

## Politics of Dis-Enclosure. Religion – Community – Violence:

### International Seminar with Achille Mbembe and other leading scholars, inspired by Jean-Luc Nancy's work

26. April 2023, University of Vienna, Main Building,  
Dekanatssaal of the Faculty of Catholic Theology

27. April 2023, Abbey of Melk, Lower Austria

The seminar "Politics of Dis-enclosure" proposes to contribute to the task evoked by Jean-Luc Nancy's notion of "dis-enclosure," denoting an opening up of the world, by way of applying the motif of dis-enclosure to deconstruct the disconcerting race-religion-complex that takes shape in the maelstrom of globalization. As a matter of fact, the ways in which racialized and religious "others" are classified and dominated in similar ways today attest to the necessity to rethink political systems with regard to the logic of exclusion that they disavowedly entertain. This seminar is not intended as a memorial for Jean-Luc Nancy. It will be a thematic exchange of thoughts between several scholars (Achille Mbembe, Louise du Toit, Nabil Echchaibi, Anke Graneß, Petra Carlsson, Hans Schelkshorn), using Nancy's notion of dis-enclosure, as an inspiration to think through and evoke this experience and its implications in a variety of contexts.

The notion thus invites us to think about the thematic of the opening up of the world in new ways, also beyond the limits of Nancy's application thereof. In seeking to disentangle the resurgent race-religion constellation that thrives on this globalized double-bind, we propose to profit from an affinity displayed in the works of all those invited.

**Due to the limited seat capacity, participation is only possible after registration at:**  
[marian.weingartshofer@univie.ac.at](mailto:marian.weingartshofer@univie.ac.at).

## Programme

### Wednesday, April 26 2023 – Dekanatssaal of the Faculty of Catholic Theology (University of Vienna, Main Building)

10.00	Introduction
10:30	<b>Achille Mbembe:</b> <i>The Earthly Community</i>
11:30	Discussion
12:30	Lunch break
13:30	<b>Louise du Toit:</b> <i>The Haunting of the Ghost of the Black Man?</i>
14:30	Discussion
15:30	Coffee break
16:00	<b>Nabil Echchaibi:</b> <i>Dis-Enclosures in a Minor Key: Fugitivity and Everyday Decoloniality</i>
17:00	Discussion
18:00	General discussion
19:00	End

### Thursday, April 27 2023 – Melk Abbey (Lower Austria)

10.00	Introduction
10:30	<b>Petra Carlson:</b> <i>The Ecopolitics of the Passerby</i>
11:30	Discussion
12:30	Lunch break
13:30	<b>Hans Schelkshorn:</b> <i>Ethics, Politics and Religion in Transmodernity. Some Remarks on a Decolonial Deconstruction of Christian Secular Europe</i>
14:30	Discussion
15:30	Coffee break
16:00	<b>Anke Graneß:</b> <i>On the Decolonisation of Philosophy and its History</i>
17:00	Discussion
18:00	General discussion
19:00	End

## Abstracts

### **Achille Mbembe**

#### *The Earthly Community*

The paper provides a reflection on the Earth, its future, and above all, the kind of community it forms with the cohort of animate and inanimate species that inhabit it. It will concern our fundamental relationship to the Earth in terms of the inhabitant and the passer-by, in relation to the notion of the in-common, first introduced in *Out of the Dark Night* in a discussion on decolonization as dis-enclosure. These reflections on the need for a new planetary consciousness comes from the volume *The Earthly Community 2023*, the last part of a trilogy that began in 2016 with *Necropolitics* and continued in 2020 with *Brutalism*.

### **Louise du Toit**

#### *The Haunting of the Ghost of the Black Man?*

‘The Black Man is in effect the ghost of modernity’, writes Mbembe. My tentative and explorative, questioning contribution to our conversation in Vienna would be to ask where and how Black Woman enters the discourse on Critique of Black Reason as offered by Mbembe. For an early investigation of the terrain where this question can be staked, I will read Christina Sharpe’s *In the Wake*, Sylvia Wynter’s *On Being Human as Praxis* and Jolyn Phillips’ *Bientang*, alongside Mbembe’s text. Shared interests of these authors include slavery, the meanings of Blackness, the generalisation of the black condition, human be-ing, love, and sex/gender. If I can pull it off, I would like to write a kind of ‘Symposium’ unfolding between these different voices.

