

100 Years of Now

# Now is the Time of Monsters

## What Comes After Nations?

7–9 pm AUDITORIUM

 EN → DE

The Nation-State System

PRESENTATIONS, PERFORMANCE

Lawrence Liang, Kudzanai Chiurai  
with Zaki Ibrahim, Cemil Aydin

WELCOME Bernd Scherer

INTRODUCTION Katrin Klingan

9–11 pm AUDITORIUM

 EN ↔ DE

The Standard of Civilization – A History  
of Continuity

DOCUMENTS, PRESENTATIONS Brigitta

Kuster, David Scott, Christian Nyampeta,  
Antony T. Anghie

INTRODUCTION Nanna Heidenreich



Headphones are available in the cloak room foyer.

The restaurant is open until 7 pm. The Hirschfeld Bar remains open after the last event closes.

INSTALLATION

FOYER AND AUDITORIUM

From Left to Night, 2017

Christian Nyampeta

A spatial contribution consisting of an interior space, a continuous film with occasional alterations, and a permeable library will unfold in the Foyer and the Auditorium. This installation extends the question of the position of the artist in the construction of history, and the role of the artist in political action by focusing on the fictional trial of the late Nigerian poet Christopher Okigbo. Okigbo is put on trial in the Hereafter, for having confused universal heroism with parochial martyrdom. Okigbo had advocated art as an affirmation of life, and spoken out against national and racial boundaries. Nevertheless, he died for Biafra on the battlefield in 1967, seeking cessation from the newly independent Nigerian state. In the face of today's resurgence of socially destructive forms of nationalism, what tasks await the artist and what are meaningful contributions to the crafting of more habitable futures?

This exploration arises from an archive of events, institutions, legal documents, resolutions, terms, and practices that constitute and lay bare a history of the "standard of civilization" inscribed in the international system of states. It extends across new and existing structures, texts and imagery derived from a collaborative, discursive, polyrhythmic, and transformative outlook on the concretization of artistic motives into political habits. *From Left to Night* shares its title with a film by artist Wendelien van Oldenborgh (2014), and a film by the Otolith Group (2015).

CHRISTIAN NYAMPETA is an artist and a PhD candidate at the Visual Cultures Department of Goldsmiths, University of London where he researches Sub-Saharan African philosophy. Ongoing activities include contributions to research programs of Another Roadmap, Africa Cluster. Most recently, he contributed to the Gwangju Biennale (2016) and the Jerusalem Show VIII (2016). Recent exhibitions include *Through the Fog: Describing the Present*, State of Concept, Athens (2016); *Prix de Rome 2015*, de Appel Arts Centre, Amsterdam; *How to Live Together: Prototypes*, The Showroom, London as well as Casco, Utrecht and Stroom, Den Haag between 2013 and 2014.

## The Nation-State System The Abandoned Futures in the Era of Nations

How did the nation-state system manage to replace all other ideas of political organization? By shedding light on curtailed political options from the past, we hope to reclaim once again the possibility to imagine other forms of political belonging—within, between and across nations. The narrative of self-determination propagated by the nation-state still contains echoes of the immediate past and present of (post)colonialism. In view of a present which is informed by the catastrophic experiences of the 20th century, how can possibilities for an emancipatory future arise? And, finally the decisive question: How can one think beyond the limits of the nation-state system?

7-9 pm

WELCOME

Bernd Scherer

INTRODUCTION

Katrin Klingan

PRESENTATION

"Another Asia."

The Future Possibilities of a Failed Idea

Lawrence Liang

In March 1947 a conference was organized in New Delhi by Jawaharlal Nehru, the head of the provisional government in India. The Asian Relations Conference sought to deliberate on the idea of Asia, both conceptually in the context of the de-colonizing moment and as a way to address specific questions such as that of citizenship and migrants (the colonial *modus operandi* had been a free movement of people across Asia). In retrospect, this event appears to have been the culmination of the potential of Pan Asianism, despite the fact that it also inaugurated its actual decline. In his presentation, legal scholar and writer Lawrence Liang examines why this story of failure may still serve as a reference point when rethinking nationalism in Asia.

