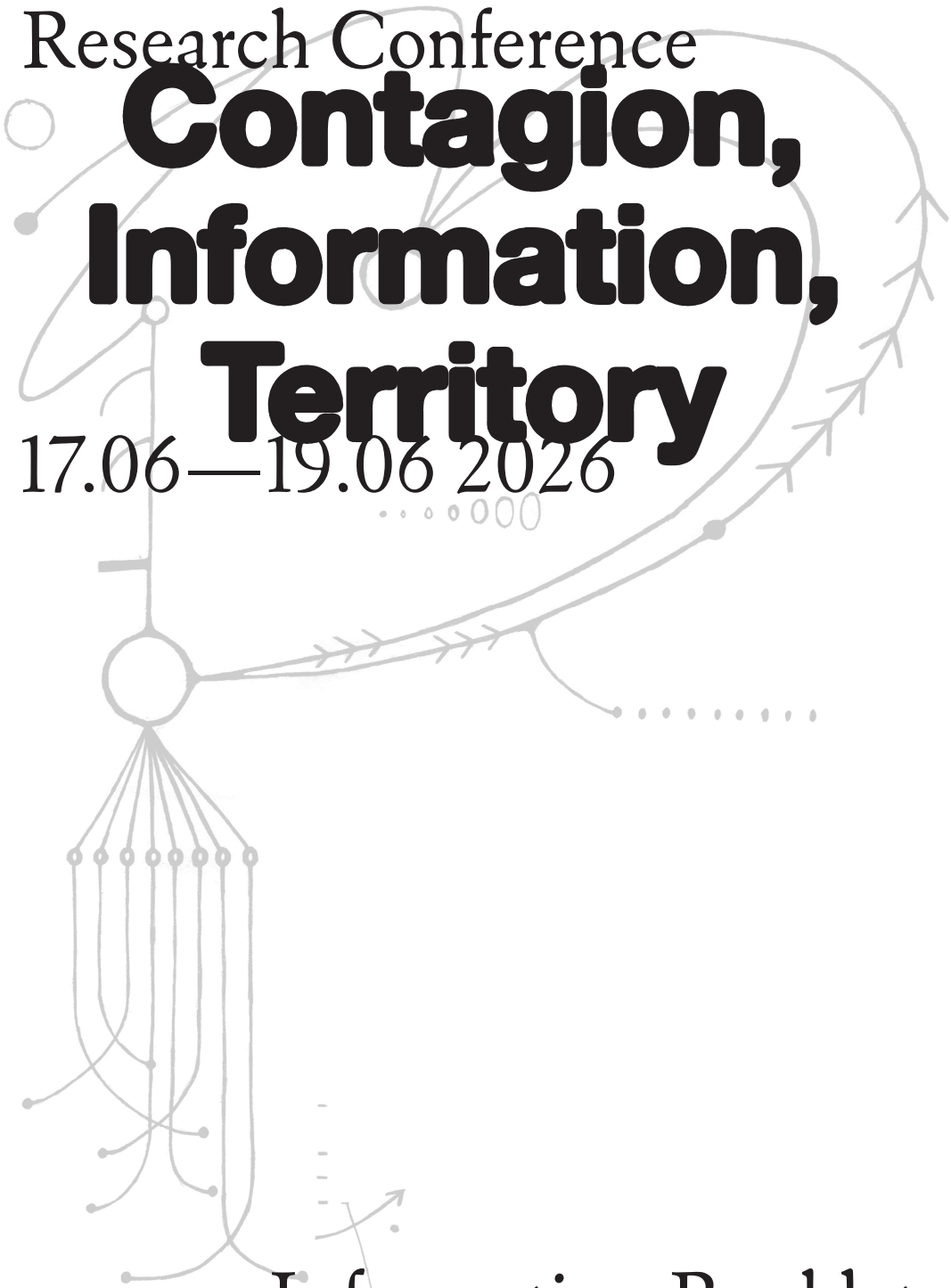


Research Conference

Contagion, Information, Territory

17.06—19.06 2026

Information Booklet



Contagion, Information, Territory

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Contagion, Information, Territory

Introduction

This conference, organized by the research group “Contagious Territories” at Leiden University, with support of the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Analysis (NICA), aims to investigate the relationship between three cultural concepts: *contagion*, *information*, and *territory*.

Mapping the connections between these concepts is important, not only for the study of culture as an academic endeavor, but also for making sense of our political present. How do public health interventions, immunization policies, and biopolitical regimes help govern populations under conditions of uncertainty? Concepts of (auto-)immunity, and parasitism, have been central to discussions around biomedicine, territory, and democracy, and considerations of care, the viral, and vaccination have found new urgency during the COVID-19 pandemic. And as new forms of exclusion and colonialism emerge and old apartheid policies are reinvigorated, the movement of people, the spread of disease, and the circulation of information become ever more central to our understanding of politics, genocide, identity, and governance. The war in Gaza and the illegal occupation of the West Bank are a case in point. This conflict is both territorial and informational. The Israeli government employs debilitating strategies of withholding care and barring humanitarian aid to preemptively immunize Israel’s cultural and legal self perception as a “uniquely” Jewish nation-state against Palestinian life (Puar). The entangled histories of automation, racialization, and labor, articulated through technical and imperial rhetorics, constitute another site of scrutiny for the ongoing implications of colonial legacies (Franklin). With the rise of AI and machine learning, it is more urgent than ever to examine the rhetorical underpinnings of information regimes that fuel racialized anxieties about replaceability and the fungibility of work.

By studying *contagion*, *information*, and *territory* in conjunction, this conference aims to take stock of a cultural and political assemblage which shapes contemporary forms of exclusion, enslavement, debilitation, killing, and genocide today.

Dr. Seb Franklin

Automation's Territory: Labour, Machinery, Slavery

ABSTRACT Writing on automation from a multitude of different perspectives tends to reproduce a single image of production: a flat landscape of humans and machines with interchangeable functions. This common image informs the opposite predictions of machine-enabled abundance and leisure and machine-driven mass unemployment. In this talk, I focus on the remarkably constant presence of a third figure, that of the slave, across the history of utopian and pessimistic writing on automaton. From the late 1940s to the present, automation, labour, and slavery have been invoked together in congressional hearings and parliamentary debates, newspaper and magazine articles, documentaries and news segments, trade union reports, industry conferences, technical writings, works of philosophy, and histories of science and technology. The talk asks two questions of this phenomenon, each of which attends to a different scale. What animates this compulsion, to rhetorically deploy slavery to say something about automation? And what becomes legible when the resultant rhetorical forms are read closely?

TIME & PLACE

18 June 2026,
10:00-11:30,
P.J. Veth Building, Room 1.01

KEYNOTE

Prof. Dr. Jasbir Puar

Living in Genocide

ABSTRACT Genocide is not only about killing and extermination. It is also about forcing people to live a certain kind of life. It is this consignment—this coercive tethering of bodies and communities to lives shaped by siege, starvation, debilitation, and slow death—that conditions genocide as a way of life, as a continuum and not an event, as an accumulative process, and increasingly, as a sanctioned method of governance. This talk therefore discusses “living in genocide,” and not “living through genocide” as a way of illuminating the thresholds of bio and necropolitical thought.

