relations*, *International Political Sociology*, *Security Dialogue*, and with the Black Mediterranean collective.

## VANISHING VIENNA

*Modernism, Philosemitism, and Jews in a Postwar City*  
Lecture Frances Tanzer (Clark University) | Tuesday, 18 June, 2024, 16-18 hrs. Goethe-Institut, Herengracht 470, Amsterdam | Organizers: Natalie Scholz ([n.scholz@uva.nl](mailto:n.scholz@uva.nl)), Gregor Langfeld ([g.m.langfeld@uva.nl](mailto:g.m.langfeld@uva.nl))

Frances Tanzer will discuss her new book, *Vanishing Vienna: Modernism, Philosemitism, and Jews in a Postwar City* (University of Pennsylvania Press), which traces the reconstruction of Viennese culture from the 1938 German *Anschluss* through the early 1960s. The book reveals continuity in Vienna's cultural history across this period: a framework for interpreting Viennese culture that has relied on antisemitism, philosemitism, and a related discourse of Jewish presence and absence. As she shows, antisemitism and philosemitism were not contradictory forces in post-Nazi Austrian culture. They were deeply interconnected aspirations in a city where nostalgia for the past dominated cultural reconstruction efforts and supported seemingly contradictory impulses. Philosemitism was much more than a simple inversion of antisemitism—instead, Tanzer argues, philosemitism defined Vienna in the era of postwar reconstruction. *Vanishing Vienna* uncovers a rarely discussed phenomenon of the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust—a society that consumes, redefines, and bestows symbolic meaning on the victims in their absence.

Comment: Ido de Haan (Utrecht University)

**Frances Tanzer** is the Rose Professor of Holocaust Studies and Jewish Culture at Clark University. She is a historian of modern Jewish culture, the Holocaust, and Modern Europe. Her book *Vanishing Vienna: Philosemitism, Modernism, and Jews in a Postwar City* is forthcoming with University of Pennsylvania Press. She has had articles published in the *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* and *Contemporary European History*. In 2021, she received the Sosland Fellowship at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. She is currently a fellow at the Remarque Institute at NYU.

**Ido de Haan** is Professor of Political History at Utrecht University. His fields of interest are the political history and philosophy of democracy and the welfare state in Western Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth century, the history and memory of the Holocaust and other large-scale violence, as well as regime changes and political transition since the early modern period.

Facilitated by: AHM, OSK, Menasseh ben Israel Instituut, Goethe-Institut Amsterdam

Please register for the event via this website:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/vanishing-vienna-modernism-philosemitism-and-jews-in-a-postwar-city-tickets-907454760617?aff=oddtcreator>

## OFFENSIVE ADVICE (CO-AUTHORED WITH JONAS HAEG)

*Philosophy and Public Affairs* 19 June, 16:00 - 17:30 | Faculteitskamer Oude Turfmarkt 145 Speaker: Dr. Romy Eskens (UU) Commentator: Dr. Chris Ranalli (VU) | Contact: Tijn Smits - [t.m.smits@uva.nl](mailto:t.m.smits@uva.nl)

It's often permissible, or even required, to warn others about possible dangers and advise them about how to avoid these. Think of, for instance, warning signs along hiking trails, travel advice about countries in conflict, and general health guidance. However, advice about avoiding dangers sometimes seems morally offensive, even when it's factually good advice. For example, many think it offensive to advise women not to walk home alone at night, or to refrain from wearing certain clothes, in order to reduce the risk of being sexually assaulted. This is so even if the suggested strategies indeed reduce the risk. Our question is: what is it that makes danger-related advice of this kind, but not the earlier 'good' kind, morally offensive? We consider and reject several possible answers – for example, that it's the danger's wrongful status or a misallocation of responsibility – and then develop and defend our own. According to our answer, factually good advice is morally offensive if and because the speaker lacks the appropriate evaluative commitments.