LAWRENCE LIANG is a legal scholar and writer based at the Alternative Law Forum, Bangalore. His work lies at the intersection of law and cultural politics, and has in recent years been looking at questions of media piracy. He has been working closely with the independent research initiative Sarai, New Delhi on the joint research project Intellectual Property and the Knowledge/Culture Commons. Liang is the author of *Free/Open Source Software. Open Content* (2007) and *The Public is Watching: Sex, Laws and Videotape* (2007). Most recently he co-authored *Invisible Libraries* (2016), speculative fiction on libraries and the future of reading. He regularly publishes on copyright, popular culture, and legal questions.

PERFORMANCE

The State of the Nation

Kudzanai Chiurai

performed by Zaki Ibrahim

In the performance by artist Kudzanai Chiurai, the first female Prime Minister of an African state addresses her nation on its day of independence from colonial rule. The speech explores the African condition by juxtaposing the synchronized past and the present of a continent afflicted by years of violence. Opposing an unbearable past, the address marks a moment of hope, where emancipatory futures can be realized in the post-independence era. Following the performance, a conversation between Kudzanai Chiurai and Rana Dasgupta will take place via conference call.

KUDZANAI CHIURAI is an artist working with a broad range of media, such as photography, editing and printing, painting and film. His work is focused on tracing the trajectory of political, economic and social conditions in his homeland from colonialism and independence, to the present day. He graduated from the University of Pretoria, South Africa, in 2005 and currently lives and works in Zimbabwe. Chiurai's work has been exhibited internationally including most recently at the Lagos Photo Festival (2016), the National Gallery of Zimbabwe (2016), the Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt (2014), dOCUMENTA 13 (2012), MoMA New York (2011), and Goodman Gallery Project Space, Johannesburg (2011).

ZAKI IBRAHIM is a singer-songwriter and producer known for making music across genres. Her work has cultivated a sound called "Sci-fi Soul", was featured in films and has made her a constant in the South African House Scene. She has collaborated and shared stages with various artists across continents, such as Erykah Badu, Saul Williams, Young Fathers and The Roots. Her first full-length album *Every Opposite* was released in 2012 and was nominated for the Polaris Music Prize in 2013. Zaki's latest work *ORBIT: A Postcoital Prequel* EP was produced by Red Bull Studios Cape Town in 2016 and foreshadows the release of her new full-length album coming in 2017.

PRESENTATION

Lost Futures of Cosmopolitan Empires.

Rescuing 20th Century History from

Nationalist Narratives

Cemil Aydin

In the aftermath of World War One, the Wilsonian ideal of nation-states with homogenous populations emerged as the cure for the pains caused by multi-ethnic and multi-religious empires. But this magic pill proved highly poisonous, as it shattered millions of lives by justifying ethnic cleansing and even genocide. Yet, the current international order aims at proving its naturalness by means of a historical narrative that implies the inevitability of nationalism. In the face of this predicament historian Cemil Aydin revisits the cosmopolitan empires of the past to recover the lost futures of inclusive and pluralistic political visions.

CEMIL AYDIN teaches global history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His research focuses on modern Middle Eastern and Asian intellectual histories, investigating the roots of the contemporary world order. In *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought* (2007) he discusses the rise of modern anti-Westernism in the age of imperialism. He recently published *Regionen und Reiche in der Politischen Geschichte des Langen 19. Jahrhunderts, 1750-1924* (Regions and Empires in the Political History of the Long 19th Century) in *Geschichte der Welt, 1750-1870: Wege zur Modernen Welt* (2016). His book *The Idea of the Muslim World: A Global Intellectual History* is forthcoming (April 2017).

## The Standard of Civilization Asymmetries of the International System

How do inequality and global power asymmetries get inscribed in international systems of state and law? How did the imperial-era divisions between “civilized” and “barbaric” remain in place—albeit with a new vocabulary of “good governance”, “transparency,” and “human rights”? Drawing on documents, this history of continuity will be subjected to a close reading. An installation by the artist Christian Nyampeta allows for opposing readings of historical processes. Examinations of the international framework governing war, trade and finance lay bare the structural inequality built into our global system, as well as the far-reaching consequences of existing concentrations of power.

9–11 pm  
INTRODUCTION  
Nanna Heidenreich

DOCUMENTS, PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSSION  
A History of Continuity

The evolution of international law and the international system is profoundly informed by the notion of civilization. In an attempt to trace this legacy that marked racial hierarchies in the colonial empires and its persistence until the present day, contributors will engage in a close reading of a set of documents that represent specific historical moments exemplary for thinking in terms of “civilization.”

Artist and cultural researcher Brigitta Kuster will address the word civilization itself and its opponents in relation to “culture,” considering aspects of what has been discarded in the colonial production of social difference.

