

# NEWSLETTER

HELSINKI  
COLLEGIUM  
FOR ADVANCED  
STUDIES

2020-2021



UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI  
HELSINKI COLLEGIUM FOR ADVANCED STUDIES



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

From the Director	3
Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies	5
Helsinki Collegium Fellows 2020–2021	6
Erkko Professor Karen Knop	16
Art Fellow Pedro Oliveira	19
HCAS Alumni: Down by the Water Webinar Series	22
HCAS Events 2020–2021	24
IAS Collaborations in 2020–2021	34
Upcoming HCAS Events in 2021–2022	35

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# THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIA DEPENDS ON THE QUALITY OF REVIEWING

*Text: Tuomas Forsberg*

*Photo: Veikko Somerpuro*

Academia as an institution depends on peer review. Peer review is an essential aspect of processes related to publication, recruitment, the distribution of funding, and conference organization. External evaluators are indispensable to the Collegium, too, especially in the selection process of our fellows. It is important to acknowledge the work of the hundreds of academic experts who have agreed to review our applications as well as the proposals submitted to our in-house book series *AHEAD*. The Collegium itself is also regularly assessed as a unit. We wish to express our gratitude to all of the reviewers for their input.

We have been accustomed to think that academic work consists of research, teaching, and societal interaction as well as administrative duties. We recognize achievements in these areas and have ways to assess the contributions that people make. However, reviewing, although being a core mechanism of science, is seldom recognized as a separate area that demands its own kind of expertise. While solid expertise is required from an academic evaluator, the best evaluators are not always the most prominent researchers.

Reviewing tasks are often only tacitly acknowledged, because a great deal of peer-reviewing is carried out anonymously. A great bulk of reviewing is done free of charge, and very few prizes are devoted to exemplary reviewers. Reviewing is also time consuming. The situation is not helped by the fact that many senior academics often decline requests for reviewing, thereby passing the buck to others, who then carry the collective burden.

What makes a good evaluator? It is not that good academic evaluators are simply ‘objective’, because there are no commonly shared objective standards of evaluation. Indeed, evaluators are asked to do the job with the understanding that their judgments have a subjective element, which reflects their own criteria for what counts for quality, originality, or scientific excellence. At the same time, evaluators are expected to make their evaluations from a broader perspective than their personal point of view, to be transparent



in the usage of the criteria and able to recognize the application’s merits on its own terms within the framework of the purpose and justifications that the applicant presents. Nor should a good evaluator be sloppy or depart too far from the conventional way of assessing academic merits without proper justification.

In Finland, the Committee for Public Information (TJNK) and the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (TSV) have published guidelines for Good

Practice in Researcher Evaluation. In these guidelines, the recommendations for the responsible use of research metrics are of particular significance. The guidelines also recommend that experience in expert evaluation work should be better recognised as a merit. It surely should. However, as fair as it may sound, integrating multiple and diverse aspects of the researcher's career into consideration in the evaluation process may still create confusion and ambiguity. For example, researchers' activity in promoting open access to their research outputs as a new criterion of evaluation may be problematic as practices have been rapidly changing and expectations as well as opportunities with regard to OA publishing vary internationally.

Evaluatees are often dissatisfied with the reviews they receive. This is in a way unavoidable given the subjective myside bias in judgement. Reviewers may disagree with the applicant on the significance of the proposed project and see things in a broader context. Sometimes different reviewers' comments and grades diverge. This is natural, too, at least in part, but does

not yet render the process arbitrary. Moreover, often it is better that such a discrepancy is visible in the reviews instead of artificially combining the different reviews into one compromised assessment.

Academic evaluations should not be taken at face value. The employer, grant giver or editor is responsible for assessing the reviews for their quality and potential biases. Therefore, it is not necessarily a sign of unfairness if the final decisions do not blindly follow the evaluators' recommendations. However, in an expert organization, the default position ought to be that the opinion of the experts is honoured.

No reviewer and no review system is perfect. Particularly in an interdisciplinary context, the problem of comparing apples and oranges is apparent. Some mistakes or margins of error are unavoidable. Yet, a system that does not rely on independent expert reviews would most likely be less just and less effective. Most importantly, it would contradict the basic principles of academia as an organization that rests on critical reflection and expertise.

# HELSINKI COLLEGIUM FOR ADVANCED STUDIES

The Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies was established in 2001 as an independent institute of the University of Helsinki. In the spirit of the concept of an institute of advanced study, HCAS facilitates innovative, curiosity-driven research and multidisciplinary interaction between different fields of research. HCAS provides its fellows excellent conditions to pursue their research in an intellectually stimulating and encouraging environment.

The Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies will celebrate its twentieth anniversary during the academic year 2021-2022. A preview of upcoming events can be found on page 35.



*Director Tuomas Forsberg speaking to fellows in the HCAS Common Room during orientation week. (Photo: HCAS)*

*HCAS fellows on a winter walk on the Seurasaari and Pukkisaari islands in Helsinki. (Photo: Kaisa Kaakinen)*





# HCAS FELLOWS 2020–2021

The Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies selects fellows through a competitive and international application process. **The HCAS Core Fellowship** is based on an annual call open to researchers in the humanities, social sciences, educational sciences, theology and law, and to researchers in other fields focusing on topics related to the human sciences. Core Fellows represent different career stages, from junior postdoctoral researcher to established senior scholar.

The **Erik Allardt Fellowship** funded by the Kone Foundation offers a fellowship for scholars who have an affiliation with a university in Sweden. **The Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Arts** funded by the Kone Foundation promotes dialogue between art and

research and is intended for practicing artists who also hold a doctoral degree.

In addition to these fellowships that have an annual call, HCAS hosts two invitational fellowship programs, the **Jane and Aatos Erkko Visiting Professorship in Studies on Contemporary Society** and the **Kone Foundation Fellowship**, targeted towards scholars who come from the Baltic States, Belarus, Ukraine or Russia.

Photos: Veikko Somerpuro, except for the following: Airi-Alina Allaste by Rene Suurkaev, Nicolas Faucher by Nicolas Launay, Pedro Oliveira by Francisco Laranjo, Thomas-Andreas Pöder by Karin Kallas-Pöder, Maria Pupynina by Sergey Aibulatov.



## AIRI-ALINA ALLASTE KONE FOUNDATION FELLOW (SPRING 2021)

*Youth Political Participation via Social Media*

Airi-Alina Allaste is Professor of Sociology at Tallinn University. Currently, she is vice-president of the international research committee of the Sociology of Youth, ISA, and has recently served as a member of the European Sociological Association executive committee (2015-2019). Her project at the Collegium focuses on political participation of the younger generation. Though young people have been seen as being alienated from politics, an alternative explanation is that conventional political participation has been replaced by new, more individualized forms of political sensibility. Using examples from Estonia and Finland, the project investigates how new forms of political subjectivity are constructed online.



## NATALYA BEKHTA | CORE FELLOW

*Alternative Communities: Irrealist Tropes and the Collective Imaginary on the Literary Semi-Periphery of Europe*

Natalya Bekhta has a PhD from Justus Liebig University Giessen. Her current research combines narratology with emerging world-literary theories and social sciences and focuses on utopian imaginary in post-1990s European literature. This project aims at reconstructing the former 'Second World' within current world-literary geographies. Her recent publications include *We-Narratives: Collective Storytelling in Contemporary Fiction* (2020, Ohio State University Press) and a special issue of *Style* on "We-Narratives and We-Discourses across Genres" (2020, 54.1).

**DAVID COLLINS | CORE FELLOW***Disenchanted Albert: Magic in the Service of Disenchantment*

David Collins is Associate Professor of Medieval Intellectual and Cultural History at Georgetown University. He has higher degrees in history, philosophy, and theology, and a PhD in history from Northwestern University. He has published extensively on Renaissance humanism, medieval magic, religion, and science; he recently completed *The Sacred and the Sinister: Studies in Medieval Religion and Magic* (Penn State Press, 2019). His research focuses on medieval philosopher Albertus Magnus, and how his life serves as a lens through which it is possible to address the larger challenge of Western thoughts on disenchantment, especially as it bears on the two fields in which Albert's study of magic proved most controversial, science and theology.