Romy Eskens is an Assistant Professor at the Ethics Institute of Utrecht University. Before starting in Utrecht, she was a postdoctoral researcher in philosophy at Stockholm University, where she also earned her PhD. Her research is primarily in moral philosophy, and secondarily in social/political philosophy and moral psychology. She currently writes about the ethics of mind, personal relationships, moral address, reactive attitudes, harming and rescuing, and moral equality and partiality.

## DECOLONIAL FUTURES HARD LAUNCH

*Taking place at Droog (Staalstraat 7B, Amsterdam), Grand Space* | 24 June 2024, 12:30 -20:30

We are excited announce the Decolonial Futures RPA Hard Launch event featuring 3 panels, each led by one of the RPA coordinators, Sanjukta Sunderason (Humanities), Eliana Cusato (Law), and Darshan Vigneswaran (Social and Behavioural Sciences). This will be followed by drinks and an informal dinner. Guests are invited to join for all or any parts of the day.

**Panels:**

*Cultures of Decolonization*

Chaired by Sanjukta Sunderason

The panel, *Cultures of Decolonization*, will be steered by Sanjukta Sunderason, with a set of speakers from multiple disciplines and practices tied to cultural thinking and practice. We will discuss how the question of cultural forms – whether in artistic, political, historical or pedagogical practice – can provide us with new directions to craft decolonial methodologies in

academia and beyond. Some of the questions shaping this panel will include, among others:

*What does thinking via cultural forms and practices bring to the discussion of decolonization? What histories can we draw, of such cultures of decolonization? What archives – and precarities – are we working with here? What methodological futures can we shape from these?*

#### ***A Decolonial Politics for a Decolonial Cause***

Chaired by Darshan Vigneswaran

*A Decolonial Politics for a Decolonial Cause* will take its cue from recent protests for the protection of Palestinian lives, and subsequent brutal police crackdowns at the UvA, to think through the political strategies and tactics that may be deployed in the service of contemporary decolonial struggles. We will discuss how strategies like occupation, diplomacy, boycotts, and prosecutions might be deployed in the service of marginalised and victimised populations, while also paying keen attention to the problems involved in evoking the instruments of European states in order to achieve concrete change in colonised and formerly colonised zones. Some of the questions addressed by panel members will include:

*Can we differentiate decolonial forms of political strategy from decolonial causes? What forms of decolonial praxis should scholars and activists choose?*

#### ***Law, Coloniality and Decolonial Praxis***

Chaired by Eliana Cusato

This panel brings together scholars exploring the relationship between law and coloniality drawing inspiration from different intellectual traditions. The panel will scrutinize law's colonial foundations and enduring legacies, as well as consider the possibilities for contestation and resistance within and beyond the legal order. Building upon their wide-ranging research interests, the speakers will discuss issues such as land rights in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, human-non-human entanglements, global political economy, technology and the 'war on terror'. The speakers will also reflect on the role of lawyers, legal educators, and mentors in bridging decolonial theory and praxis.

Speakers:

Dr Kanad Bagchi (Amsterdam Law School)

Dr Hadeel Abu Hussein (Utrecht University)

Dr Yoriko Otomo (University for the Creative Arts)

Dr Tasniem Anwar (Vrije Universiteit)

*More details will be provided in the coming weeks in June, see the ASCA website.*

#### **SOAPBOX ISSUE 5.0 LAUNCH EVENT: SWAMPED**

**Time:** *t.b.a* | **Venue:** *Kriterion, Roetersstraat 170 1018 WE Amsterdam NL*

*SOAPBOX Journal for Cultural Analysis* is launching its printed issue 5.0: *Swamped* at *Kriterion* this coming June. Co-organised with ASCA, the launch event will host contributing authors, artists, guest speakers, and

team members to celebrate the release and invite all attendees to explore the theme of *Swamped*!

Experience *Swamped* Issue in live settings! The launch event includes a round table and Q&A with the authors and the editors. A short film screening and the collage artwork by two contributing authors will extend from written work. The Soapbox team also brings a sound piece for listening sessions during the launch. It is also an opportunity for everyone to skim through the new printed issue.

With Free Admission, join us for talks and drinks!