TIME & PLACE

19 June 2026,

10:00-11:30,

Lipsius, Room 1.48

Only open to conference participants.

KEYNOTE

DAY 1 **10:30—12:00**
PANEL 1

Informational
Management, Policing &
Occupation

The Face as Territory: Masking, Anonymity, and Resistance to Biometric Contagion.

ABSTRACT Facial recognition technologies operate at the intersection of contagion, information, and territory, transforming the human face into a contested site where surveillance capitalism extracts, circulates and weaponises biometric data while State power exerts the technology as a tool of repression and control. In this paper, I argue that facial recognition technologies functions through a dual logic of informational contagion and accumulation, where biometric data is spread virally across commercial and state networks, colonising faces as territories of capital and control.

The mask, as a technology of identity, has proven to be a material culture object par excellence that can safeguard anonymity against biometric capture. Through critical analysis of anti-surveillance masking practices during the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests, and the concurrent pro- and anti-masking pandemic-era protests, this paper examines how masking enacts Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's term "deterritorialization". These practices demonstrate a refusal of facial inscription within biometric regimes, creating temporary zones of anonymity that disrupt biometric capture and unsolicited capital extraction. I propose they embody the process of deterritorialization, representing attempts to escape the rigid structures of power that facial recognition technologies impose.

By mapping the territorial struggles over facial anonymity through masking practices, this paper demonstrates how the face becomes a vector through which power, informational extraction, and territorial control converge. In this exchange, I ask, why does the spectre of anonymity induce such fear, discomfort, and mistrust, inviting dialogue on the idea of anonymity as a 'threat'. Considering the concept of anonymity as a 'threat,' it is fair to ask the questions of 'to whom?' and 'to what?'

BIO

Dr Laini Burton is Senior Lecturer in Art History and Theory at the Queensland College of Art and Design, Griffith University, Australia. Her research centres on contemporary visual art practices, bio-art and design, fashion theory, performance, and body/spatial relations. Her book, *Masked: Anonymity, Empowerment, and Identity in Fashion and Popular Culture*, will be published by Bloomsbury, London, in 2026.

Masa Awartani

Digital Occupation as Contagion: Telecommunications Control in the West Bank.

ABSTRACT This paper theorizes Israel's regulatory stranglehold on Palestinian telecommunications as a form of digital occupation—a contagious logic of control that spreads through legal, infrastructural, and spectral networks to enforce territorial subjugation. Drawing from my LL.M. thesis and interviews with Palestinian telecom executives, I analyze how Israel weaponizes three interlocking systems: the permit regime in Area C, which fragments physical network coherence; the withholding of electromagnetic spectrum, inducing technological debt and service inferiority; and the unilaterally defined dual-use import list, which operates as a non-tariff barrier under the guise of security. Together, these mechanisms produce what I term a "compliance trilemma," where Palestinian corporations are forced to navigate contradictory legal orders—Palestinian domestic law, Israeli military authority, and international trade standards—resulting in systemic corporate paralysis.

I argue that this trilemma functions as a biopolitical contagion, infecting the very infrastructure of Palestinian economic life and preempting sovereignty through datafication. The electromagnetic spectrum—a public natural resource—is administratively seized and weaponized, transforming connectivity into a tool of necropolitical governance. This regime not only violates international humanitarian law but also exemplifies how information control becomes territorial control, and how bureaucratic contagion spreads dependency.

BIO

I am a Palestinian lawyer and researcher focused on gender, law, and political economy in SWANA. I hold an LL.M. in Compliance from the University of Fribourg and are currently examining the weaponization of corporate regulation in occupied territories through feminist and postcolonial lenses.

Nicolo Paolo P. Ludovice

Informational Territory-Making: Health Data, Sovereignty, and the Biopolitics of Philippine Reconstruction, 1946-1953

BIO

Nicolo Paolo P. Ludovice is a Research Assistant Professor at the Division of Public Policy, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. His research interests broadly cover environmental humanities, food histories and policy, the history of science, technology, and medicine (including biomedicine, public health, and zoonoses), and multispecies sustainability, with the Philippines as his geographical focus. He leads the History and Policy Research Group, where he is currently working on the rehabilitation of health systems in post-conflict societies. His work appears in leading interdisciplinary journals as well as in the edited collections, *Routledge Handbook of Environmental History* (Routledge, 2024) and *Halo-Halo Ecologies: The Emergent Environments Behind Filipino Food* (University of Hawai'i, 2025). He is the recipient of the Wang Gungwu Prize for Research Postgraduate Students by the University of Hong Kong (2022) and the prestigious Young Historian's Prize 2022 by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, the Republic of the Philippines. He holds a PhD in History from the University of Hong Kong.

ABSTRACT This paper examines how health information operated as an instrument of territorial production in the Philippines between 1946 and 1953, when the newly independent republic reconstructed its health system under American rehabilitation legislation. Drawing on the Philippine Rehabilitation Act of 1946 (s. 1610), its annual reports to the US Congress, and Philippine health agency records, the paper introduces the concept of "informational territory-making" to describe how epidemiological data, damage assessments, and rehabilitation plans actively produced the postwar Philippines as a governable space. These documents did not restore a prior territory destroyed by war. They selectively reactivated and repurposed colonial health categories to serve new political imperatives, chief among them the simultaneous demonstration of Filipino self-governance capacity and the justification of continued American involvement.

The paper argues that postwar health reconstruction produced a form of sovereignty that was at once declared and constrained. The Philippines held formal independence, yet the categories through which the nation's health was known, the standards against which it was measured, and the audiences to whom it was reported remained structured by American institutional requirements. Each annual report rendered certain areas, populations, and health conditions visible while leaving others outside the frame of recovery. This case reveals a form of territorial power

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that operated not through military occupation or economic coercion alone but through the control of how a territory was represented to itself and to others. By historicizing the political work of health data at a moment of decolonization, this paper contributes to ongoing conversations about contagion, information, and territory.

DAY 1 — PANEL 1

DAY 1 13:30—15:00
PANEL 2

Mediating Contagion

Valences of the Same: Memes, Metaphors, and Contagious Analogs.

ABSTRACT As logics of digitality ingress our milieux and modes of prediction become methods of social (re)production (Chun), sameness—were we to follow Byung Chul-Han’s critique of the growing “terror of the same”—may be said to abound today. From the flattening of historical

BIO

Rachel Tay is a PhD candidate in Duke’s Literature Program. Historicizing the tropes and media-technological infrastructures by which we configure attention, her dissertation probes the latent politics of our sensoria. Her work can be found in *Communications+1*, *Post45*, *Mid-Theory*, *Techno-Orientalism*, *Vol.II.*, and is also forthcoming in *Angelaki*.

time, with all its alterity, into the “depthlessness” that Fredric Jameson suggests is constitutive of postmodernity to the nearly seamless coordination of information across planetary scales, the friction of mediation has ostensibly been eroded to a deluge of categorical identities. For this reason, viral epidemiology is often taken as the paradigm of our current regimes of techno-cultural production (Sampson, Munster, Latour); the latter’s tendency towards memetic unities, under a recursively self-aggrandiz-

ing capitalism, tracks the presubjective “contagions of imitations” by which biological infections sustain themselves (Tarde). Yet, counter to growing anxieties about the total collapse of individual subjectivity by forces of capture, compression, and homogenization, it would appear that such reproductive (homeo)stasis need not entail a fatalistic end. Rather, as this paper contends, sameness affords variety.