**CHRISTINE DAIGLE | CORE FELLOW***Rethinking the Human: Posthuman Vulnerability and Its Ethics Potential*

Christine Daigle is Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Post-humanism Research Institute at Brock University. In addition to her work in posthumanism, material feminism, and the environmental posthumanities, she has published extensively on the works of Friedrich Nietzsche, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Simone de Beauvoir. Her current research at the Collegium explores the concept of posthuman vulnerability and its ethical potential as seen from a posthumanist material feminist point of view.

**DMITRY DUBROVSKY  
KONE FOUNDATION FELLOW (FALL 2020)***History on Trial: Russian Memorial Laws and Counter-extremism Litigation*

Dmitry Dubrovskiy is Associate Professor at the Department of Social Science at HSE University, Moscow and Associate Research Fellow at the Center for Independent Social Research in St. Petersburg. Dmitry received his PhD in 2007 and has since worked as a Research Fellow in the Russian Museum of Ethnography and European University at St. Petersburg, Ethnic Studies Program. Additionally, he has also worked as a Galina Starovoitova Fellow (2007-2008), a Kone Fellow (2010), a Reagan-Fascell Fellow (2015), and a Scholars Rescue Fund Fellow (2015-2017). He has also worked as a lecturer on human rights at the Harriman Institute, Columbia University. His current research focuses on Russian memorial laws and counter-extremism litigation. By contrasting European Law and the Russian approach to the "Glorification of Nazism," the project examines legal tools that restrict freedom of history in Russia.





## NICOLAS FAUCHER, CORE FELLOW

*Manufacturing Belief in Latin Medieval Philosophy*

Nicolas Faucher is a specialist in medieval theories of faith, and he completed his PhD in 2019. His interests include the ethics of belief, philosophy of religion, moral philosophy, rhetoric, and psychology. His project at the Collegium aims to initiate a comprehensive study of the philosophical underpinnings of the medieval conceptions of religious persuasion through the rhetorical production of emotions in the Catholic tradition. Using medieval theories of emotions, rhetoric, preaching and religious faith as points of departure, the project studies under-examined texts from the early 13th century to the middle of the 14th century that deal with the production of beliefs through emotion inducing persuasion.



## EKATERINA GRUZDEVA, CORE FELLOW

*A Grammar of Nivkh, an Isolate Paleosiberian Language*

Ekaterina Gruzdeva is University Lecturer and Docent in General Linguistics at the Department of Languages, University of Helsinki. Her research deals with issues related to the grammar and status of the endangered Nivkh language spoken on Sakhalin and in the Amur region of Russia. Nivkh represents a remnant of the original linguistic diversity of the North Pacific Rim, which is why the study of its evolution and structure is essential for understanding the human past of eastern Eurasia. She has been leading a project on its revitalization and is currently producing a comprehensive grammar for the language.



## ARI HAUKKALA, CORE FELLOW

*Disseminating Heritable Cancer Risk Information to Relatives: Knowledge, Duty, Fear, Guilt, and Support in Social Networks*

Ari Haukkala worked as University Researcher at the Helsinki Collegium of Advanced Studies in 2019-2021. He also co-directed the Behavior Change and Well-Being research group at the University of Helsinki. During his HCAS term, he was involved with personalized medicine projects in which the aim was to examine how health-related genetic information is understood among lay people, how heritable risk information is communicated within families, and the conditions under which this information may affect behavior. The main interest in these projects was in how theory-based behavior change techniques can be used to improve well-being and health in various environments.

*To our great sorrow, Ari Haukkala passed away in February 2021. The Collegium honors the memory of our beloved colleague.*



## KIRSTI JÕESALU

### KONE FOUNDATION FELLOW (FALL 2020)

*Remembering and Staging Communism at (East) European Museums: The Case of Estonian History and Cultural Museums in Comparative Approach*

Kirsti Jõesalu is an ethnologist working as a researcher at the Department of Ethnology at the University of Tartu. In her previous studies, she has looked at the intersections of public and private remembering. She has published in such international journals as *Europe-Asia Studies*, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, and *Oral History*. Her current research deals with the role of museums in contemporary Baltic societies in dealing with the multiplicity of competing perceptions of the 20th century past (and especially the communist past) in changing political and socio-economic contexts. In her new project (led by former Kone-fellow Ene Kõresaar), “Practices and Challenges of Mnemonic Pluralism in Baltic History Museums,” she investigates together with her co-researchers the roles, responsibilities and practices of history museums in creating pluralist and reflexive spaces for memory work.



## MAIJASTINA KAHLOS, CORE FELLOW

*Waiting for Barbarians, Recognizing Immigrants, Making Romans: Roman Ambiguities and the Uses of Barbarians in the Political, Social and Religious Struggles in Late Antiquity (300-600)*

Maijastina Kahlos is a historian and a classicist, as well as Docent in Latin and Roman Literature at the University of Helsinki. Most recently, she has published a book, *Religious Dissent in the Late Roman Empire in 350-450* (Oxford University Press, 2020). Her project at the Collegium explores the uses of immigrant and alien groups in internal political, social and religious struggles in Roman Late Antiquity. More specifically, the project examines the mechanisms by which the Romans dealt with immigrants and aliens, both at the conceptual and rhetorical levels of knowledge ordering, ethnicization and religious othering, as well as at the socio-political level.



## TUUKKA KAIDESOJA, CORE FELLOW

*Cognitive Sociology: What, Why and How?*

Tuukka Kaidesoja is a member of the TINT Centre for Philosophy of Social Science at the University of Helsinki, and a Docent in Sociology at the University of Turku. Additionally, he is the principal investigator of a research project on the cognitive social sciences that is funded by the Emil Aaltonen Foundation. His main research areas have been in sociological theory, mechanism-based explanations in the social sciences, critical realism in the social sciences, and science policy. His project at the Collegium explores the intersection between sociology and the cognitive sciences with a specific aim, among other things, to develop a theoretical framework for analyzing the interdisciplinary integration between the cognitive and social sciences.





## MARIA KHACHATURYAN, CORE FELLOW

*Bilingualism at Home and in Church: A Holistic Study of Language Contact in Social Contexts*

Maria Khachaturyan is an interdisciplinary researcher studying the intersection of anthropology, sociolinguistics, and structural linguistics. Her research is underpinned by extensive fieldwork and focuses on cross-linguistic and cross-cultural comparison. Her current project explores language contact between the under-studied Mano and Kpelle languages in West Africa in their social context. Khachaturyan initially trained as a linguist, but quickly expanded her area of expertise into sociology and anthropology. After receiving her PhD at Inalco, Paris in 2015, she spent three years as a postdoc in the Department of Anthropology, UC Berkeley. She came to Helsinki in 2017 and was a member of the Helsinki University Humanities Program until 2020.



## KAREN KNOP JANE AND AATOS ERKKO PROFESSOR

*What Should Foreign Relations Be?*

Karen Knop is Professor of Law at the University of Toronto, where she has also served as Associate Dean for Research and Editor of the *University of Toronto Law Journal*. Her current project is on the changing relationship between international law and the lesser-known field of foreign relations law in a time of populism and also in a longer historical perspective. Her hypothesis is that this focus can lead to a new pluralistic and critical vantage point on the state in international law.



## MICHAEL LANGLOIS, CORE FELLOW

*The Alphabet: History and Development in the First Millennium BCE Levant*

Prof. Dr. habil. Michael Langlois holds a PhD and Habilitation in Historical and Philological Sciences from EPHE Sorbonne. He teaches as a tenured Associate Professor at the University of Strasbourg and is a member of the University Institute of France. He is also an associate researcher with the CNRS / Collège de France, as well as an Auxiliary of the Academy of Inscriptions and Fine Letters. His research at the Collegium delves into the history of the alphabet, tracing its evolution from the first millennium BCE to its spread to the entire Mediterranean world, giving rise to such scripts as the Greek and Latin alphabets. From the ground up, his project studies the history and evolution of these scripts in the light of new discoveries and with the help of new technologies.



**XIN LIU, CORE FELLOW***Ecological Assetization: New Configurations of Economy and Ecology*

Liu Xin is a postdoctoral researcher at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies. Her research has been published in journals such as *Australian Feminist Studies*, *Parallax*, *Media Theory* and *Journal of Environmental Media*. Her interests include science and technology studies, economic sociology, and feminist theory. Her project at the Collegium investigates one of the most challenging issues facing humanity today: how to simultaneously cultivate ecological and economic sustainability.