Stay tuned for the date announcement and more details.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email: [soapboxjournal@gmail.com](mailto:soapboxjournal@gmail.com)

Know more about [Soapbox](#) and its new Call for Papers: [On the Uses of Absence](#).

#### **GLOBAL DIGITAL INTIMACIES**

*A hybrid conference convened at the University of Amsterdam, 27-28 June 2024, [Oudemanhuispoort](#) | <https://globaldigitalcultures.uva.nl/content/news/2024/6/conference-global-digital-intimacies.html> [Register here](#)*

#### **Keynote speakers**

Apryl Williams, Audrey Yue, Mona Abdel-Fadil, Katrin Tiidenberg and Patrick Keilty

#### **Organizing Committee**

Lorena Caminhas, Jeroen de Kloet, Nermin Elsherif, Rébecca Franco, Emilija Jokubauskaitė, Thomas Poell, Ladan Rahbari, Hanne Stegeman, Olav Velthuis

Digitization is transforming intimate practices around the globe. The expansive reach of digital connectivity is reorganizing public/private, global/local boundaries, and pushing beyond dominant Western understandings of intimacy. Digital platforms and mobile apps—Facebook, Tiktok, Instagram, WeChat, WhatsApp, Tinder, Tantan, Blued, and Chaturbate—have rapidly become central to intimacy. These platforms and apps enable and allow for the traveling of new forms of self-expression and identity construction, including LGBTQAI+ cultures and identifications across the globe, as well as new types of social connections and attachments. Such connections interact in complex ways with conventional understandings of sex, love and desire, as well as of friendship, kinship, community, nationhood, partnership and collegiality.

While the digital is becoming intricately entangled with every social activity, these platforms and apps are characterized by distinct material characteristics within technological, geopolitical contexts. Economically speaking, social networks, live streaming platforms, and chat and dating apps constitute markets, connecting end-users, content producers, advertisers, data intermediaries, venture capitalists, and other third parties. Powered by large-scale infrastructures, they bring about the datafication and commodification of intimacy. Simultaneously, these techno-commercial assemblages cannot be separated from the affective

exchanges and emotional experiences that constitute the immaterial content of digital interactions and relations.

In the light of these transformations, the Global Digital Intimacies conference aims to gather together scholars from around the world to investigate digital intimacy in all its varieties. We understand digital intimacy as affect, labor, a form of being, and structure of feeling. It takes shape through the digital, but is deeply material. It includes love, sex, and sexuality, but also wider sets of relations. Intimacy is conceived as a function that brings together humans and non-humans, shaping communities and identities. As Lauren Berlant (1998, 281) argued, it "involves an aspiration for a narrative about something shared, a story about both oneself and others that will turn out in a particular way". Intimacy is a political experience, transcending the public and the private. Intimacy, as a structure of feeling, can bring social movements together, it can feed into fantasies about a better life, but can also propel conservative nostalgic and nationalistic discourses. What are the political implications of digital intimacies, and how are different forms of governance trying to steer or control these politics?

Intimacy holds different meanings and takes various forms across the globe, and thus, in the spirit of decolonial and postcolonial thinking, we encourage participants to reflect and develop alternative interpretations of intimacy, and to avoid universalizing Western-centric understandings of intimacy in their papers. Similarly, digital technologies are used and imagined differently based on historical, cultural, and political contexts. Accordingly, we urge participants to steer clear of both techno-deterministic and cultural essentialist rhetorics, grounding their research in specific localities, but remaining attuned to global entanglements. The conference is explicitly interdisciplinary, bringing together media studies scholars, sociologists, communication researchers, information scientists, anthropologists, philosophers, economists, and legal scholars, among others. The digitization of intimacy requires interdisciplinary collaboration to address the hard questions triggered by this development.

You do not have to present work in order to attend the conference, however, you must register by [purchasing a ticket](#).

## ON THE COLONIALITY OF THOUGHT

*Inaugural Lecture Rolando Vázquez Melken* | 27 June 2024, 16:30 [Aula - Oude Lutherse kerk](#).

In his inaugural lecture, Rolando Vázquez Melken addresses decoloniality and the limits of western thought.