David Scott will look at the UN resolution 1514 (XV) dating from December 14, 1960, on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples. In discussing its background and emergence as well as its constituent articles and their significance, he will reflect on the language used in the resolution and what it means today. Translating this history of continuity into space by means of an indexical installation, artist Christian Nyampeta aims at introducing a moment of discontinuity, which—through its disruptive nature—becomes a connective moment, an invitation to engage in a dialog.

International law scholar Antony T. Anghie will draw the broader picture of the elaborate distinctions between “civilized” European and “uncivilized” non-European states as formulated by the Western powers in the 19th century and discuss how the basic structure of this analytic framework was replicated in the new vocabularies emerging during the process of decolonization.

BRIGITTA KUSTER is an artist and cultural researcher, primarily interested in visual and film studies, postcolonialism, and migration and border studies. Her work takes the form of research projects, exhibitions, and filmic approaches. Kuster is a member of the artist collective Artefakte, with Regina Sarreiter and Dierk Schmidt. Together with Moise Merlin Mabouna she works on the longtime filmic research project *choix d'un passé*, dealing with the legacies of colonialism in Cameroon. The project is also presented in her most recent book, *Choix d'un passé - transnationale Vergegenwärtigungen kolonialer Hinterlassenschaften* (2016, *Choix d'un passé—transnational realizations of colonial legacies*).

DAVID SCOTT teaches in the Department of Anthropology at Columbia University. His work is concerned with rethinking the story of the colonial past for the postcolonial present. This has involved a variety of inquiries into tradition and generations, dialogue and criticism, self-determination and sovereignty, tragedy and temporality, and transitional justice and liberalism. He is the author of *Formations of Ritual* (1994), *Refashioning Futures* (1999), *Conscripts of Modernity* (2004), *Omens of Adversity* (2014), and *Stuart Hall's Voice: Intimation of an Ethics of Receptive Generosity* (2017). Scott is the founder and editor of the journal *Small Axe*, and director of the Small Axe Project.

CHRISTIAN NYAMPETA is an artist and a PhD candidate at the Visual Cultures Department of Goldsmiths, University of London where he researches Sub-Saharan African philosophy. Ongoing activities include contributions to research programs of Another Roadmap, Africa Cluster. Most recently, he contributed to the Gwangju Biennale (2016) and the Jerusalem Show VIII (2016). Recent exhibitions include *Through the Fog: Describing the Present*, State of Concept, Athens (2016); *Prix de Rome 2015*, de Appel Arts Centre, Amsterdam; *How to Live Together: Prototypes*, The Showroom, London as well as *Casco*, Utrecht and Stroom, Den Haag between 2013 and 2014.

ANTONY T. ANGHIE is Professor of Law at the National University of Singapore. He has served as Professor of Law at the University of Utah and as Visiting Professor at the American University Cairo, Cornell, Harvard, the London School of Economics, and the University of Tokyo. Professor Anghie's research interests include globalization, development issues, and international law; colonialism and the history of public international law; and Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL). In his book *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (2005) he argues that the colonial confrontation was central to the formation of international law and its founding concept, sovereignty.

## THURSDAY, MARCH 23

7–9 pm AUDITORIUM

🔄 EN→DE

The Nation-State System

PRESENTATIONS, PERFORMANCE Lawrence Liang, Kudzanai Chiurai with Zaki Ibrahim, Cemil Aydin

WELCOME Bernd Scherer

INTRODUCTION Katrin Klingan

9–11 pm AUDITORIUM

🔄 EN↔DE

The Standard of Civilization –  
A History of Continuity

DOCUMENTS, PRESENTATIONS Brigitta Kuster, David Scott, Christian Nyampeta, Antony T. Anghie

INTRODUCTION Nanna Heidenreich

## FRIDAY, MARCH 24

12–4 pm AUDITORIUM

🔄 EN↔DE

Migration – Talking Migration

THESES, DISCUSSIONS Avery F. Gordon, Bernd Kasperek, Sandro Mezzadra, Zoran Terzić, Brigitta Kuster, Isabelle Saint-Saëns, Ramzi Kassem, Kim Rygiel

INTRODUCTION Nanna Heidenreich

MODERATION Nanna Heidenreich, Brigitta Kuster

5–7 pm AUDITORIUM

🔄 EN→DE

The Standard of Civilization – Law and War

DOCUMENTS, PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSSION Avery F. Gordon, Slavenka Drakulić, Ramzi Kassem

INTRODUCTION, MODERATION

Rana Dasgupta

7–8 pm AUDITORIUM

🔄 EN→DE

The Nation-State System

PRESENTATION David Scott

INTRODUCTION Katrin Klingan

Conversations

5.30–6.30 pm FOYER

🔄 EN↔DE, ARB↔DE, ARB↔EN

Which Humans Have Human Rights?