**RYAN MULLINS, CORE FELLOW***From Divine Timemaker to Divine Watchmaker*

Ryan Mullins has a PhD in Theology from the University of St Andrews, and he currently works in philosophical theology. His primary interests are philosophy of time and philosophy of religion, and his previous publications include *God and Emotion* (Cambridge University Press, 2020) and *The End of the Timeless God* (Oxford University Press, 2016). He also has his own podcast “The Reluctant Theologian.” His research at the Collegium focuses on the following questions: What is time? In what sense is God responsible for the existence of time? What kind of structure might God give to a time series? What are the implications for religious doctrines of creation, providence, and life after death?

**PEDRO OLIVEIRA**  
**KONE FOUNDATION POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW IN THE ARTS***On Temporalities of (Colonial) Sonic Biometrics*

Dr. Pedro Oliveira is a researcher and sound artist whose work focuses on a material inquiry of sound, using both artistic and academic methods to explore and interrogate the articulations of listening, coloniality, and violence in the policing of urban and border spaces. His project at the Collegium concerns the development and deployment of so-called “automated accent recognition” technologies in the migration and border industry of Germany.





## TUOMAS PERNU, CORE FELLOW

*Agency and Free Will in a Physical World*

Tuomas Pernu is University Lecturer in Philosophy of Science and Research Ethics at the University of Eastern Finland (UEF), and a Research Fellow at the University of Helsinki and King's College London. He completed his PhD on causal explanation in naturalistic philosophy of mind which jointly represents the Department of Biosciences (neuroscience and physiology) and the Department of Philosophy (theoretical philosophy) at the University of Helsinki in 2013. He has research expertise in philosophy of mind and philosophy of the natural sciences, physics, biology, and medicine, in particular. His project at the Collegium explores the roles of determinism and indeterminism in physical explanation and analyzes the relationship of fundamental physical symmetries and free will.



## KINGA POŁYŃCZUK-ALENIUS, CORE FELLOW

*Racism without Others: Everyday Mediations in Poland*

Kinga Połyńczuk-Alenius is a media and communication researcher. In her research, she approaches mediated communication as a multisided object: on the one hand, she tries to dissect its context(s) and, on the other, she is interested in the role that it can play in addressing, or not, ethical challenges that face an increasingly globalized world. She defended her doctoral dissertation, titled "Ethical Trade Communication as Moral Education," at the University of Helsinki in 2018. Her postdoctoral project at the Collegium cross-fertilizes communication studies with disciplines such as sociology, history, and social geography to untangle racism and nationalism in Poland.



## MARIA PUPYNINA KONE FOUNDATION FELLOW (SPRING 2021)

*Multilingual Areas in North Asia: Reconstructing Interethnic Communication Patterns of Traditional Communities*

Maria Pupynina is a research fellow at the Institute for Linguistic studies RAS. She has completed studies at Herzen State Pedagogical University and the Institute for Linguistic studies, St. Petersburg. Her PhD topic was the Chukchi language, and she undertook multiple expeditions to various districts of Chukotka, Kamchatka and Yakutia. Her project at the collegium concerns the case study of the Lower Kolyma region to illustrate the linguistic and ethnic interaction between indigenous communities over time. She plans to compile a picture of the Lower Kolyma communities from the middle of the 19th century to the present day, making the area diachronically comparable to the other multicultural regions of North Asia, such as the Chukchi Peninsula and Lower Amur areas.



## THOMAS-ANDREAS PÖDER

### KONE FOUNDATION FELLOW (SPRING 2021)

*The Dynamics and Varieties of Religion in the Semiosphere*

Thomas-Andreas Pöder is Professor of Systematic Theology at the Institute of Theology of the EELC, Tallinn, and Lecturer of Philosophy of Religion at the University of Tartu. He has authored two monographs: *The Culture of Faith in Lutheran Perspective: Historical and Constructive Explorations in Theological Thought* (Tallinn: EELK UI, 2018) and *Solidaristic Tolerance: Theology of the Cross and Social Ethics in the Work of Alexander von Oettingen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016). Most recently he has co-edited *Sign, Method, and the Sacred – New Directions in Semiotic Methodologies for the Study of Religion* (DeGruyter, to be published in 2021). His project at the Collegium seeks to contribute with a novel theo-semiotic methodology to a better understanding of religion as a lived reality and a dynamic factor that affects societies and communal life in Europe.



## LIIA REBANE

### KONE FOUNDATION FELLOW (FALL 2020)

*16th Century Bookbindings of the National Library of Finland*

Liia Rebane has studied library science as well as book and art history in the Universities of Tallinn and Helsinki. She received her PhD from Helsinki University in 2018. Her research is connected to material cultural heritage focusing on 16th century bookbindings and gives an overview of the movements and production of 16th century Northern-European binders. In addition to being active in the museum sphere, establishing the museum of technology at Tallinn University of Technology and belonging to the council of the University, she has also been a long-standing member of the exhibition commission in the Estonian Cultural Ministry. Liia Rebane has also given lectures of the history of bindings at the Estonian Academy of Arts for many years. Her interests include material cultural heritage, micro history, and iconography. Currently, her research focuses on the collection of foreign literature of the sixteenth century in the National Library of Finland.



## MAGNUS RYNER, CORE FELLOW

*Lost Decades: Germany, the United States and the Political Economy of Transatlantic Relations after Bretton Woods*

Magnus Ryner is Professor of International Political Economy and former head of the Department of European and International Studies at King's College London. He has published extensively on the problem of welfare capitalism in the era of global neoliberalism, as well as on the so-called 'Nordic Model', the German social market, and European integration. By drawing on post-Keynesian and regulation-theoretical traditions, his current project seeks to explain why globalization and European integration are associated with socio-economic stagnation in Europe and the US. More specifically, it addresses the problem of American and German hegemony after the 1971 collapse of Bretton Woods.





## KATERYNA SAVELIEVA, CORE FELLOW

*Psychosocial Factors Driving Fertility Decline in Finland and Other Nordic Countries*

Kateryna Savelieva is a research psychologist currently focusing on fertility research. She also works in the areas of family psychology, health psychology, public health, and mental health. She received her PhD in Psychology from the University of Helsinki in 2017. Since then, she has investigated psychosocial factors in symptom reporting (2018-2019), as well as the heterogeneity of depression (2020). Her research at the Collegium focuses on the recent fertility decline in the Nordic countries. By examining the role of fertility ideals, desires, and intentions from psychological and demographic perspectives, she investigates whether the actual fertility trends are anticipated by changes in fertility preferences.



## LOUISE SETTLE, CORE FELLOW

*Unruly Emotions: Changing Emotional Cultures of Married Life in Britain, 1945-2000*

Louise Settle completed her PhD at the University of Edinburgh in 2013 and has since held two postdoctoral fellowships, at the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities (Edinburgh, 2013-2014) and the Institute for Advanced Social Research (Tampere, 2016-2018). She has also undertaken research on the history of child sexual abuse as part of a collaborative project between Cambridge, Edinburgh and Sheffield Universities. Her recent publications include *Probation and the Policing of the Private Sphere in Britain, 1907-1962* (Bloomsbury, 2021 forthcoming) and *Sex For Sale In Scotland: Prostitution in Edinburgh and Glasgow, 1900-1939* (Edinburgh UP, 2016). Her current research maps how the state, the medical profession, and the media influenced the marriage advice given to couples in Britain between 1945 and 2000, and how the emotional rules differed according to time period, class, gender, and local socio-economic conditions.



## JAANA SIMOLA, CORE FELLOW

*When Attention Wanders: Neurocognitive Basis of Fluctuations in Attention*

Jaana Simola is a research professional in cognitive neuroscience and cognitive psychology and has a PhD in psychology. Her research concerns performance and brain dynamics during various attention tasks. She is especially interested in cognitive flexibility and how attentional fluctuations can inform us about the episodes when attention decouples from the external environment to self-generated states such as mind wandering. By using a wide range of methods, such as MEG, EEG, eye-tracking and various statistical approaches, her project examines the neural and cognitive basis as well as the behavioral significance of attentional fluctuations.



## GUSTAVS STRENGA

### KONE FOUNDATION FELLOW (FALL 2020)

*How to Speak with Russians? A Language of Diplomatic Gift-exchange between Livonians, Hanseatics and Muscovites during the Late 15th and 16th Centuries*

Gustavs Strenga is a senior researcher at the National Library of Latvia, where he has also curated exhibitions. He has a master's degree from the Central European University (2006), and a PhD from Queen Mary University of London (2014). Additionally, he has been a post-doctoral research fellow at Tallinn University (2018-2020). Some of his main research interests are the history of medieval Livonia and memory studies. His current project explores the role that diplomatic gifts played in the relationship between Livonians and Russians during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.