Probing the procedures of permutation, repetition, and copying promulgated by our infrastructures of algorithmic derivation/reproduction, my project disambiguates the valences of sameness therein. Drawing specifically on the Chinese idiom of “Shanzhai”—as exemplified by the activist art collective, Shanzhai Lyric’s improvisatory aesthetics—it elucidates how derivative objects may nonetheless hypostatize novel poetic and politic modes. The virality of the collective’s Instagram archive of non-standard English phrasings on shanzhai garments, I suggest, counterposes Western metaphysics’s “white mythology” (Derrida) of originality against what Gilbert Simondon calls “operations of analogy,” or processes of individuation that are crystallized in the eventual in-formation of identifiable—but not identical—entities. In so doing, what they ultimately rehearse is the indispensability and radical potential of a sameness reimagined as semantic nearness, kinship without filiation, or, as Denise Ferreira da Silva puts it, “difference without separability.”

Lucy Wowk

Melancholic Disavowal: Imagining the End of Humanity.

ABSTRACT This paper draws on psychoanalytic theory to examine the failure of information and knowledge to prompt meaningful ethical action. I read this especially in cultural objects' formal and figurative depictions of the end of humanity as a means of acknowledging the possibility (or fantasy) of future mass destruction while enabling the disavowal of immediate self-implicated crises. I develop this argument through an analysis of the 2025 film *Bugonia* (dir. Yorgos Lanthimos). In a review of the film, critic Peter Bradshaw asks: "Does the globally traumatised finale succeed in retrospectively upgrading the significance of what has preceded it?" Here, I ask: Do fantasies of the end of humanity succeed in retroactively ascribing significance to continuing life as it is? I argue that the film's final scene sustains fantasies of total destruction that do not compel ethical action but instead enable business as usual for the bourgeois subject as an exempt spectator to mass destruction.

Building on Alenka Zupančič's formulation of disavowal, encapsulated by the phrase "I know well, but all the same," I conceptualize this dynamic as a pathological melancholic contagion circulating through bourgeois culture and securing subjectivity amidst shattering realities of global crises and violence. Drawing on Sigmund Freud's account of melancholia, I understand this condition as structured by opposing forces—attachment and detachment, love and hatred, ego and object—bound together in the maintenance of an internalized wound that is as narcissistic and self-destructive.

While melancholia has often been mobilized in queer theory to affirm non-normativity and asociality, I instead propose it as a contagious pathology animating disavowal and sustaining the normative bourgeois subject's claim to an absolved human-neutral position (see Sylvia Wynter). The paper argues that the bourgeois attachment to the category "humanity" reveals itself as destructively melancholic: an inward turning toward the lost object that is the fantasy of the human as a coherent, unifying category absolved of sin.

DAY 1 — PANEL 2

BIO

Lucy Wowk holds an MA in Communication & Culture from *TMU*/York University and is a PhD candidate in Social and Political Thought at York University. Her work studies the genealogy of aesthetics and its bearing upon mediations of the human as a singular concept. Currently, she teaches creative and critical thought at Toronto Metropolitan University and Sheridan College in Toronto, Canada.

Max Casey

Was the subject just a computer's idea for making more computers? On the viral logic of language and computation in the formation of subjectivity.

ABSTRACT It used to be popular in continental philosophy to say that the subject was a construct of language and the linguistic/semiotic. Is any idea now more retro? More steeped in ancient arguments about poststructuralism and the signifier? Nevertheless, in the last few years, following the generative AI boom, it has become increasingly common to see arguments for human subjectivity and intelligence as products of computation. This presentation will argue that such positions are structurally the same, and can be thought together through the metaphor of the virus.

Jacques Lacan, writing in the wake of information theory and semiotics, famously saw the subject as being an effect of the signifier. As his work went on it developed into further anti-humanist directions, and by the 1970s the 'speaking-being' was no longer a subject but merely a vessel through which language enjoyed itself. The human was simply a host for the virus of language. In a similar tone, Bogna Konior recently articulated her concept of the 'exonet' to describe the exogenous nature of computation, where human subjectivity exists primarily as the most efficient method through which computational logic can reproduce itself. She argues that computation contains a viral, parasitical logic that humans have only pretensions of control over. For computers, "humans are not as important as the memes that they carry ... ultimately, humans are just carriers for the evolution of another logic entirely."

This presentation will use the metaphor of the virus to bridge the gap between the semiotic/linguistic focus of Lacanian psychoanalysis with the computation/digital logic of contemporary posthumanism and new media studies. In doing so, it will nuance and historicize our understanding of the contemporary subject and its myriad viruses.

BIO

Max Casey is a PhD candidate at VU Amsterdam and currently a visiting scholar at the Department of Psychoanalysis and Clinical Consulting at Gent University. Their research explores the relationship between psychosis and desire in Lacanian psychoanalysis, with a cultural analysis and media studies focus.

DAY 1 — PANEL 2

DAY 1 **15:20—16:50**
PANEL 3

Cleanliness, Immunity
and Health

Pathologizing Crime: Medical Metaphors and Models in Predictive Policing.

ABSTRACT Predictive policing models claim to forecast, through the statistical analysis of historical and real-time data, when and where crime is most likely to be committed, or who is most likely to be involved, either as a perpetrator or a victim, in the near future. The predictions are used to inform targeted policing strategies (e.g., patrol deployment) aimed at pre-emption and deterrence. An examination of predictive policing programs developed in two of the largest cities in the United States reveals the recurrent use of medical and biological metaphors and categories to explain the algorithmic functioning of predictive models. In Los Angeles, PredPol employed an epidemic-type aftershock sequence (ETAS) model to predict

BIO

Stelios Koufogiannakis is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and an academic fellow at the Hellenic Foundation for Research & Innovation. His research focuses on the study of digital systems of behavioral control and preventive repression based on big data and artificial intelligence. He completed his undergraduate studies in Management Science and Technology at the Athens University of Economics and Business and his postgraduate studies in Political Science and Sociology at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

crime. Operation LASER was described as “analogous to laser surgery”. In Chicago, the Strategic Subject List approached the spread of violence within communities in the same way as the spread of infectious diseases. Likewise, the Crime and Victimization Risk Model drew on modelling techniques originating in public health research.

The use of such categories operates on two levels. On the one hand, they serve a strong ideological function. References to established practices in the medical field are mobilized to legitimize the application of predictive policing, presenting it as familiar, routine, and socially beneficial, with the stated objective –analogous to medicine– of saving human lives. On the other hand, these references are not merely ideological discourses; they also shed light

on the computational processes underlying algorithmic risk assessments. Consequently, the machine learning epistemology of the predictive models is supplemented by an epistemology of social physics. Within this framework, lawbreaking acquires a pathological dimension, and offenders are conceptualized as if they were ill. Law enforcement agencies are thus called upon to operate with “surgical” precision in order to suppress the disease and protect society from its perceived impure or diseased elements.

Lucas Rinzema

Sanctioned Sight: Biosecurity Infrastructure as Media in the Animal-Industrial Complex.