### **Nabil Echchaibi**

#### *Dis-Enclosures in a Minor Key: Fugitivity and Everyday Decoloniality*

“Our boats are open, and we sail them for everyone.” Nothing comes close to this arresting and poetic vindication of deep relationality and mobility as a rejection of a dominant ontology of extractive and frozen enclosures expressed through the abyss of the slave ship, the dark imaginaries of coloniality, and the tormenting rule of borders, secularism, and fixed nations. The stark contrast between the delight of the open boat and the chasm of the enclosure is the vivid image Martinican poet and philosopher Edouard Glissant leaves us with in his seminal book, *The Poetics of Relation*. In the wake and against the violence of this delirium of difference, Glissant addresses the racialized subject of the enclosure not as a victim but as a world-making agent, a fugitive emblem of an alternative vision of dwelling in a common world where relation and diversity are neither liberal aspirations nor challenges but rather foundational features of our lived experience. Drawing on Jean Luc Nancy’s work on *la décloison* (dis-enclosure) and Achille Mbembe’s epistemological question of habitation, I seek to foreground examples of how dis-enclosures are lived and performed through a decolonial poetics of refusal and perpetual becoming in a world always and already destined against the disciplining scripts of the enclosure.

## **Petra Carlsson**

### *The Ecopolitics of the Passerby*

The lecture connects Jean-Luc Nancy's concept of the passerby with the ecological notion of drifting and the nomadism of the indigenous people of the arctic North. It suggests letting becoming-human-in-the-world take its outset in Sami land based, nomadic subjectivity in order to challenge the oft assumed connection between globalization and the transition aspect of the passerby and to re-situate the concept of the passerby in the drifting motion of the extended body of the earth. The lecture thus renegotiates the Eurocentric ideal of a globalized self through the nomadic aspect of drifting, thus disenclaving – in the sense of a movement that offers an exit from a Eurocentric notion of movement – an ecopolitics embedded in the passerby.

Verena Andermat Conley (1997), Tore Johnsen (2022), Achille Mbembe (2019), Jean-Luc Nancy (1996), Lovisa Mienna Sjöberg (2021), Bronislaw Szerszynski (2019)

## **Hans Schelkshorn**

### *Ethics, Politics and Religion in Transmodernity. Some Remarks on a Decolonial Deconstruction of Christian Secular Europe*

The polycentric world society, long called for by post- and decolonial thought, has become a reality today. In this context, the relations between ethics, politics and religion need to be reconsidered. Above all, the question arises whether the polycentric world society is on the way to a “transmodernity”, which was envisioned decades ago by Enrique Dussel. Nevertheless, the long shadows of colonialism are still omnipresent. Europe - and with Europe Christianity - is therefore faced with the challenge of a decolonial deconstruction, in which the colonial and liberating dimensions are reconsidered. In this question, the colonial debates in 16th century Spain have a special significance, as Latin American philosophies have long pointed out. The task of a decolonial deconstruction of Christian Europe, however, can ultimately only succeed through a dialogue that transcends the boundaries of rigid constructions of religious and political identities.

## **Anke Graneß**

### *On the Decolonisation of Philosophy and its History*

Philosophy as a discipline is slowly beginning to face the challenges of an increasingly globalised world and the inevitable and difficult task of decolonisation that this entails – and has obvious difficulties in doing so. For it is not only the exclusion of philosophical traditions from different regions of the world from the history of philosophy as well as from current debates that is under criticism, but also quite fundamentally the claims to truth and universal validity associated with philosophical theories. Also the grand narratives of the history of philosophy as a continuous progress of the mind are called into question. Decolonising philosophy and its history, then, does not simply mean adding theories and concepts from other regions, but goes to the heart of philosophical work: analysing the epistemic framework of philosophy to uncover deep-rooted centrisms, racisms and sexism, and the long-denied involvement of European philosophy in European expansion and colonialism. How then can one approach the historiography of philosophy today? In my talk, I will discuss the consequences for the future of a globally oriented historiography of philosophy.