Boaventura de Sousa Santos and Samar Yazbek

7–8 pm FOYER

🔄 EN↔DE

Have Nations Killed Cosmopolitanism?

Arjun Appadurai, Cemil Aydin and Rana Dasgupta

8.30–9.30 pm FOYER

🔄 EN↔DE

What is the Space of Exception?

Keller Easterling, Bernd Kasperek and Kim Rygiel

8–10 pm AUDITORIUM

🔄 EN↔DE, FR→DE, FR→EN

The Standard of Civilization – From the  
"Right to Trade" to "Good Governance"

DOCUMENTS, PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSSION

Antony T. Anghie, Susan George,

Lawrence Liang, In Koli Jean Bofane

INTRODUCTION Katrin Klingan

## SATURDAY, MARCH 25

12–1.30 pm FOYER

🔄 EN↔DE, FR↔DE, FR↔EN

Migration – The Right to Have Rights

PERFORMANCE, DISCUSSION

Patrick Bernier, Olive Martin, Sébastien

Canevet, Sylvia Preuss-Laussinotte

Conversations

5–6 pm FOYER

🔄 EN↔DE

The New Machismo

Arjun Appadurai and Slavenka Drakulić

2–4 pm AUDITORIUM

🔄 EN↔DE

Migration – Unruly Thinking

INPUTS, DISCUSSION Bernd Kasperek,

Ramzi Kassem, Brigitta Kuster,

Sandro Mezzadra, Kim Rygiel,

Isabelle Saint-Saëns, Zoran Terzić

INTRODUCTION Nanna Heidenreich

MODERATION Nanna Heidenreich,

Brigitta Kuster

6.30–7.30 pm FOYER

🔄 EN↔DE

How is the World Governed,  
and Towards What End?

Antony T. Anghie and Susan George

7.30–8.30 pm FOYER

🔄 EN↔DE, FR→DE, FR→EN

Reinventing Futures?

In Koli Jean Bofane and Brigitta Kuster

5–8.30 pm AUDITORIUM

🔄 EN↔DE, ARB↔DE, ARB↔EN

State Technologies

PRESENTATIONS, LECTURE PERFORMANCES

Keller Easterling, cinéma copains

(Arne Hector, Minze Tummescheit),

Felix Stalder, Charles Lim Yi Yong,

Samar Yazbek, Boaventura

de Sousa Santos

INTRODUCTION Rana Dasgupta

9–10.30 pm AUDITORIUM

🔄 EN↔DE

The Nation-State System

LECTURE, LECTURE PERFORMANCE

Hito Steyerl, Ann Cotten

INTRODUCTION Rana Dasgupta

The present moment is marked by one central political idea: the nation-state. It installs itself through a system of nation-states and a corresponding global framework that originated from a new world order after the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. Since then, it has become so deeply embedded in our thinking that alternative forms of political organization have become practically unimaginable—even though serious alternatives, such as transnational anti-colonial movements and communist internationalism, existed at the time. By laying bare the framing conditions of the nation-state, their exclusionary mechanisms and the structural violence anchored within them, *Now is the Time of Monsters* picks up a phrase by Antonio Gramsci to open up a space for the decisive question: how can one think beyond the limits of the nation-state system? Today, neo-nationalist threats and the failure of a nation-state system confronted with global migration, make clear that we need to reclaim such a zone of political transformation and radical imagination.

This three-day event will draw on international voices from the arts, literature, theory, and science, discussing pressing questions: How did the nation-state system replace all other ideas of political organization, and what was lost in this process? How do inequality and global power asymmetries get transferred into international systems of state and law? How can migration allow for a radical reconsideration of existing structures? How should one understand the role of the state in the relational network of globalization and financial capitalism, and how does this influence our idea of the actual character of the state?

*Now is the Time of Monsters* is a project by the Literature and Humanities department, curated by Rana Dasgupta, Nanna Heidenreich and Katrin Klingan.

→ [hkw.de/monsters](https://hkw.de/monsters)



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