## MARGIT SUTROP

### KONE FOUNDATION FELLOW (2020)

*Trust in Artificial Intelligence: A Philosophical Analysis*

Margit Sutrop is Professor of Practical Philosophy at the University of Tartu and founding Director of the Interdisciplinary Centre for Ethics at the University of Tartu. She received her PhD in Philosophy in 1997 from the University of Konstanz. Since 2004, she has worked as an ethics expert for the European Commission and European Research Council, been a member of the Section Committee of Academia Europaea, and the international advisory boards of the University of Konstanz and the Ethics Centre of the University of Tübingen. From 2013-2019 she was Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the University of Tartu. She has authored and edited numerous books and articles, as well as been the recipient of many research grants. Currently, her research focuses on how ethics and trust can be incorporated into AI. In 2021, Margit Sutrop started working in the Parliament of Estonia, appointed as a member of the Cultural Affairs Committee as well as of the European Union Affairs Committee.



## FRANS SVENSSON, ERIK ALLARDT FELLOW

*Descartes' Ethical Perfectionism*

After obtaining his PhD in Philosophy from Uppsala University in 2006, Frans Svensson has held various positions at the Universities of Witwatersrand, Arizona, Stockholm, and Umeå. Currently, he is a senior lecturer in philosophy at the Department of Philosophy, Linguistics, and Theory of Science at the University of Gothenburg, and his interests include ethics, the history of philosophy, and moral psychology. His research at the Collegium focuses on Descartes' ethics, and how it constitutes a unique kind of ethical perfectionism.



# ERKKO PROFESSOR KAREN KNOP: IS FOREIGN RELATIONS LAW THE ANSWER TO POPULISM?

*Text: Mari Peltonen, Photo: Veikko Somerpuro*

Jane and Aatos Erkkö Visiting Professor (2020-2021) Karen Knop is Professor of Law at the University of Toronto. At the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, she researches international law, foreign relations law and populism as a threat to international treaties. An unknown field of law in most countries, foreign relations law has become a topic of increasing interest.

## POPULIST BACKLASH AGAINST INTERNATIONAL LAW

“A lot has been written about the populist backlash against international law,” Knop states. “Some international lawyers focus on resistance to the backlash and the resilience of international law, while others are concerned with identifying the underlying causes of the backlash and how to change international law to make it more democratic and representative.”

Karen Knop shows that if we look at national law, it turns out that resistance to the populist backlash has already changed how international law is made and unmade in a number of countries. She calls this phenomenon the “rise of foreign relations law”. The best-known example of the backlash is the many states that have abandoned, unsigned or withdrawn from international treaties.

“One strategy for resisting the backlash has been to argue that a treaty exit is not a decision that a populist leader can make alone but should require the approval of the legislature as well.”

According to Knop, in South Africa and the United Kingdom, for instance, courts have rejected the traditional view that the decision to withdraw belongs to the executive only and have held that the legislature must also have a say for certain kinds of treaties.

A different example of resistance to the populist backlash involves sub-divisions of the state. When President Trump announced that the United States would withdraw from the Paris Agreement on climate change, a number of US state, Indigenous, county and city leaders pledged to abide by the agreement.

“They could not be formal parties to the agreement under international law, but they could commit informally and participate in transnational

networks with sub-divisions of other states,” Knop says. “To counter this type of resistance, the Trump administration brought an unprecedented lawsuit against California for engaging in an environmental agreement with the Canadian province of Quebec.”

## NATIONAL LAWS AS TOOLS FOR AND AGAINST TREATIES

In the examples Knop gives, opponents of treaty exit have used national laws to try to stop their state from withdrawing or to compensate for that withdrawal. But she also shows that this alliance between international law and the increasing role of courts and legislatures in foreign relations is an uneasy one.

Courts in Venezuela, Colombia and the Dominican Republic have recently joined or even led efforts to escape treaty obligations.

“And the Brexit example shows that both sides can claim to have democracy on their side, and the involvement of courts and legislatures will not persuade populists – on the contrary.”

Street protesters who were against the Prime Minister suspending Parliament during the Brexit negotiations held signs saying, ‘This is about defending democracy’, while populist protesters maintained that the people had already voted to leave the European Union. Other protesters carried signs with the slogan, ‘We want a people’s vote’, meaning a second Brexit referendum (which came close to being held at points).

“In other words, populism in foreign relations law is not only about the executive powers of populist leaders,” Knop claims. “It is also an area where populist movements make claims for direct democracy in forms such as referenda.”





## A CLOSER LOOK AT THE CURRENT ALLIANCE BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL LAW AND FOREIGN RELATIONS LAW

A closer look at the current alliance between international law and foreign relations law shows that whether or not this alliance is successful in resisting the populist backlash, it may have risks for the status quo of international law in the longer run.

Although international lawyers do not usually pay attention to the foreign relations law of individual states, Article 50 in the EU Treaty refers to this law: it specifies that any member state can decide to withdraw from the Union “in accordance with its own constitutional requirements”.

According to Knop, some scholars argue that failing to secure Parliamentary approval for the UK’s withdrawal would have made it ineffective in

international law, and even go so far as to argue that this should be true of treaty exit more generally when it is clear that a state’s decision to withdraw has violated a fundamentally important rule of its own law.

“We need a critical historical understanding of this kind of relationship between the international and the domestic,” says Knop. “Recovering this history is likely to give us a very different picture of the state in international law: one that may reveal the negative impact of nationalism and imperialism in new ways, but also open up positive possibilities for pluralism that would have implications for Indigenous peoples and their law, among others.”

Together with Professor **Martti Koskenniemi**, Karen Knop is holding an informal workshop on this subject at HCAS this June involving colleagues from a number of countries. (For a short description of the workshop, see page 33.)

## WHY HELSINKI AND HCAS?

**Karen Knop** is Professor of Law at the University of Toronto, where she has served as Editor of the University of Toronto Law Journal and Associate Dean for Research. Her scholarship tackles some of the most foundational concepts in public international law, including sovereignty, self-determination, nationality and the relationship between international and domestic law. Her perspective on these concepts is concerned with inequalities of gender, culture and other forms of difference, most recently the urban/rural divide.

“Any international lawyer would jump at the chance to come to the University of Helsinki, which has one of the most cutting-edge groups of international lawyers in the world,” Knop states with appreciation. “Early in my career, I taught at the International Summer School on International Law at the University of Helsinki – and I am excited to teach there again this summer.”

Knop has also served as a doctoral examiner at the University of Helsinki several times and has been highly impressed by the originality and rigour of the dissertations each time.

Knop’s own work draws on history and gender studies as well as being “intradisciplinary”: she is

interested in how different fields of law divide up a problem and what each field’s perspective has to offer the others.

Professor Knop’s latest work develops alternative approaches to fundamental issues of diversity in public international law by examining them critically through fields of law with which public international law tends to have lost touch: private international law, which introduces private relations into international law, and foreign relations law, which involves the public-law complexity of the state.

Her books include *Diversity and Self-Determination in International Law* (Cambridge University Press), which received a Certificate of Merit from the American Society of International Law, and, as editor, *Gender and Human Rights* (Oxford University Press). Her articles have appeared in the *European Journal of International Law*, *Stanford Law Review* and *Transnational Legal Theory*, among others. She delivered a course at the Hague Academy of International Law in 2020. Professor Knop serves on the editorial boards of five journals published in three countries.



# MEET PEDRO OLIVEIRA – THE NEW ART FELLOW

*Text: Sofie Malm Henriksen & Riina Koskela*



Photo: Sofie Malm Henriksen & Riina Koskela

The Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Arts offered by the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies and funded by Kone Foundation provides an excellent opportunity to combine academic work and artistic practice. The Fellowship is aimed at scholars with a doctoral degree and experience in artistic work, and its purpose is to develop cooperation and dialogue between art and scholarship. For the year 2021, the Art Fellow hosted by HCAS is researcher, sound artist and educator Dr. Pedro Oliveira.

Being both a researcher and an artist allows Oliveira to discover connections that would otherwise be difficult to find within a purely academic setting. With artistic methods, Oliveira says, it is possible to create even “speculative connections” which is one way he approaches his current research at the Collegium.