ABSTRACT Throughout the Netherlands, sixteen sight barns (*zichtstallen*) allow humans to come in and see farmed pigs. The sight barns, allocated as such by the media branch of the Dutch pig farming organization *POV (Producentenorganisatie Varkenshouderij)*, are one of a few instances of encounter between a human public and some of the more than twenty million pigs that are bred, incarcerated and killed for their flesh annually. These encounters, of course, do not remain unmediated but take shape as a highly curated and framed performance of transparency. In this paper, I will analyze the animal-industrial deployment of infrastructure as media. My focus is on the windows that separate farmed pigs from their human spectators. The windows in the sight barns, I argue, stem from concerns with biosecurity but go beyond that to secure the hierarchical boundary between human and animal. Whereas theories of film and media have long deployed the window as a visual metaphor for the screen, I want to take the screen as a metaphor for the window and approach these architectural fixtures as media. How do they position their spectators, what do they screen from them, how do they distribute sensory perception? How does the biopolitical and perceptual regime of the animal-industrial complex rely on an entanglement of biosecurity (contagion), performed transparency (information), and a spatially and perceptually enforced human-animal difference (territoriality)? I draw on my own film-making at the sight barns, developing my critique by showing clips and considering the possibility of reframing the animal-industrial frame.

BIO

Lucas Rinzema is a researcher, filmmaker and teacher. His PhD project examines the frames and figures that dominate representations of the Dutch animal-industrial complex, and how these circulate in media.

Mathieu Bokestael

ImmunoValley: The Immunitary Imaginaries of Silicon Valley.

ABSTRACT This paper argues that the primary ideological investment of the new Silicon Valley right is one that accelerates the drive for absolute immunity already present under contemporary neoliberalism. Elsewhere, I have argued that the dominant mode of protection under neoliberalism is one of desocialisation. Under contemporary neoliberalism, immunity's ongoing semantic productivity has come to define all forms of protection—political, biomedical, ecological, psychological—as being achieved through the desocialisation of the self from its human and nonhuman environments. By focusing on a number of new Silicon Valley phenomena, this presentation will show how the new techno-capitalist right exemplifies this dynamic. New social media, it argues, seek to resolve the contradiction between the material reality of our finite interconnectedness with the desire for desocialised protection and immunity. Meanwhile, Silicon Valley's multiple eugenic projects similarly seek to immunise the self from the perceived risk, contagion, and contamination which interpenetrated life entails. Finally, utopian fantasies of space colonisation and of transhumanist bodily transcendence, too, seek to symbolically protect the self by attempting to separate the human from its material environments. This

presentation will thus show how the new Silicon Valley techno-utopianism accelerates the neoliberal drive for absolute immunity, and yet simultaneously uncovers its material impossibility.

BIO

Mathieu Bokestael is a resident scholar at University College Dublin's Humanities Institute. He recently completed his dissertation, *Reading Immunofiction: The Immunitary Unconscious in Contemporary Scottish Writing (1981-2023)*, at UCD's School of English, Drama and Film. His next project explores how contemporary immunofiction can help us challenge the immunitary imaginaries of the new Silicon Valley right.

DAY 2 **11:50—13:20**
PANEL 4

**Blackness, Borders,
Bodies**

Fugitive Community: Beyond the Paradigm of Immunization.

ABSTRACT Roberto Esposito's work has convincingly outlined how modernity is predicated on an ever-increasing predominance of a biopolitical 'paradigm of immunization' (Esposito 2008). Immunization requires the separating operations of limits to produce anti(-)bodies necessary for the sustenance of the *immunitas*. Such differentiated anti(-)bodies are produced through enclosing logics that work exclusionary, like; property lines, the 'borderization' of territories (Mbembe 2024); color lines, the racialization of bodies (see Da Silva 2007; Wynter 2003); and algorithmic segregation (see Chun 2018). To try to escape the paradigm of immunization, Esposito proposes the *communitas* as opposed to *immunitas* (Esposito 2008). Moving appositionally with thinkers like Bataille, Nancy, and Blanchot, Esposito's account of the *communitas* conceives Being in terms of an inalienable in-commonness that locates this commonality on a pre-individual level, a Being-in-common in which we all *partake* [*partager*] (Esposito 2015). However, because this line of thinking conceives the in-commonness of Being as being revealed in death, Esposito also remains stuck in defining the *communitas* in aporetic terms, merely 'representing its unrepresentability' by enclosing the impossibility of representing death.

BIO

My name is Menno Lenting, a PhD candidate in film studies at Leiden University. I have a strong interest in French philosophy, affect theory, and critical race theory. My research is located on the intersection between film studies and philosophy.

I argue that Esposito's formulation of *communitas* remains within the epistemic pillars that have structured and organized the production of anti(-)bodies that sustain the *immunitas*, and that this is why he cannot overcome the aporia of the *communitas*, his language sutures it. Instead, this paper pursues a fugitive pathway that manages to break through this aporia by appreciating articulations of Being-in-common found in decolonial theory (see Mbembe 2022; Robinson 1980; Da Silva 2015). With help of Mati Diop's film *Dahomey* (2024), which stages this Being-in-common in the interstitial spaces of events of restitution, I will elaborate the continuity between these decolonial articulations of being-in-common with the conceptual work on the *communitas*. This, I argue, will recompose a disenclosed articulation of Being-in-common upon the *immunitas*'s enclosing logic's decomposition.

Sinha Aman

The Body, The Image and the Archive: Navigating Digitality in Zanele Muholi's Self Portraiture.

ABSTRACT In one of the self-portraits of her rich and expansive collection *Somnyama Ngonyama: Hail the Dark Lioness* (2018), Zanele Muholi photographs her naked body, lying submerged within the rocks on the coast of Mayotte, France's 101st official overseas territory. In a black and white gradient, her body glistens against the sun, contrasting with the grey shade of the rocks. Although it takes a minute to locate her body, Muholi's visual mediation in the frame not only recalls the afterlives of the colonial metropole's participation in the transatlantic slave trade but also indexes the variegated methods of biopolitical surveillance enforced by the liberal state in contemporary Mayotte. The specific positioning and gradation of the body counters the prevalent visual grammar of global queering—a racially endogamous worldview that disseminates across global media channels as evidence of an exceptional modernity unique to Euro-North American civilisational histories. Its discursive homonationalist materialisation through surveillant border technologies, as identified by Puar, co-constitutes a digitally mediated visual grammar that positions queerness as ordinary, everyday, biologically natural and conducive to conditions of precarity generated by neoliberal capitalism. In Muholi's frame, however, queerness is signalled through a slippage, an excess of meaning that disrupts both the photographic and the national frontier. In doing so, Muholi resists what Seb Franklin identifies as an episteme of digitality—a mode where logics of apprehension, quantification and cybernetics operate as metaphors delimiting what is knowable, sayable and seeable. This paper examines Muholi's visual oeuvre in conversation with other postcolonial artists, such as Sunil Gupta and Annu Mathew, to explore how they problematize the boundaries of the photographic frame to counter how digitality as metaphor already mediates the conception, production and reception of queer visual cultures within the informational networks of global capitalism.

