

# Studies in Art and Culture: Challenges and Transformations

Seminar date: 20 September 2019

Time: 13:15-17:00

Room no.: 23.0.50

To celebrate the appointment of Mikkel Bolt Rasmussen to Professor in Political Aesthetics and Anne Ring Petersen to Professor in Modern Culture and Contemporary Art, the Department of Arts and Cultural Studies invites students and faculty at the department, as well as everyone interested in the field, to a seminar on the current changes in the ways in which we study art, aesthetics and culture. In their talks, the speakers will consider the following aspects:

In recent decades, scholars studying culture and the arts have increasingly turned to topics and 'societal challenges' that can only be researched by opening up the traditional methodologies of literary studies, art history, visual culture, etc. to include methods and perspectives traditionally associated with the social sciences, as well as research by social and political scientists. How has this rapprochement challenged and transformed the broader field of studies in art and culture?

An aspect of this development is a strong and sustained interest in exploring the political dimensions of art, culture and aesthetics as well as examining political movements and counter-movements (from rightwing nationalism to the LGBTQ+ struggles) as well as past and present configurations of politics and geopolitics (from colonialism to Trump). In which ways can studies in art and culture contribute to our knowledge and understanding of society and politics?

During the last 30 years, social critique and cultural critique have come under fire for being naïve (Sloterdijk), paranoid (Sedgwick) or based on a problematic idea of depth (Latour). The different criticisms of critique have forced us to look critically at the nature and function of critique without letting go of it. For Foucault critique was an analysis of who we are. Or what we can become. That is, an analysis of the present historical situation. When we engage in a discussion of the character and function of critique we are engaging in an analysis of the historical situation. The question of critique does not occur in a void but in a specific historical situation we are trying to understand. Engaging in critique is analyzing the historical situation, analyzing the conjuncture. And doing so with a view as to what critique is in the present situation, what critique can do and become.

## *Programme*

13.15-13.30: Welcome and Introduction

13.30-14.10: *Rethinking Cultural Analysis through Migration: Geography, Methodology, Politics*  
Anne Ring Petersen, Dept. of Arts and Cultural Studies, University of Copenhagen

14.10-14.50: *Migrant Agency and Political Emergence: Notes on the Aesthetic Knowledge of Social Transformations*

Stefan Jonsson, Institute for Research on Migration, Ethnicity and Society (REMESO), Linköping University

14.50-15.10: Coffee break

15.10-15.50: *Late Capitalist Fascism and the Aestheticization of the (White) Working Class*  
Mikkel Bolt, Department of Arts and Cultural Studies, University of Copenhagen

15.50-16.30: *Crisis Talks and the Conspiracies of 'Cultural Marxism'*

Esther Leslie, Birkbeck College, University of London

16.30-17.00: Panel

Chaired by Frederik Tygstrup, Department of Arts and Cultural Studies, University of Copenhagen

Reception

Everyone is welcome