## MACHINE “LISTENING”

Pedro Oliveira’s current research, *On Temporalities of (Colonial) Sonic Biometrics*, focuses on the development and deployment of automated accent recognition technologies in the migration and border industry of Germany.

In the project, he is investigating onto-epistemological questions, such as what it means when a machine listens; what kind of body does it produce; who is allowed to be perceived as a body, both legally and discursively, and finally; how does machine listening differ from when a human listens?

Situating these questions within a theoretical framework of sound studies and decolonial thinking allows Oliveira to investigate the limits of the detectability of a voice, and how accent automation software is weaponized in the migration and border industry to control the movement of racialized, gendered and sexed bodies.

His interest in looking at coloniality within the borders of Germany was sparked when he was presenting his PhD dissertation in various academic forums. The dissertation investigated the continuity of coloniality and listening related to police violence in Brazil. Oliveira explains how he always got comments on his work which would frame coloniality, continuation of colonialism and racialized violence as something that happened *There*:

*"Because Brazil is a former colony, therefore coloniality continues There. Which is true. But it is not exclusive to There. So, then I started thinking, I am a Brazilian researcher and I am privileged enough to be in Europe doing research about There. But why am I looking elsewhere, if this thing is happening Here as well?"*

Oliveira acknowledges that the historical connection between coloniality and the German migration and border control is not 1:1, but that these sonic biometrics are colonial in their nature. Rather, he argues, it is a discursive connection "that relates all these techniques, especially bordering as a whole, to coloniality, to colonialism and the continuation of colonialism as an epistemic device."

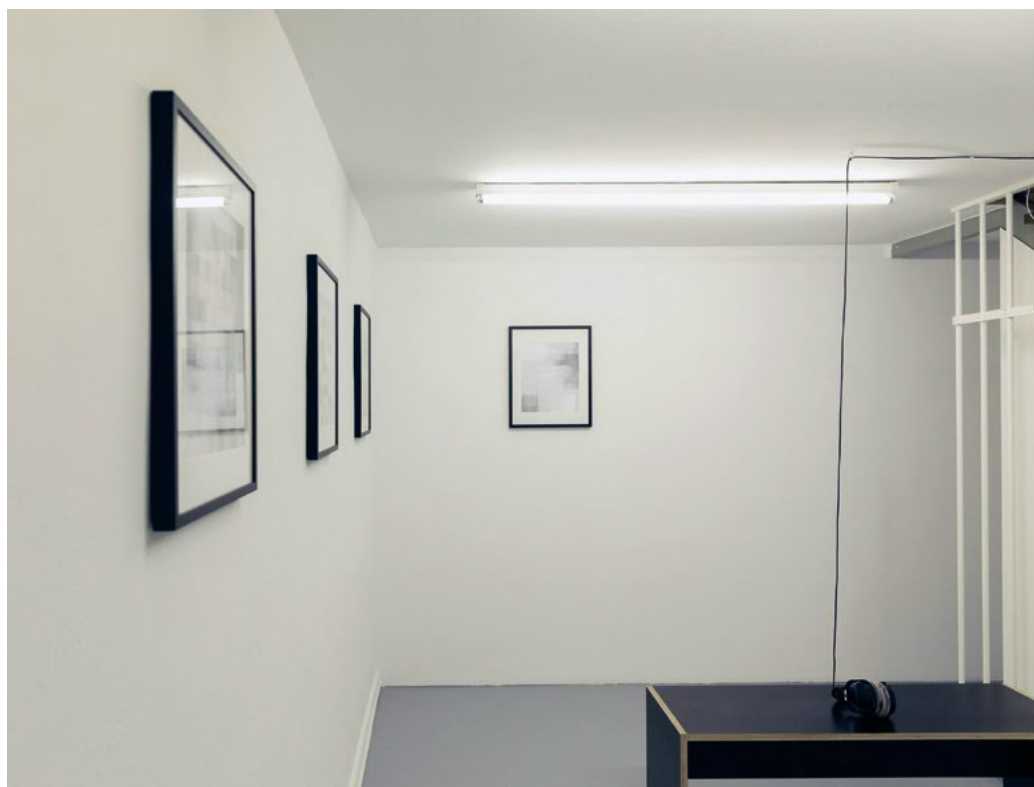
## THE PROCESSING OF PEOPLE

When asked about the temporal perspective of the project, Pedro Oliveira explains that it is many-fold. First, there is a temporal and spatial connection between the collection of accents in Germany today, and the Prussian Phonographic Commission in the early 20th century under the auspices of phonetician Wilhelm Doegen. To create a catalogue of accents, Doegen travelled among prisoner camps in Germany, former Prussia, to record the voices of prisoners of war. This context of forced recordings is the first speculative spatial temporality.

The second temporality is connected to the accent software, which is itself divided into three moments: collection of the database; training of the software by adjustment, calibration and interpretation, and finally; the moment when the asylum seeker performs the test.

The testing however stretches into the third temporal perspective through the aspect of waiting, which is an overall theme for an asylum seeker:

*"Asylum seekers are usually waiting for a long time before their cases are processed, and when they come to the room to be tested, they have to speak for two minutes, so there is a constraint on their time, in which these two minutes decide upon their lives."*



*"The Detectability of Echoes." 2019. Installed at BASIS Frankfurt, November 2020. (Photo: Katrin Binner)*





*"There is a Point at which Methods Devour Themselves." 2020. Installed at BASIS Frankfurt in November 2020. (Photo: Katrin Binner)*

Subsequently, the recorded voice is cut into snippets of 10 milliseconds. All of these temporalities have strong connections to the immigration and asylum industry, which seek to reduce the processing time of people. Ultimately, Oliveira says, the industry is operating in microtime to make macro decisions.

### **“THERE IS A POINT AT WHICH METHODS DEVOUR THEMSELVES”**

Pedro Oliveira too works with processing voices, albeit through artistic means. In his earlier work, *“There is a point at which methods devour themselves”*, a Greek singer who does not speak Portuguese is performing a Brazilian song learned by heart. In that work, Oliveira illuminates the very point where the methods of accent software devour themselves: the narrow and binary categories dehumanize and violate bodies that do not fit into clear-cut categories of accent equals geography. In this way, the inherently dehumanizing aspect of the software technology is also what makes it faulty.

By experimenting with deconstructing, reconstructing and performing voices in different ways, as with the Greek woman singing in Portuguese, Oliveira points to a place where social bodies can challenge this rigid and dehumanizing system and thus maintain or reclaim opacity.

### **A YEAR AT THE COLLEGIUM**

Having explored these themes artistically in recent years, Pedro Oliveira sees his year at the Collegium as a great opportunity to focus on the academic side of the work, as well as to look back and to derive theory from his previous works. Finally, referring to the multidisciplinary of the Collegium, Oliveira says that the research of other current HCAS fellows is fascinating and mostly out of his scope, and that this exchange contributes to his own knowledge and sense of the world.

To explore more of Pedro Oliveira’s artistic work, visit <https://oliveira.work>.

# DOWN BY THE WATER, ACROSS THE TIME ZONES – HCAS ALUMNI HOST AN INNOVATIVE GLOBAL WEBINAR SERIES ON MARITIME ARCHAEOLOGY

By Kaisa Kaakinen

When the global pandemic stopped all conference travel last spring, Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies alumna Veronica Walker Vadillo, a maritime archaeologist at the University of Helsinki, realized that the unexpected situation required new forms of academic exchange. She sought help from Emilia Mataix Ferrándiz, HCAS alumna and researcher of Roman law and archaeology at the University of Helsinki, and Kristin Ilves, assistant professor of maritime archaeology at the UH, to launch a webinar series *Down by the Water – Global Conversations in Maritime Archaeology*. This conversation that now connects scholars across continents began in the Common Room of the Helsinki Collegium a few years back.

Inaugurated in September 2020, the webinar series has biweekly sessions on Mondays (#MaritimeMondays, as the hashtag of the maritime research community puts it). While the focus of the series is on maritime archaeology, it reaches out to other disciplines, too.

“Similar webinars are often focused on underwater or nautical topics or specific regions. Our series is about the whole concept of ‘maritimity’, what it means in different areas, and we also invite speakers who are not archaeologists to explain how they understand maritime communities,” Veronica Walker Vadillo explains. “Yes, and this approach really helps us broaden the scholarly discussions, as people doing maritime archaeology can tap into different disciplines,” Emilia Mataix Ferrándiz adds.