The so-called 'Age of Discovery' coincides with the gestation of western modernity and the onset of the modern/colonial order. The notion of discovery has certainly functioned as a euphemism for the mass

conquest of peoples and territories. Yet, Vázquez Melken interrogates the 'Age of Discovery' as an index of the impetus of expansion of western thought. Decoloniality brings modern thought face to face with its own finitude, disorientation and forgetfulness. To the loss of Earth and the loss of worlds, earthlessness and worldlessness, corresponds a loss of thought, argues Vázquez Melken.

In his inaugural lecture, he will address the question of the coloniality of modern thought and the task of decolonial thinking. What is the task of thinking, beyond the metaphysics of modernity? What is the task of thinking in the awareness of the precedence and finitude of Earth? What is the task of thinking in relation to what has been unthought, to what is under erasure? Prof. dr. R.D. Vázquez Melken, Professor of Post/Decolonial Theories and Literatures, with a focus on the Global South: *On the Coloniality of Thought*.

## CRITICAL THEORIES TODAY

*Axel Honneth and the Frankfurt School(s)*. 4-5 July 2024, University of Amsterdam

Axel Honneth is widely seen as one of the major voices in critical theory today. His work represents both a continuation and reinterpretation of the main themes of the early Frankfurt School, as well as an opening up of this tradition. The contributions of this workshop engage with the multifaceted legacies of critical theory, in Honneth's work and beyond.

*Organized with support from the philosophy departments of the universities of Amsterdam, Frankfurt and Groningen, the Laboratoire interdisciplinaire d'études sur les réflexivités Paris, the Duitsland-Institut, the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis and the Philosophy & Public Affairs Capacitygroup*

The workshop is open for all, but registration is required. Please indicate if you are interested in gaining credit as a student. Registrations with Lukas Seidler: [l.h.s.seidler@uva.nl](mailto:l.h.s.seidler@uva.nl)

### Program

- 4 July *Workshop* (University Library, Doelenzaal)
- 14.00 Welcome and Introduction (Daniel Loick, Amsterdam)
- 14.15 Frederick Neuhouser (New York): *How To Criticize Inequality: Lessons from Piketty*, Chair: Daniel Loick (Amsterdam)
- 15.15 Break
- 15.30 Kristina Lepold (Berlin): *What is Institutional Racism?*, Chair: Veerle van Wijngaarden (Amsterdam)
- 16.30 Break
- 16.45 Lillian Cicerchia (Amsterdam): *Emancipation from what and for whom? A materialist critique of recognition*, Chair: Titus Stahl (Groningen)
- 17.45 Break
- 20.00 *Evening Lecture*: Axel Honneth (New York): *One step forward, two steps back. Postcolonialism and the West*, Chair: Beate Roessler (Amsterdam) (SPUI 25)
- 21.30 Reception (SPUI25)

Please register separately for the event at Spui25 via <https://spui25.nl/>.

5 July *Workshop* (University Library, Doelenzaal)

10.00 Graduate Panel: Mathurin Schweyer (Paris), Veerle van Wijngaarden (Amsterdam), Wouter Wiersma (Groningen), Chair: Julia Christ (Paris)

12.00 Lunch Break

13.30 Federica Gregoratto (Berlin): *Recognition of x. Projection, lack, transformation*, Chair: Beate Roessler (Amsterdam)

14.30 Break

14.45 Jörg Schaub (Essex): *Aesthetic (Mis-)Recognition: Expanding the Critical Theory of Recognition*, Chair: Titus Stahl (Groningen)

15.45 Break

16.15 Juliane Rebentisch (Offenbach): *Notes on Political Optics*, Chair: Martin Saar (Frankfurt)

17.15 Final Remarks

### CALL FOR THOUGHTS: CULTURAL HERITAGE AND IDENTITY

*National Sector Plan Conference on Friday 20 September 2024 at the Erasmus University Rotterdam*

You are cordially invited to the very first National Sector Plan Conference “Cultural Heritage and Identity” organised by the Dutch faculties in Arts and Humanities and hosted by Erasmus University Rotterdam. The conference is intended for all staff involved in the sector plan theme Cultural Heritage and Identity. Mark your calendars for Friday 20 September for this national gathering!