BIO

I am a final year PhD student at Warwick University, in the department of English and Comparative Literary Studies. My PhD project examines queer autobiographical narratives from India and South Africa, that have emerged in the last two to three decades. I am also interested in reading and writing poetry and exploring queer visual cultures.

Christoph Brunner

Transparency Surround(ed): Édouard Glissant's Concept of l'informatique and Archipelagic Media Activism.

ABSTRACT This paper re-reads Édouard Glissant's reflections on *l'informatique* as a Caribbean critique of computation's time and the political demand for legibility. I argue that "information," in Glissant's sense, is a poetics of relation that marks a limit to mediated capture: not a retreat into secrecy, but an ethics of opacity—an insistence that relation cannot be exhausted by calculation. In the current conjuncture, *l'informatique* helps

BIO

Christoph Brunner is assistant professor for philosophy of media and technology at Erasmus School of Philosophy (Rotterdam). In his work he deals with the intersection of philosophical aesthetics and activist media practices. He particularly focuses on feminist and decolonial movements and their specific modes of production and organization as aesthetic forms of resistance but also looks at the identitarian logics of racial and racist media infrastructures and right-wing affective politics.

diagnose how transparency operates as a technique of immunization: it frames exposure, verification, and "clarity" as care, while organizing populations through prediction, preemption, and differential vulnerability.

Accordingly, I propose the figure of *transparency surround(ed)*: transparency is never total, but encircled by what it cannot compute—creolized languages, situated knowledges, and relational expression that escapes extraction. The paper combines close reading of Glissant's poetics of information with critiques of openness and racialized surveillance, and turns to *archipelagic media activism* as an applied poetics of opacity. Here "archipelagic" names both geography and method: distributed struggles across digital in-

frastructures, where relation is made through partial visibility, selective sharing, and collective sense-making.

I develop these claims through Guadeloupean rapper Keros-N and the music video "IMB (île an mwen bel)," which recontextualizes footage from the 2021 protests in Guadeloupe—widely framed by the French state as anti-vaccination unrest. I read this framing as a contagion metaphor that translates dissent into epidemiological risk, enabling informational containment and policing. Against it, "IMB" mobilizes contagion as media practice—circulating across platforms and diasporic networks through Creole address, montage, and historical reference—to transmit partial, relational

Contagion, Information, Territory

knowledges that resist containment. The video also links the protests to the Chlordecone pollution scandal, staging contamination as slow debilitation that complicates the state's health-and-order narrative. In this way, the video returns to Glissant's *l'informatique*: it refigures "information" not as capture and legibility, but as a poetics of relation that interrupts immunizing transparency.

DAY 2 **15:00—16:30**
PANEL 5

Ecology, Toxicity, Biosecurity

Mays Smithwick

Rhetorics of Toxicity: The Making of Threat, Contamination, and Borders.

ABSTRACT This paper is concerned with the constitutive relationship between the languages of toxicity and contamination and the meaning-making apparatus of the security state. I discompose a narrative choreography: processes of legitimation on which petrochemical capitalist and military industrial regimes render the world toxic have been interpolated with a collective feeling of threat. Placing the fear of toxicity—commonly associated with white nationalist discourse in the United States—in conversation with longstanding processes of uneven exposure faced by racialized communities and landscapes, I explore how threat discourse reinforces debilitation. I trace the narratives and material dispersal of radiation, heavy metals, ‘forever’ chemicals, and so forth, to identify how certain toxins remain invisible while others—including the ambiguously defined ‘toxin’ itself—are mobilized as moral panics or security threats. Drawing from Sylvia Wynter and Mel Chen, I demonstrate how modernity’s hierarchically arranged symbolic ordering and racial frames shape the purity/contamination dialectic. I weave national security discourse from the Cold

BIO

Mays Smithwick is a PhD student in the American Studies and Religious Studies departments at Yale University. Their research investigates co-formations of Western secularism, the military industrial complex, and the US national security myth. Mays is a fellow of Racisms and Colonialisms in the *Longue Durée* at University College London and Yale.

War and War on Terror, which rendered flexible and capacious the category of the ‘existential threat,’ and the ‘enemy other.’ Highlighting the parallel enmity underlying toxic discourse, I then forward Joseph Masco’s claim that “toxicity, the cumulative fallout of the industrial age in all its myriad forms, has now achieved multiple vectors of planetary agency” (Masco, 2010: 38). I thus suggest that calls to rid ourselves of toxicity enact what Shannon Cram observes in the Department of Energy’s “definition of clean performing a kind of rhetorical closure, serving as an end-point rather than opening” (Cram, 2023: 16).

To grapple with this irreversible enmeshment with toxicity, I draw from Édouard Glissant and Lou Cornum to challenge the logics of bordering and reorient our *longue durée*, planetary, and collective toxic condition as a mode of *Tout-Monde* relationality.

Sergei Shevchenko

From Ecological Preparedness to Epidemic Zoning: Soviet Approaches to Biosecurity.

ABSTRACT Biopolitical and biosecurity histories most often emphasize two closely linked developments: the central role of statistical information and the transition from surveillance to scenario-based planning and preparedness. In these accounts, preparedness emerges from expanding systems of observation, data aggregation, and epidemiological modeling, making the anticipation and management of epidemics dependent on the extraction and circulation of information (Lakoff and Collier 2008, 2021).

The Soviet history of epidemic security follows a different logic. In the 1920s, forms of preparedness emerged prior to consolidated surveillance infrastructures and independently of statistical modeling. This preparedness was ecological rather than informational. It relied on the delegated capacity of biological agents, most notably bacteriophages, to co-evolve with pathogens and suppress epidemic outbreaks. Readiness was sought through biological processes themselves, with limited possibilities for extracting information about their dynamics. Research on bacteriophages in the 1920s and early 1930s treated naturally occurring phages as agents capable of suppressing the explosive growth of pathogenic bacteria (Myelnikov 2018; Shevchenko 2020). Their identification structured sanitary markings of territory by tracing ecological presence in soil, water, and the human body, grounding preparedness in environmental detection rather than population-level observation.

From the 1930s onward, this ecological logic was progressively displaced. The establishment of anti-plague surveillance stations in 1934 marked a shift toward sanitary zoning and territorial control, particularly in regions of expansionist interest (Jones and Amramina 2018). Interventions targeted the living conditions of vectors and biological reservoirs, while information on their population levels was layered onto robust schemes of interspecific interaction that included humans.

Over time, early zones of co-evolutionary preparedness gave way to zones of ecological control and later to zones of potential alienation. Only in the late Soviet period were these territorial arrangements reorganized around scenario-based modeling of epidemic outbreaks. This late de-ecologization

was accompanied by informatization, as the displacement of phage-based ecological preparedness coincided with the de-dialecticization of the life sciences and a growing reliance on abstract indicators, scenarios, and territorial control.

BIO

Sergei Shevchenko is a Gerda Henkel Foundation postdoctoral fellow at Ruhr University Bochum. Trained in biology and philosophy of science, he works in STS, history and philosophy of the life sciences, focusing on biosecurity, biological instability, and governance at the level of organisms. His current project examines Soviet approaches to epidemic and biological governance in the 1920s–1950s. After leaving Russia in 2022, he participated in threatened scholars programs in Belgrade, Paris and Bochum.