Furthermore, the series brings together scholarly communities from different geographic contexts. For instance, the organizers have been able to connect Helsinki to Asian scholarly networks and to the large Spanish-speaking community of archaeologists in Spain and the Americas.

“We decided to take advantage of this pandemic and transform Helsinki into a kind of hub of maritime archaeology. People usually want to present at places like Oxford or Cambridge, not only because they are prestigious but because they are so well located close to London,” says Walker Vadillo.

Walker Vadillo and Mataix Ferrándiz have been happy to observe that the series run from Helsinki has acted as a bridge in the world of maritime archaeology, as, for instance, the event has put scholars from the Philippines and Mexico in touch, in what they hope is a first step in a fruitful collaboration.

“Also for my own field this exchange is key, as scholars doing classics and researching the Roman Empire are often quite isolated in their own fields of research,” says Mataix Ferrándiz. “Methods that we use can sometimes be used to understand other empires. Right now I am studying the Indian Ocean and find many parallels to what happened in the Roman Empire.”

The events tend to draw about 50 online participants, a mix of people from various locations and career stages. Some recordings of the events have already reached over 1,000 views, and the video archive also presents a great resource for teaching. The project also has local impact, as there is always a good number of people attending from Finland. The events allow Helsinki-based researchers and students to get a glimpse of what is happening elsewhere and to find contacts for their future research endeavors.

## HOW IT ALL BEGAN AT THE HELSINKI COLLEGIUM

The interdisciplinary concept of the series was born two years earlier, when Walker Vadillo and Mataix Ferrándiz were fellows at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies. Both say that the series would most likely not have its current form had it not grown from the interdisciplinary exchanges at the Collegium.

An important spark for the project came from a presentation by linguist **Olesya Khanina**, who presented at the Collegium’s weekly seminar her research on Siberian rivers as language contact areas. Walker Vadillo, who was researching the riverine cultural landscape of Angkor at the Mekong river, and Mataix Ferrándiz, who specializes in Roman law connected to



maritime commerce, understood that they could learn a lot from the way linguists approach riverine cultures. The seminar and lunch conversations grew into a symposium project, in which fellows working on archaeology, law, linguistics and anthropology set out to understand better the human–environment interactions in maritime and fluvial spaces. In addition to Walker Vadillo, Khanina and Mataix Ferrándiz, the symposium team included archaeologist **Elisabeth Holmqvist-Sipilä**, a specialist in material culture and archaeological science.

The resulting symposium *Down by the Water: Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Role of Water Transit Points in Past Societies* took place in November 2019 at the Collegium.

“During the symposium, we were constantly talking about how all this was so rare, so out of our comfort zone. It became something wonderfully strange. That is what we want to continue, although the new series is more focused on archaeology and anthropology. We also aim to bring in people who are not from these areas,” Walker Vadillo and Mataix Ferrándiz explain.

## FROM SEMINAR TO PODCAST

The organizers of the 2019 symposium are currently editing a book that will be published in the series *Cultural Studies in Maritime and Underwater Archaeology* by BAR Publishing.

As for the webinar series, the organizers want to explore the podcast format, which allows one to listen to the conversations without being tied to the screen. As there are not many maritime archaeology podcasts out there, this is a promising direction. In addition to presentations, the series has already featured some roundtable discussions, such as a discussion on March 8, 2021, on women doing maritime archaeology.

“As we change the format into a more conversational tone, I really want to emphasize the advances we are making in theoretical frameworks,” Walker Vadillo says.

As an example of a session highlighting theoretical advances in the field, she mentions the event on April 19, 2021, with **Roberto Junco**, who works with the concept of temporal landscapes and talked about the archaeology of the Manila Galleons and current excavations in Acapulco. Junco studies how the



This photo, adorning the website of the *Down by the Water* webinar series, appears in *A History of the Philippines* (1905) by David P. Barrows. [www.gutenberg.org/files/38269/38269-h/38269-h.htm#pb201](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/38269/38269-h/38269-h.htm#pb201)

temporal landscapes in the ports are dependent on a specific rhythm of different activities. In order to explain how the activities come together as the life of a port city, Junco draws on music and musicology.

“I am very excited about the chance to have such speakers and conversations and to give the audience the opportunity to ask questions, it really enhances what we can contribute to the field in terms of theory,” Walker Vadillo says.

In addition to welcoming new audiences, the organizers are open to proposals for presentations. If interested in giving a talk in the series, you can contact the organizers by email.

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**Website:**  
[blogs.helsinki.fi/downbythewater](https://blogs.helsinki.fi/downbythewater)

**Facebook:**  
[www.facebook.com/4DownByTheWater](https://www.facebook.com/4DownByTheWater)

# COLLEGIUM EVENTS IN 2020–2021

The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to postpone or cancel some of the events planned for spring 2020. However, the exceptional situation also gave rise to new ideas, such as a one-day seminar organized by HCAS Fellows in June 2020 to discuss the ongoing global pandemic from the point of view of the humanities and social sciences. In fall 2020 and spring 2021, all public events at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies took place online. Highlights of HCAS events from spring 2020 to summer 2021 are presented on the following pages.

## HCAS WINTER SCHOOL FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS, 22–24.1.2020: “TAKING THE STAGE: SPEAKING, LISTENING, NETWORKING”



*HCAS Fellow Miia Halme-Tuomisaari and HCAS Alumna Hanna Ylöstalo shared their experiences and tips concerning public speaking and outreach beyond academia.*



*Riikka Järvelä from the Language Center of the University of Helsinki giving her advice on successful academic presentations.*

The HCAS Winter School 2020 focused on public speaking and the role of academic conferences in networking and career building. About 40 doctoral students of the University of Helsinki gathered at the HCAS premises for plenary discussions and small workshops led by HCAS fellows. The Winter School 2020 was organized by HCAS Fellows **Natalya Bekhta** and **Alexei Zadorozhnyi**, with the help of HCAS Deputy Director **Hanne Appelqvist** and Research Coordinator **Kaisa Kaakinen**.

*The doctoral students had a chance to interact with each other and with HCAS fellows during coffee breaks.*





## HCAS SYMPOSIUM “NO SUCH THING AS HERITAGE?” – FROM BASIC ASSUMPTIONS AND CONSTRUCTS TO RECONCEPTUALIZATIONS, 4.–6.3.2020

The “No Such Thing As Heritage?” Symposium focused on practices, assumptions, constructs and ideologies linked to heritage and its operation, looking especially at categories and oppositions constructed through discourse. The emergence of critical heritage perspectives has produced two levels of discussion in heritage studies to which this symposium added a third by looking critically at critical heritage studies and the constructedness of the categories and oppositions that have structured it. The event weaved together the various threads of current debates by bringing together representatives of different forms of heritage “on the ground” and diverse strands of critical heritage studies and beyond.

The keynote speakers were **Laurajane Smith** (Australian National University), **Kristin Kuutma** (University of Tartu) and **Suzie Thomas** (University

of Helsinki). In addition to the academic program, the symposium included performances by two artists. Finnish folk singer and musician **Emmi Kuittinen**’s session focused on performing Karelian laments in modern society, and **Girila Baars**, a composer based in Uppsala, Sweden, performed his music that combines electroacoustic music and sound art with elements from traditional vocal folk music.

The main organizers of the event were HCAS Fellows **Eila Stepanova** and **Rani-Henrik Andersson**, HCAS Alumna **Elo-Hanna Seljamäe** (University of Tartu) and **Frog** (Folklore Studies, University of Helsinki).

Symposium website:

[blogs.helsinki.fi/nosuchthingasheritage](https://blogs.helsinki.fi/nosuchthingasheritage)



*Andreas Kalkun from the Estonian Literary Museum giving a presentation in the HCAS Common Room.*



*Eila Stepanova introducing Emmi Kuittinen, who performed laments based on Karelian traditions.*



## KOLLEGIUM TALKS: PERSPECTIVES ON RESEARCH ETHICS



In spring 2020 Kollegium Talks events, HCAS fellows and other University of Helsinki researchers reflected on ethical issues that researchers face when they collaborate with each other and design research projects involving live participants. The third part of the series on the ethics of impact was canceled due to the pandemic.

The recordings of the two discussions are available on Helsinki Collegium's Youtube channel at [www.youtube.com/user/TheHelsinkiCollegium/videos](https://www.youtube.com/user/TheHelsinkiCollegium/videos).