The conference will facilitate roundtable discussions on national cooperation in education, research, and dissemination. Additionally, there will be time for networking and exchange. Please reserve the date in your calendars. We encourage you to spread this message widely in your network, as we do not have all email addresses of concerned staff members.

To keep track of the number of potential participants, [we kindly request that you pre-register via this form](#) (without commitment).

The programme is currently in development, and the organisers welcome suggestions from the field. To share your thoughts, you can share these via the pre-registration form. You can also submit suggestions via this form.

### CALL FOR PAPERS: THE CIRCUITS OF TELEVISION. HISTORIES, TECHNOLOGIES, IMAGINARIES

*International Conference University of Lausanne, Switzerland, May 7-9, 2025 | Organized by Marie Sandoz, Markus Stauff and Anne-Katrin Weber | Deadline for proposals: June 12, 2024.*

Television has been conceived as a mass medium that broadcasts a linear program flow to a wide and anonymous domestic audience. Occasionally, the medium is praised for its power of dissemination; more often, it is criticized for centralized transmission of

indiscriminate content to distracted or passive viewers. Television, in this perspective, lacks any kind of direct feedback mechanism.

In this conference, we want to rethink television history and theory by focusing on the medium’s circuits and multiple loops. This shift in perspective brings to our attention television’s technological flexibility and interrelations with other media, as well as its sprawling, often hidden, cultural, industrial, and political productivity. Taking as a starting point the *Circuits of Television*, this conference also aims to inquire the much-overlooked connection between the history of computing, cybernetics, video art, ecology and system theory – where circuits and feedback loops are key concepts – and television’s historiography.

Looking at televisual apparatuses and imaginaries within and beyond the cultural form of broadcasting, the medium’s history offers a rich variety of circuits that embed sound and vision, signals and data, places and behavior in feedback systems for different ends. Famously, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, inventors and writers were imagining interactive forms of television such as picture telephones. Similarly, in the postwar period, broadcasting television’s history was ripe with unsolicited and solicited forms of audience feedback, ranging from letters of discontent viewers to audience polls and the collection of behavioral traces through set-top boxes before social media. At the same time, television found numerous applications in closed-circuit systems in the military and the industry, in science and education, serving automation and other practical goals. Not least through video art and surveillance systems, feedback functions have been spreading across private and public spaces. Television’s constant shape shifting (e.g. through video and remote control, through satellite and cable) generates new apparatuses and new imaginaries of circuits’ applicability across these different domains. In short, past and present ideas, practices, and apparatuses of television encompass multiple loops.

The conference aims at tracking televisual circuits from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It seeks to grasp their functions and operations ranging from interaction and communication to automation and control. The notion of “circuits” is thus proposed as a heuristic tool to revisit and complicate television’s long history. It fosters an expanded definition of television that is not limited to broadcasting TV but includes television’s useful forms and its entanglements with the histories of computer, telecommunications, video art, cybernetics, ecology, and “closed world” epistemologies.

In line with this expanded definition and our desire to cross disciplines, we hope to bring together television historians with scholars working in the fields of media history and theory, science and technology studies, art history, history of science and knowledge, history of medicine, environmental history, economic history, social history and related fields.

This international and bilingual (French/English) conference is part of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) sponsored research project on *Operational TV. Audiovisual Closed-Circuits from the Military to the Classroom, 1930s-1990s* led at the University of Lausanne by Anne-Katrin Weber, and co-organized with the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis. The keynote will be given by Prof. Kit Hugues (Colorado State University) whose recent monograph *Television at Work. Industrial Media and American Labor* (2020) explores how American businesses appropriated television as a “workplace medium” supporting industrial efficiency, ideological orientation, and corporate expansion.