Gerwin van Schie

Viral Tulips: A Critical Discussion of Virality, Symbiosis, and the making of Dutchness.

ABSTRACT Taking a postcolonial and feminist STS approach, this paper will use the virus infected tulip variety “Zomerschoon” (Summer Beauty), as an “evocative object” (Turkle 2011), to critically think about the construction of Dutchness in relation to migration, race, and technology. Tulips, originating from what is now known as Turkey and Iran, arrived in the Netherlands in the second half of the 16th century. After growing this species for several decades some new varieties, like Zomerschoon, became prone to so-called “breaking”, a process which slows down growth, but also causes the appearance of irregular—often white—stripes on the flowers. This colourful appearance made them highly valuable in the beginning of the 17th century, and a common subject for paintings. It is in this century that used to be seen as the Dutch “golden age”, that the tulip as a symbol became culturally tied to the Netherlands.

In contemporary tulip growing practices, however, AI-driven robots outfitted with image recognition software are increasingly used to scan flowering tulip fields, killing infected tulips in the process. I will argue that these practices are more than metaphorically connected to the biopolitical regimes that Dutch people with a migration background have been subjected through the embedded white norms of Dutch governmental algorithms in the past decade. I will argue that the tulip and the virus, the migrant and the Dutch, are in a culturally constructed symbiotic relationship. By deconstructing the myth of the virus infected tulip, not merely

as a biological object, but rather as a mix of nature, culture, and technology, I aim to give critical input to discussions about Dutch identity and belonging, as well as subverting ideas about “native” and “invasive” species.

DAY 2 — PANEL 5

BIO

Gerwin van Schie is an Assistant Professor at the Media and Culture department of Utrecht University. He critically investigates algorithmic discrimination in the Dutch context using feminist and postcolonial perspectives combined with insights from critical data studies and critical race studies.

DAY 3 **11:50-13:20**
PANEL 6

Biopolitics and the
Instrumentalization
of Bodies

Reproductive Warfare and the Biopolitics of Settler Futurity: Post-Mortem Sperm Retrieval in Israel Post-October 7th.

ABSTRACT This paper explores the necro and biopolitical implications of the shifting terrain of the practice of post-mortem sperm retrieval (PMSR) in Israel post October 7th. Following October 7th and the invasion of Gaza, there has been a surge in requests for PMSR, particularly by the parents of the deceased. PMSR is now not only easier to request but proactively offered to bereaved families by the Israeli Defence Force, reflecting the state's investment in biologically sustaining the nation through assisted reproductive technologies (ART).

BIO

Thea Graham-Cooper is studying the Erasmus Mundus Masters in Women's and Gender Studies between Utrecht University and the University of Granada. Her research focuses on a decolonial and materialist analysis of assisted reproductive technologies, specifically how they are rooted in and manifest colonial imaginaries as part of global fertility chains.

This research is grounded in broader work on ART in Israel, which emphasises how the stratified distribution of fertility treatments work to manifest the racialised imaginaries of the Zionist project. PMSR is therefore understood as intimately and uniquely linked to population regulation, militarisation, and Zionist reproductive warfare.

A decolonial feminist analysis is used to problematise the mobilisation of pronatalism and narratives of national crisis as justifications for the prevalence and institutional support of PMSR following October 7th. Through a comparative analysis of legal, cultural, and media discourses from 2022 and 2024, it demonstrates a continuity in both the discursive production and practical deployment of PMSR before and after October 7. This continuity reveals the enduring ideological imperatives of the state of exception as central to the development and legitimisation of PMSR. Within this framework, the deceased soldier is reconstituted simultaneously as martyr and reproductive subject, whose legacy is rendered not merely symbolic but materially and corporeally reproducible. Correspondingly, the maternal figure is reconfigured not only as a subject of mourning but as an active reproductive agent of national and settler-colonial continuity.

Such research contributes to ongoing debates on reproductive justice and biopolitics, showing how reproductive technologies are deployed not solely for private healing but as part of a biopolitical apparatus that racialises, regulates, and reproduces the nation.

Alexandra Yatsyk

The Biopolitics of Disability: Veteran Care and Abandonment in Russian war against Ukraine.

ABSTRACT This paper seeks to uncover forms of *care* including policies towards disabilities that authoritarian societies apply to their citizens in times of war. I approach the issue from a wider biopolitical perspective, exploring the ways in which power operates on lives and death of human beings as political objects (Foucault 2003). To put it simply, the relations between politically regulated social life (bios) and wildlife (zoe) as “power over life” and “power over death” are at the core of biopolitics.

Seen from this perspective, care is a set of regulations and practices focused on enhancing the productive capacities of human bodies (Mavelli 2017; Müller 2011). In liberal regimes, biopolitical care aims at fostering life and well-being of population (Mavelli 2017, 812). Yet in authoritarian states the rationality of biopolitical care could be easily transformed into a system of killing and annihilation: “while power is exercised in the name of life, it is not exercised in the name of any given life in particular, which rather functions as the object of rationalities that may presuppose domination” (Prozorov 2016, 68). *Biopolitical othering* defines the latter in terms of “valuable” and “non-valuable” members of society (Vaughan-Williams, 2015). The state of war attributes the highest level of value to those who are sacrificing their lives for the sake of state interests (Mbembé and Meintjes 2003).

BIO

Alexandra Yatsyk is a researcher at the University of Lille, and a lecturer at Sciences Po, France. Her expertise covers post-Soviet nation-building, illiberalism, and biopolitics. She is the author of numerous articles and books, including co-authored the *Critical biopolitics of the Post-Soviet: from Population to Nation* (Lexington, 2019), the *Lotman’s Cultural Semiotics and the Political* (Rowman & Littlefield International, 2017), and others.

Puar’s concept of *debility* provides a relevant framework to approach Russia’s policy towards its veterans of the current war against Ukraine. Whereas a disability framework privileges the moment of injury and ensuing claims to entitlement, Puar’s concept of debility describes a sustained wearing down of bodies that forecloses their translation into recognized disability status (Puar 2017). This distinction becomes particularly salient when examining how authoritarian and neoliberal states determine which impaired bodies “deserve” state investment due to their “biopolitical value.”

The paper argues that the Russia “svo” veteran rehabilitation programme exemplifies Russia’s political economy of debilitation. The paper demonstrates, that despite the Kremlin’s rhetoric about veterans as “the elite who defend the Motherland” (Tenisheva 2025), the actual infrastructure reveals profound gaps between promise and delivery. Eloquent example is the state *The Defenders of the Fatherland foundation*, which bureaucratic expenses significantly exceeded provided services to disabled veterans (Tóth-Czifra 2025). Similarly, initiatives like the “Time of Heroes” programme, while glorifying soldiers, lacks psychological support for those traumatized by the war (Garner 2025). This bifurcated approach creates a small class of politically useful disabled bodies while abandoning the majority to what one could describe as debilitation, when bodies worn down by state violence but denied the resources that recognized disability status would provide.

Based on the case of Russia’s instrumentalization of different regimes of “disabilities” as “debilities” towards veterans of the Russo-Ukrainian war, the paper seeks to explore how logics of “liberal care” is combined with totalitarian trends in contemporary nation states.