### ETHICS OF COLLABORATION, MARCH 5, 2020

The discussion focused on collaboration as an essential academic activity that has its potential difficulties and pitfalls. How do researchers choose who to collaborate with? How do they ensure fairness in collaboration? How do they negotiate authorship and acknowledgements? What ethical issues may arise in the relationship between PhD supervisors and supervisees, or the principal investigator and the rest of their research group?

*Ethics of Collaboration, March 5, 2020.*

*Speakers: HCAS Fellows Andreas Bieler, Jaana Simola and Anna Usacheva, Moderator: Silva Nurmio (HCAS)*

### ETHICS OF RESEARCH DESIGN, MARCH 12, 2020

This discussion focused on ethical questions that academics intending to conduct responsible research have to pose as they prepare a research proposal, especially if they plan to do fieldwork. When working with live participants, have you considered if your work is in need of ethical clearance? Have you planned ways of obtaining informed consent? Have you considered your participants' safety? How will you store the data to ensure anonymity when required? What about ownership of the data? Are your participants entitled to ownership? Have you considered the ethics of working with Indigenous communities and how your work can impact their lives?

*Ethics of Research Design, March 12, 2020*

*Speakers: Molly Andrews (HCAS), Erika Löfström (University of Helsinki), Pirjo Kristiina Virtanen (University of Helsinki)  
Moderator: Veronica Walker Vadillo (HCAS)*



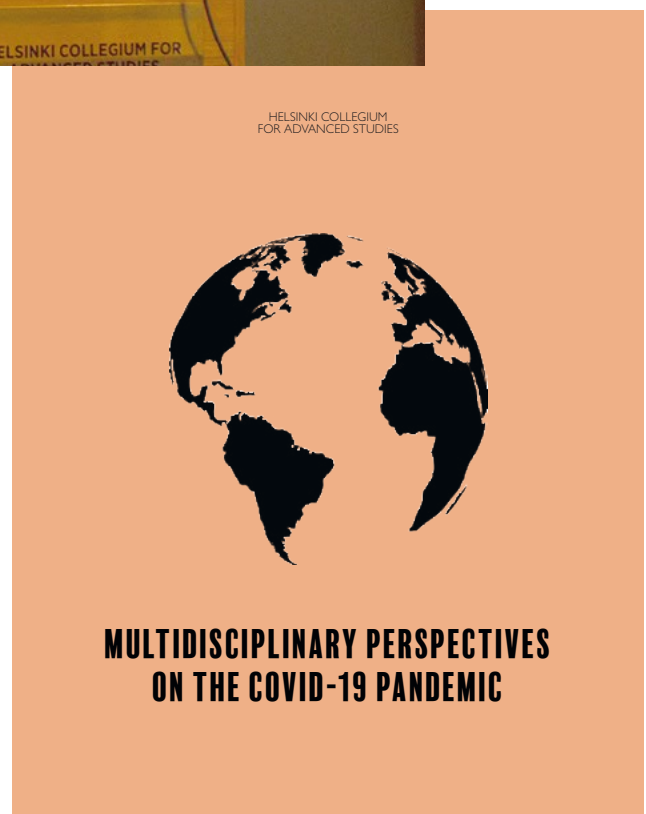
## MULTIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, HCAS IN-HOUSE SEMINAR ON JUNE 16, 2020



*Molly Andrews  
opening the  
symposium*

As the first pandemic lockdown gave way to less severe restrictions in the Helsinki area in June 2020, HCAS fellows returned to the Common Room of the Collegium to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic from multidisciplinary perspectives. **Molly Andrews**, Jane and Aatos Erkko Professor in 2019–2020, had proposed the idea to **Niko Besnier** and **Andreas Bieler**, and together they invited all fellows to contribute a short talk about the pandemic based on their disciplinary expertise. This produced a multifaceted discussion in which the pandemic was approached from the point of view of history, literature, psychology, anthropology, linguistics, philosophy, political science, poetry, filmmaking and more. The contributions to the seminar were later published as a pamphlet that is available on the HCAS website.

**Link to the publication:** [www.helsinki.fi/en/helsinki-collegium-for-advanced-studies/multidisciplinary-perspectives-on-covid-19](http://www.helsinki.fi/en/helsinki-collegium-for-advanced-studies/multidisciplinary-perspectives-on-covid-19)



*The cover of the pamphlet (design: Shanna Constantinescu)*



## WESTERMARCK MEMORIAL LECTURE BY BEVERLEY SKEGGS AND ERIK ALLARDT PANEL, 26.11.2020

The Westermarck Society, the Swedish School of Social Science of the University of Helsinki and HCAS co-organized a panel discussion in memory of Finnish Sociologist **Erik Allardt**, who passed away on August 25, 2020. The panelists, **Risto Alapuro**, **Riitta Jallinoja**, **Aino Sinnemäki**, **Pekka Sulkunen** and **Tom Sandlund** as well as moderators **Eeva Luhtakallio** and **Lena Näre** discussed the significance of Allardt's career and his impact on Finnish sociology. The panel was preceded by the 2020 Westermarck Memorial Lecture delivered by

Prof. **Beverley Skeggs** (Lancaster University), who presented on "The Necropolitics of Now: Distributions of Values and Value."

The University of Helsinki has launched the **Erik Allardt Memorial Fundraising Program**, which supports the Erik Allardt Fellowship program at HCAS, designed for the promotion of academic and cultural exchange between Finland and Sweden.

More information: [www2.helsinki.fi/en/helsinki-collegium-for-advanced-studies/fellowships/erik-allardt-fellowship](http://www2.helsinki.fi/en/helsinki-collegium-for-advanced-studies/fellowships/erik-allardt-fellowship)

## HCAS SYMPOSIUM: MEDITERRANEAN FLOWS – PEOPLE, IDEAS AND OBJECTS IN MOTION, 10.–11.12.2020

The HCAS Symposium "Mediterranean Flows" was held on Zoom on December 10–11, 2020. The rationale for this symposium was to create a space for interdisciplinary inquiry into the movement of individuals, objects, and ideas, focusing on the Mediterranean region.

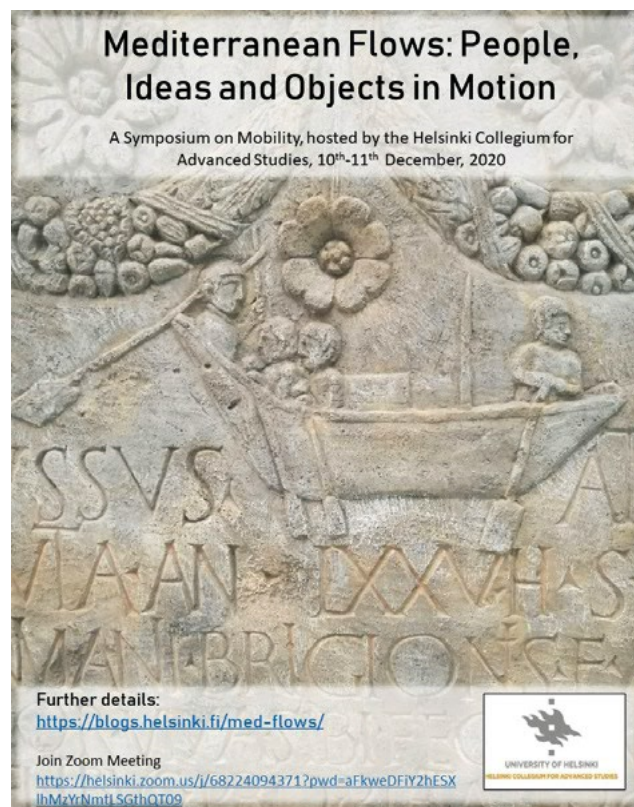
The organizers of the symposium, HCAS fellows and alumni **Maijastina Kahlos**, **Emilia Mataix Ferrándiz**, **Anna Usacheva**, and **Elisa Uusimäki**, write about the project in the HCAS blog "Freedom to think":

"All of us organizers work on the ancient world, with texts and/or material culture, but thanks to our diverse group of colleagues at HCAS, it soon became clear that contemporary cases of Mediterranean-related movement would provide excellent conversation partners to ancient modes and moments of travel and mobility. This is how 'Mediterranean Flows' came to be.

We are happy that we followed the Collegium's cross-disciplinary vision, as the symposium turned out to be a delight. [...] We heard excellent contributions by researchers trained in history, archaeology, sociology, anthropology, classics, theology, the study of religion, philosophy, and geography."