We want to invite emerging and senior scholars to contribute research that may include but is not limited to the following topics:

*Media archaeological approaches to televisual circuits:*

- Televisual circuits in the *longue durée*: ideas and fictional apparatus of interactive and bi-directional television from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century on
- Closed-circuit television in the military, science, industry; television as a tool for surveillance, targeting, and automation
- Feedback mechanisms and television in medicine and education
- Televisual circuits and the renewal of television historiography

*Televisual Circuits and Broadcasting Television:*

- Televisual scandals: deprogramming and censorship of broadcast content because of public protest
- Televisual tools and community building: “Watching ourselves on TV”
- Audience feedback: letters, surveys, and audience surveillance
- Rearticulation of liveness and flow in institutional settings

*Televisual circuits and the remapping of media ecologies:*

- “Closed world” thinking in the postwar era, cybernetics, and the emergence of television
- Computational circuits and their entanglement with television
- Concepts of circularity/circuits in ecology and energy flow analysis and its relation to cybernetics and television history
- Circuits in Video Art and their link to television history

Presentations will last a maximum of 20 minutes.

Please submit an abstract of no more than 500 words (including 2 or 3 key references) plus a short bio (max. 150 words) to [marie.sandoz@unil.ch](mailto:marie.sandoz@unil.ch), **before June 21, 2024**.

Decisions on acceptance will be announced mid-July. Travel (by train only) and hotel will be covered by the organizers.

## CALL FOR PAPERS: SENSORIAL LEGALITIES: SPECULATING AESTHETICS AND ART/LAW

*Critical Legal Conference in Lund 16-18 September 2024 | Stream conveners: Julia Chryssostalis, Yiorgos-Eugenios Douliakakos, Swastee Ranjan and Lucy Finchett-Maddock*

While speculative thinking has been present throughout the history of ideas, its recent re-emergence as a site for critical and socio-legal theory has been grounded in developments in posthuman, new materialist and speculative realist thinking. These theoretical frameworks have broadened the understanding of law in relation to its environment through time, space, materiality, affect, aesthetics, and practice. Moreover, in recent years, an increasing body of scholarship that has been exploring law’s sensorial lives: the protocols the law uses (and abuses) to see, hear, touch, smell, and taste; the spaces, instruments and media that it uses (and abuses) to do so; and the strategies and techniques it deploys in order to continue not to see, hear, touch, etc.; as well as the protocols, spaces, instruments and techniques through which the law is seen, heard, touched, smelled, and tasted, and the ways that law itself regulates what is seen, heard, touched, smelled, and tasted. In other words, attempting to move beyond the question of whether and how law feels or thinks, we are interested in how it senses. That is to say, our aim is to probe into the legal life of the senses and in the sensorial life of law as well as the ways in which life is sensed in law. This turn towards the sensorial and the affective not only animates the material but poses questions on the various possibilities of representation that goes beyond categories of taste and judgment. In this context, speculating aesthetics foregrounds the material and sensorial, among other things, displaces the bias of anthropocentric thinking that has occupied broad swathes of preceding philosophical engagement, challenges a turn to a realism outside of our conception (and one similarly altered from the realism of pre-structural and post-structural thought), and seeks to engage in experimental imaginaries which illuminates our complex socio-political and economic contexts.

Speculative affective aesthetics in law understands that questions of law cannot be separated from the spatial, material and temporal. It suggests that “law leaks from building[s], filling up the spaces of its surrounding with a pulsating promise of its affect.” The speculative potential of the affective and the sensorial become sites for law to ‘stage’ itself and emerge as a normative category that directs and composes the real. At the same time, the de-centring of the human has become prominent not only within contemporary legal philosophy, but so too within contemporary art practices, and its co-fabulation through art/law and affective aesthetics. Art/law denotes uncertainty found in the ‘/’ of art/law as entropy, an emergent mattering of law and art in its non-dialectic movement and synchronicity. This accounting for the way matter

changes, alters and makes way for the juridical potentiality of every moment, every legal iteration, and every possibility for resistance and creativity, through material interfaces, whereby contemporary art practices understand this power of incompleteness and change within their work; tempering the questioning of art for art's sake and any division between the political and juridical, speculation becoming a tool for hardening emancipatory practices. Following from this, speculative thinking has become synonymous with imagining new futures and emancipatory capacities, where worlds "are not containers, they're patternings, risky co-makings, speculative fabrications." It has become influential in science fiction writing and the development of Afrofuturism through the work of science fiction writer Octavia Butler, and jazz musician Sun Ra amongst many others, where new endings and new beginnings are reimagined and time turned in its head, for colonised and racialised peoples (seen as freedom from white imposed slavery).