The research data includes official statements and decrees, issued by Russian government after February 2022, coverage of the issue by the Russian mainstream media, Telegram channels of the most popular Russian war-bloggers as well as episodes of the Russian language YouTube channel “Misguided Russian” (161M subscribers). The latter is consisted of home-made reports by Russia’s residents on the state’s “care” of the “svo” veterans (prosthesis, rehabilitation, compensation, etc).

The Making of the Migrant Sex Worker: Temporal Borders and the Defining of Agency through Burdened Agency.

ABSTRACT The construction of categories of others operates through multiple mechanisms of exclusion. In the case of the migrant sex worker, these mechanisms materialize through the securitization of the European borderscape and its temporalization, alongside the imposition of a narrative of victimization aimed at curing the stigma. This paper takes the concept of temporal borders to describe how bordering practices extend beyond spatial demarcation to govern agency, regulating not only where migrant sex workers may move, but under what conditions, durations, and forms of precarity they may continue to live and work. Within this framework, migration governance increasingly functions as the governance of bodies (Agustin, 2008). A forced dichotomy emerges between those authorized to protect and those positioned as in need of protection, foreclosing difference and dissent. The victimized subject is denied speech or audibility, and enforced silence becomes instrumental to a biopolitical technique of governmentality.

Victimhood functions as a regulatory category rather than a lived condition. Temporal borders thus operate through rhythms of renewal, assessment, and suspension, shaping lives through uncertainty rather than outright exclusion (Butler, 2009).

Drawing on a case study of migrant sex workers working in the streets of Copenhagen’s red light district, the conference paper examines the existing legislative frameworks on migration and sex work produce an embodied state of surveillance. As a state-imposed cure, victimhood operates as a form of immunization against perceived moral, sexual, and

racial contagion. By tracing resistance through burdened agency, this paper brings contagion (stigmatized bodies), information (discursive regimes of care and stigma), and territory (temporalized borders) into critical relation.

BIO

Alessandra Cuzzolino is an early career scholar and recent graduate with an MA in Advanced Migration Studies from the University of Copenhagen. Their research interests include critical border studies, time and temporalities in migration studies, critical perspectives in human trafficking, and the intersections of gendered labour and migration.

DAY 3 **15:00-17:00**
PANEL 7

Relationality,
Entanglement,
Community

Karen D van Minnen

Territorial Cut.

ABSTRACT This multimodal presentation explores the porous boundaries between human and more-than-human life under necropolitical regimes, where death circulates as contagion and presence is perpetually precarious. Drawing on Achille Mbembe's *The Earthly Community*, Sylvia Wynter's critique of Man, and Heidegger's *Being-towards-death* via Simon Critchley, the researcher argues that mortality is fundamentally relational: experienced first through the dying of others—human and more-than-human alike—in care, witnessing, and mourning.



Fig 1

The inquiry examines human bodies denied euthanasia and wolves rendered expendable through law, policy, and ecological calculation. Following Terry Smith's principle of contemporaneity, which recognises interdependent temporalities coexisting within the same field, these bodies

BIO

BA Gerrit Rietveld Academy / RISD (1993); rMA Cultural Analysis, University of Amsterdam. Critical graphic designer and artist, lecturer in visual literacy. Researcher at ASCA, University of Amsterdam. PhD *The Coventry Paradox: Zoë and the Curing Silence of the Oubliette* explores relational mortality, interspecies life, and the ethics of witnessing.

occupy overlapping social, legal, and ecological registers. Neither fully inside nor outside the community, they endure as thresholds: the wolf's territorial marking, the human's constrained autonomy, each a semiotic trace of agency. Silence, absence, and uncertainty are often treated as threats, yet residues remain—scat, shadows, archival records, gestures—inscriptions of life asserting relational Being under constraint. In these interstices, mortality is ethical, political, and affective: life persists through vulnerability, attentive witnessing, and relational care.

Contagion operates existentially and politically, travelling across species, bureaucracies, and temporal registers. Legal and administrative systems act as informational regimes, codifying whose lives matter and whose may be expendable, echoing contemporary forms of territorial and technopolitical control—from policies restricting access to care, to ecological management programmes determining species' survival. The wolf, the human, and the trace co-compose an "earthly community in negative," where necropolitical logics distribute death unevenly, while relational finitude makes survival meaningful. Ethical witnessing thus becomes a mode of listening: to the murmurs of zoë, to lives asserting themselves where the Ban (Agamben) unfolds, and to the responsibilities mortality places upon the living.

Through visual ethnography, archival reflection, and attention to silence and residue, this multimodal presentation gestures towards a politics of coexistence that resists simple boundaries. Learning to live together requires learning to die together: human and more-than-human life reveal the existential and political stakes of community, exposure, and relational mortality in the technopolitical present, showing that life endures even under the shadow of death.

Fig 1: Michael Wolgemut, The Nuremberg Chronicle, 1493 —possibly by his student Albrecht Dürer.

Ohad Ben Shimon

Theorizing Immunity from the Autoimmune.

ABSTRACT This paper proposes to rethink immunity not as a defensive, self-protective boundary but as a relational and embodied practice that challenges dominant biopolitical frameworks. Drawing on my lived experience of a chronic autoimmune condition, I explore how immunology's classical self/nonself distinction enacts a teleology of control and exclusion, which resonates with political strategies that preemptively immunize territories, through borders, surveillance, and the withholding of care, against perceived threats. Rather than a metaphorical reading, I adopt a situated, bodily perspective, showing how autoimmunity complicates assumptions about inside/outside and self/other, revealing a porous, contingent field of interactions with one's environment.

BIO

Ohad Ben Shimon is an artist, researcher and educator with a background in art, cognitive sciences, psychology, philosophy, cultural analysis, art, interdisciplinarity and international business education. He is currently a PhD candidate in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Utrecht University, where his research focuses on embodiment in knowledge-intensive institutions. His work is funded by NWO's Doctoral Grant for Educators. Alongside his doctoral research, he is a Senior Lecturer in Critical Thinking and a Researcher in Change Management at The Hague University of Applied Sciences and a Researcher in the Plasticity Consortium at the Centre for Unusual Collaborations (CUCO). He has also been a Guest Resident at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam.

In navigating both the material realities of my autoimmune condition and the social expectations of work, I came to see immunity less as a defensive barrier and more as a site of negotiation and relationality. The rigid distinction between self and nonself, so central to traditional immunology and biopolitical theory, becomes unstable when lived through autoimmunity: my body simultaneously attacks and protects itself, creating a condition of perpetual tension and adjustment. This instability, however, opens space for thinking immunity ecologically and ethically, as a practice of balance, tolerance, and relational responsibility. By attending to my own embodied experience, I can reconsider what it means to inhabit a body in which immunity is neither absolute nor purely protective. Such a perspective challenges dominant metaphors and suggests a more nuanced theorization of life, health, and community, one in which vulnerability, interdependence, and materiality are central to understanding both bodies and the social worlds they inhabit.

Laila van Berge

Sana Sana Pachamama: Spiritual Sanitization and Contagious Connections.