We welcome abstracts that speak to the speculative sensorial in law, legal affective aesthetics and their crossovers, examples of art/law that bring law and art together with respect for their incomplete speculative potentialities through written, textual, video, visual or sonic form.

Please send abstracts with relevant media to Yiorgos-Evgenios Douliakas [g.e.douliakas@uva.nl](mailto:g.e.douliakas@uva.nl) and Swastee Ranjan [s.ranjan@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:s.ranjan@exeter.ac.uk) by 30 June 2024.

More details can be found here → <https://sv-se.eu.invajo.com/events/welcome/id/5302bb10-d48a-11ee-a8ed-fda066fed7fa>

#### CALL FOR PAPERS: ON THE USES OF ABSENCE

*Soapbox 6.0*— *peer reviewed*; open to critical and artistic work; submission deadline: **June 10**; extended proposals.

Can we speak of a turn to absence? Across the contemporary academic conjuncture, theory is reapproaching the absent in all its varying fleshly and rhetorical forms, revalorizing 'absence' itself as a critical matter. Enduring scholarly investments in representing and re-presenting the absented body (from the archive and media, from power and institutions, from theory and writing) have become supplemented in current critical work by an affirmative interest in **staying with absence as such**. We are thinking of Rizvana Bradley's recent aesthetic analyses of the forms and shapes of the black body as the absence in ontology; of Lee Edelman's insistence on and reappreciation of queerness as the inevitable, generative absence at the heart of the symbolic; we are thinking of the optimism attached to absence in trans studies' reappropriation of and investment in techniques of destruction (Marquis Bey) and destitution (Jack Halberstam). The figure and body of the absent has started to matter similarly outside the academic. Absenteeism in the workplace and in university rooms are on the rise; not showing up, not producing or delivering, being absent, and

withdrawal - acts such as these formalize and mobilize absence, relocate it at the heart of myriad resistances against exploitation, appropriation, assimilation, and normativity.

For its seventh issue, *Soapbox: Journal for Cultural Analysis* invites (young) researchers, (established) scholars and creatives alike to submit work on **the uses and aesthetics of absence in and outside of theory today**. It is our point of departure that absence fails every time to be purely nothing. In all of the scenes and settings described above and below, absence is given a shape, meaning, form; it is put in writing, where it has a function, a flavor, and a politics - absence rarely looks the same. Staying with absence rather than straying from it, we invite responses to questions such as: What are the shapes and forms of absence that inflect and structure the contemporary theoretical debate? Where does absence turn up, where doesn't it? How is absence mobilized politically, to what ends and with which results? In your fields or for your objects, how does absence matter, make matter? How is absence formalized (anti-)(re)productively? How is (some) form absent(ed)? What are the uses of absence, what can they be, and what have they been, for better and for worse? Finally, how to think the contradiction and the provocation of a contemporary aesthetics of absence?

#### **possible clusters to think alongside:**

**absence and queer theory, sex, gender** — think, e.g., of the sustaining investments in thinking sex and gender via psychoanalysis and negativity; of Edelman's turn to ab-sens and sens-absence; of Leo Bersani's older investments in impoverishment and asceticism and its entanglements with the critical work of reading and writing; of queer theory's origins in (AIDS and policy-related) death.

**absence and trans studies** — think of trans studies' increasing embrace of a de-presenting: destruction, destitution, the jouissance of failure; of the 'afterwards' of destruction; of what's at stake and what goes hidden in staking critical programmes on a desire for formlessness.