ABSTRACT “Everything is Energy!”—at least, this is often the baseline of contemporary spiritual wellness onto-epistemologies. A second core idea follows: wellness no longer signifies the absence of sickness, but becomes the baseline against which one is perpetually measured. The subject is thus presumed to be, by default, unwell—ungrounded, fragmented, in need of healing and wholeness. This un-wellness is frequently narrated as trauma inflicted by society, family, or the self; yet it is simultaneously framed as no excuse for “victim mentality” or a “scarcity mindset.” This tension has far-reaching implications for personal pathology, and for the territorial legitimacy, entitlement, and relational ordering of retreat communities.

In this paper, I inquire this orientation toward wholeness and healing: what does it imply, and in turn, what are its implications? What does it mean to “become whole”? And who and what are part of this wholeness? Where does that leave the ‘rest’?

Based on ethnographic fieldwork among predominantly Euro-USian practitioners in transformational retreats in the Global South, specifically Mesoamerica, I analyse how purpose and purity/ification, hygiene and

healing, whiteness, and wholeness co-compose multi-level forms of spiritual sanitization. On the emic level, this appears as energetic cleansing through Sali smudges, individual “integration” sessions, or a collective raising of consciousness. Yet this conscious cosmology and its purificatory projects also entangle with other socio-material regimes, and in effect inflict forms of epistemic violence and even epistemicide, as well as the expropriation, extraction, and exploitation of land—and of the human and more-than-human entities that dwell there.

I argue that contemporary spiritual wellness operates as a vernacular biosecurity regime: contagion is spiritualized, debility individualized, and structural inequality recoded as energetic misalignment.

Through spiritual sanitation, global wellness culture restructures how territory, information, and contagion are imagined—and inhabited.

DAY 3 — PANEL 7

BIO

Laila van Berge (1994) is a PhD candidate in comparative religious studies at the Radboud University. In this research project, they explore the relation between spirituality and whiteness within wellness retreats. By thinking through and with wellness, Laila aims to understand its potential to subvert and/or subjugate to the mainstream metaphysics of Modernity. Laila is curious to understand how these retreats can become places that perpetuate predominant systems of social inequalities, as well as how they might be able to open up routes to alterity.

DAY 3 — PANEL 7

Rebecca Hester

Pathogenic Entanglements: Contagion, Information, and Territory.

ABSTRACT In the two decades preceding the COVID-19 pandemic, the United States spent billions in biodefense and global health security to both preempt an infectious disease outbreak and to rapidly develop medical countermeasures in the event that one occurred. As a result of these efforts, and at the onset of the pandemic, the United States ranked number one on the Global Health Security Index, an assessment of health security and benchmarking of related capabilities in 195 countries. Despite its efforts, money, and predictive capabilities, however, the U.S. failed to predict and stop the emergence and spread of SARS COV-2. Nor did its health security efforts prevent the U.S. from having the highest number of infections in the world at the height of the pandemic and over a million recorded deaths, disproportionately in Black and Brown populations.

This paper adopts the term “pathogenic entanglements” to describe the specific conjuncture of contagion narratives, information technologies, and territorial assumptions that made the high morbidity and mortality rates in the U.S. possible. Specifically, it shows how ideas about viral emergence, contagion, and circulation, shaped by specific ontological assumptions

DAY 3 — PANEL 7

BIO

Rebecca J. Hester is an Associate Professor in the Department of Science, Technology and Society at Virginia Tech. Her research is focused on the intersections of racism, health, security and im/migration. She is a co-founder of the Center for Refugee, Migrant and Displacement Studies at Virginia Tech. She currently has a health research project working with Indigenous migrants of Latin American origin in the United States and a book project (of which the above abstract is a part) on the inflammatory politics of Covid-19.

about what a virus is, where it emerges, and which technologies should be used to track it, themselves went viral. These uniquely U.S. assumptions, based on high individualism and national security logics, shaped the technological and political realities of those seeking to combat the virus, even as they failed to reflect the viral realities of SARS CO-2 itself. This failure obscured other ideas about virality and contributed to the high morbidity rates. The paper concludes with an effort to recuperate some of the viral stories that were obscured or ignored before and during the pandemic. It suggests that studying viral behavior in context, rather than the decontextualized ways that health security actors do, can offer important insights about how and in what ways we

are always already in relation with others and why this is important for pandemic preparedness. Efforts to recuperate these viral stories can also reveal the limits of technology for tracking, controlling, and preventing these relations.

DAY 3 — PANEL 7

Contagion, Information, Territory

Organizers

Ilios Willemars is Assistant Professor in Cultural Analysis and Literary Studies at Leiden University. Ilios works on placeholders, replacement, contagion, insurance, immunity, infrastructure, digitalization, the work of Franz Kafka, and animals that commit suicide.

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Dong Xia is Postdoctoral Researcher in New Media and Digital Culture working in research project “Contagious Digitalities.” Their work on chronicity as a condition of contemporary subjectivity, shaped by attrition, endurance, and data-driven forms of prediction. Their research also explores the role of informational and bureaucratic forms in contemporary literature and culture.

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Janna Houwen is Assistant Professor in Film and Literary Studies at Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society and a Research Fellow at the Netherlands Institute in Morocco, Rabat. In recent projects, Janna explores the workings of stasis in processes of displacement, the machinic operation of borders, and interrelated questions of territoriality, immunity, and contagion.

Maike Hommes is Assistant Professor in Film and Visual Culture and Gender Studies at the Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society. Maike has a general interest in relational embodiment and queer and crip theory. Her PhD project looked at how unexplained illness gains shape in discursive settings such as medical knowledge and scientific practice, but also forms of art and culture, such as internet memes and the video essay.

Contagion, Information, Territory

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Bo Wang, & Jori Snels

Reading group *Contagious Digitalities*

Chairing: Janna Houwen, Eline Balster, Dong Xia, Max Casey,
Mathieu Bokestael, Menno Lenting

Eline Balster—Web Design
Luna Konings—Graphic Design
Alexandra van der Wijck—Organizational Support

Contagion, Information, Territory

Nearby Restaurants

Some affordable dining options in Leiden.

Bar Lokaal—Hartesteeg 13
Bocconi—Burgsteeg 6
Dende—Nieuwe Rijn 5
Floor's (Gluten-free)—Doezastraat 1B
Holle Bolle Gijs—Korte Mare 34
La Bota—Herensteeg 9
Oost-Afrikaans Eethuis Djebena—Noordeinde 21
Restaurant Hotspot Central—Stationsweg 30
Roka Turkish & Greek Deli—Hogewoerd 19
't Pannenkoekenhuysje Oudt Leyden—Steenstraat 49
Verboden Toegang—Kaiserstraat 7

Contagion, Information, Territory

Important Locations

Lipsius Building

Cleveringaplaats 1
2311 BD Leiden
Lipsius—Universiteit Leiden
Google maps:
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/nxXGcDYUk2mDcCyW7>

Academiegebouw / Academic Building

Rapenburg 73
2311 GJ Leiden
Academiegebouw—Universiteit Leiden
Google maps:
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/aP2bt9k36cnZJWE9>

P.J. Veth

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<https://maps.app.goo.gl/iCSYZQ59TrAPrw6E7>

Restaurant Pakhuis

Doelensteeg 8
2311 VL Leiden
Conference Dinner Location
Google maps:
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/f7angvEnQcDukiNx7>