**absence and afropessimism/afrofuturism** — think, e.g., of Frank B. Wilderson III's claim of "Black absence," of a blackness ontologically outside the dominant social order; of afrofuturism's intent on remobilizing or filling such absences as sites of creative and generative reclamation.

**absence and decolonial scholarship & migration studies** — think, e.g., of the way absence has been read as problem in decolonial scholarship; of whether an affirmative take on absence can ever be a decolonial praxis; of whether erasure is the same as absence; think of figures of absence tied up in the many layers of discourse surrounding migration (studies) today; of the absence of citizenship; but also of what will emerge if we treat absence as a place that people live and make life in, forced or otherwise.

**absence and philosophy** – think, e.g., of the epistemological challenge of the nothing; of whether it is possible to demarcate and frame absence; of whether can we know of or appoint meaning to matters which are out of sight, touch, heart and mind; of approaches to absence ranging from phenomenology, making the absent known and felt, to analytical considerations on the structure of absence.

...and then there is **absence and** abjection, violence, art, the anarchitectural, affect, signification, silence, void, lack, the unthinkable, the unintelligible, the repressed, the dark, the out of reach, and what about **anti-absence** thought and thinkers?

**the details:**

We are inviting **extended proposals** in **MLA** formatting and referencing style to be submitted to [submissions@soapboxjournal.net](mailto:submissions@soapboxjournal.net) by **June 10th, 2024**. Each proposal must include an **abstract** of 300-500 words **and** a **brief outline** of the content and its order (up to 200 words, can be in bullet-points!). The outline is meant to give an indication of the intended structuring and weighing of the various elements of your text; we understand and expect that this will change again during drafting and editing. Submissions should be sent as a file attachment to the email, and the content of the file should be anonymised.

Guidelines for creative submissions are more flexible. They can be finished works, word-based or otherwise, but please keep in mind our spatial limitations: we publish and print in book format, and we have a limited amount of pages to give to each submission. A sense of the formatting possibilities can be garnered from previous issues and our [Instagram](#) (open-access pdf versions are available on our [website](#)).

We will try to send out conditional acceptance emails by **June 21st**. Upon acceptance, the authors of the academic essays will be asked to submit a 4000-6000 word full draft by **September 2nd**. The editing and publishing process will span the next academic year (September 2024 - February 2025).

It would be very helpful if you could let us know in your email where you saw our CFP. If you have any questions regarding your submission, do not hesitate to contact us at [submissions@soapboxjournal.net](mailto:submissions@soapboxjournal.net).

**SAFE HAVEN FELLOWSHIP**

This Call for Applications in the extended Safe Haven Fellowship particularly invites reactions from scholars, journalists, writers and artists affected by the war in Gaza. [Safe Haven Fellowship extended to all scholars and cultural actors at risk | NIAS \(knav.nl\)](#)

The Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study (NIAS-KNAW) seeks to protect and foster academic freedoms. The freedom of scholars to design and conduct their own research, and to safely communicate the insights and results gained, is a precondition for fruitful academic and public debate, and a cornerstone of democracy. As a research institute we choose not to issue general political statements, even though we obviously condemn all violence against civilians. We are specifically concerned with situations in which [academic freedoms are under threat](#).

Two years ago, NIAS established Safe Haven Fellowships for Ukrainian and dissident Russian and Belarusian researchers. Up until now twelve scholars, authors, artists and journalists have been welcomed at NIAS for one semester. This gives them a breather, a visit to normalcy, and the opportunity to continue their work. With these experiences in mind, NIAS now extends the Safe Haven Fellowships to all scholars at risk.

This extension and the accompanying additional Call for Applications for our Safe Haven Fellowship is intended, at this stage, to provide assistance to scholars and cultural actors affected by the war in Gaza. In recent months, all twelve universities in the Gaza Strip have been targeted by Israeli forces and numerous universities in the West Bank were raided by the IDF. All higher education establishments in Gaza have endured damage or complete destruction of their physical infrastructures, which will affect the academic ecosystem for generations to come. Human casualties further add to the demise of the Palestinian academic system, as three presidents and nearly a hundred deans and professors have been killed in the bombardments so far.