Read the entire blog entry at:

[blogs.helsinki.fi/hcasblog/2021/01/11/mediterranean-flows-tracing-ancient-and-contemporary-mobility-on-zoom](https://blogs.helsinki.fi/hcasblog/2021/01/11/mediterranean-flows-tracing-ancient-and-contemporary-mobility-on-zoom)



*Symposium poster, photo by Maijastina Kahlos*

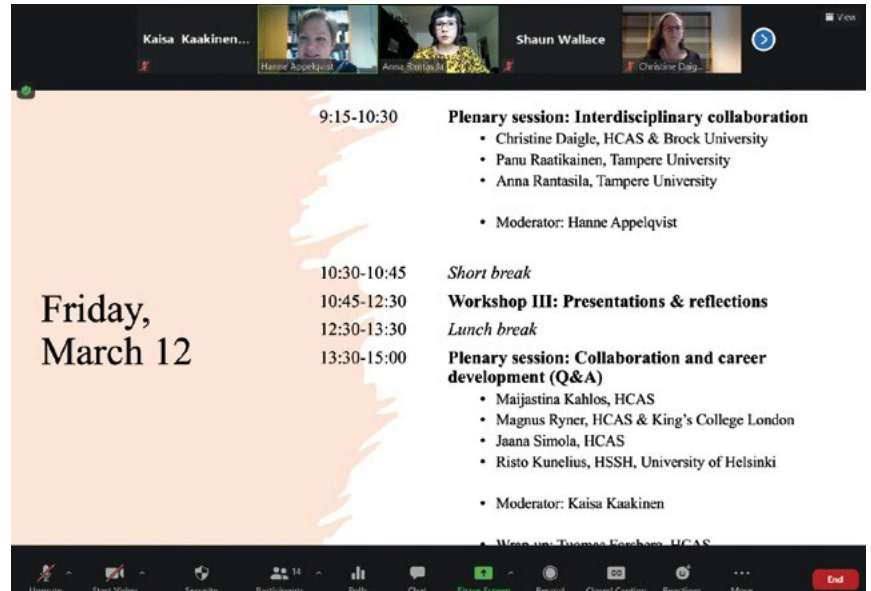


## SPRING 2021

### HCAS WINTER SCHOOL FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS: ACADEMIC COLLABORATION AND CAREER BUILDING: BENEFITS AND PITFALLS, MARCH 10–12, 2021

The HCAS Winter School 2021 delved into the topic of collaboration and its role in academic career building. The course gathered some thirty University of Helsinki doctoral students on Zoom to explore the many benefits and pitfalls associated with collaboration in different contexts, such as writing and publishing, research projects and funding applications, interdisciplinary research and collaboration with non-academic partners. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all plenary and workshop sessions were conducted online.

The organizing team consisted of HCAS Fellows **Ryan Mullins**, **Kinga Polýńczuk-Alenius** and **Louise Settle**, as well as HCAS Deputy Director **Hanne Appelqvist** and Research Coordinator **Kaisa Kaakinen**.



**Friday, March 12**

Time	Session
9:15-10:30	<b>Plenary session: Interdisciplinary collaboration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christine Daigle, HCAS &amp; Brock University</li> <li>Panu Raatikainen, Tampere University</li> <li>Anna Rantasila, Tampere University</li> <li>Moderator: Hanne Appelqvist</li> </ul>
10:30-10:45	<b>Short break</b>
10:45-12:30	<b>Workshop III: Presentations &amp; reflections</b>
12:30-13:30	<b>Lunch break</b>
13:30-15:00	<b>Plenary session: Collaboration and career development (Q&amp;A)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maijastina Kahlos, HCAS</li> <li>Magnus Ryner, HCAS &amp; King's College London</li> <li>Jaana Simola, HCAS</li> <li>Risto Kunelius, HSSH, University of Helsinki</li> <li>Moderator: Kaisa Kaakinen</li> </ul>

*Winter School 2021 Screenshot*

### JANE AND AATOS ERKKO LECTURE BY KAREN KNOP: “UNEASY ALLIANCES: POPULISM, INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THE RISE OF FOREIGN RELATIONS LAW,” MARCH 25, 2021



HCAS hosts **Karen Knop** (Professor of Law at the University of Toronto) as the Jane and Aatos Erkkö Visiting Professor in Studies on Contemporary Society in the academic year 2020–2021. In her public Erkkö lecture at HCAS, Professor Knop presented her new project on populism, international law and the rise of foreign relations law.

Professor Knop was introduced by **Martti Koskenniemi**, Professor of International Law at the University of Helsinki.

Read more about Karen Knop's research on pp. 16–18 of this newsletter.

*Karen Knop's lecture was live streamed from the Common Room of HCAS.*

## KOLLEGIUM TALKS: THINKING FUTURE WORLDS. APRIL 1, 15 AND 29, 2021.

HCAS organized three public Kollegium Talks events in April 2021. In each discussion, two fellows discussed a topic that was central to their own research as well as being crucial for an understanding of our contemporary moment and its possible futures. Due to the pandemic, the discussions were held online. The April 1 and 15 events are available as video recordings on the HCAS Youtube channel at [www.youtube.com/user/TheHelsinkiCollegium](https://www.youtube.com/user/TheHelsinkiCollegium).

### KOLLEGIUM TALKS: FROM THE ANTHROPOCENE TO BAT SOUPS – THINKING EXTINCTION (OUR OWN AND THAT OF OTHERS)

*Speakers: Christine Daigle & Xin Liu*

The world is in turmoil due to the multiple crises we face – environmental, societal, medical, economic. What does it mean to live in such a moment of crisis? Must we rethink ourselves, nonhuman others, the world and their relations in order to develop new tools to exist in this world? If the extent of these crises is such that they cannot be reverted or resolved, must we not learn to live in the mode of crisis? What does that entail? The discussion highlighted prominent concepts of this age of crisis, such as “Anthropocene,” “Extinction,” and “Sustainability,” challenging the humanist value system permeating these concepts and posing questions about the ethical and political implications of living beyond humanism.

### KOLLEGIUM TALKS: IS ANOTHER EUROPE POSSIBLE AFTER ALL? REFLECTIONS ON THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL AND THE COVID RECOVERY PLAN

*Speakers: Magnus Ryner & Heikki Patomäki*

The European Union is a contradictory entity in which many invest hope for a better future while at the same time subjecting it to seemingly ruthless criticism. This can be summarized by the slogan “another Europe



is possible.” Are recent EU initiatives such as the European Green Deal and the COVID Recovery Plan indicative of this? Or is Europe irredeemably locked into a market-based order that sits uneasily with social citizenship norms and requirements of democratic legitimation? Can the EU build cohesion by identifying external threats and enemies? What should its global role be? This session addressed these questions as a starting point for a more general discussion about whether social scientists can paint scenarios of the future to determine what might be possible and desirable.

### KOLLEGIUM TALKS: SOCIAL MEDIA AND POLITICS OF THE FUTURE: COMPLICATING SCENARIOS FOR A COMPLEX WORLD

*Speakers: Airi-Alina Allaste & Kinga Polyniczuk-Alenius*

The global uptake of social media platforms has profoundly reshaped contemporary politics. This development could be approached from contradictory standpoints: one that highlights users’ political agency in productively and creatively employing affordances of social media, and the other that argues that social media exacerbate the current democratic crisis. On the one hand, we witness unprecedented access to information and diversification of political participation. On the other hand, we are concerned about the spread of disinformation and algorithmically engineered communicative fragmentation that feeds political polarization. This session expanded on these starting points to reflect on how social media impact societal debates, activism and political communication in ways that will shape the politics of the future.

## PUBLIC EVENT WITH SOCIO-LEGAL SCHOLAR MARIANA VALVERDE: “CHRONOTOPES OF LAW AND MULTI-SCALAR GOVERNANCE: NEW CONTEXTS,” MAY 20, 2021

In her celebrated book *Chronotopes of Law: Jurisdiction, Scale and Governance*, leading socio-legal scholar Mariana Valverde (Sociolegal Studies, University of Toronto) develops a new framework for analyzing the spatio-temporal workings of law and other forms of governance. Valverde’s innovative approach adapts philosopher and literary theorist **Mikhail Bakhtin**’s notion of the “chronotope” to law and brings together diverse research traditions, including anthropological approaches to legal temporality and studies of law and space by geographers.

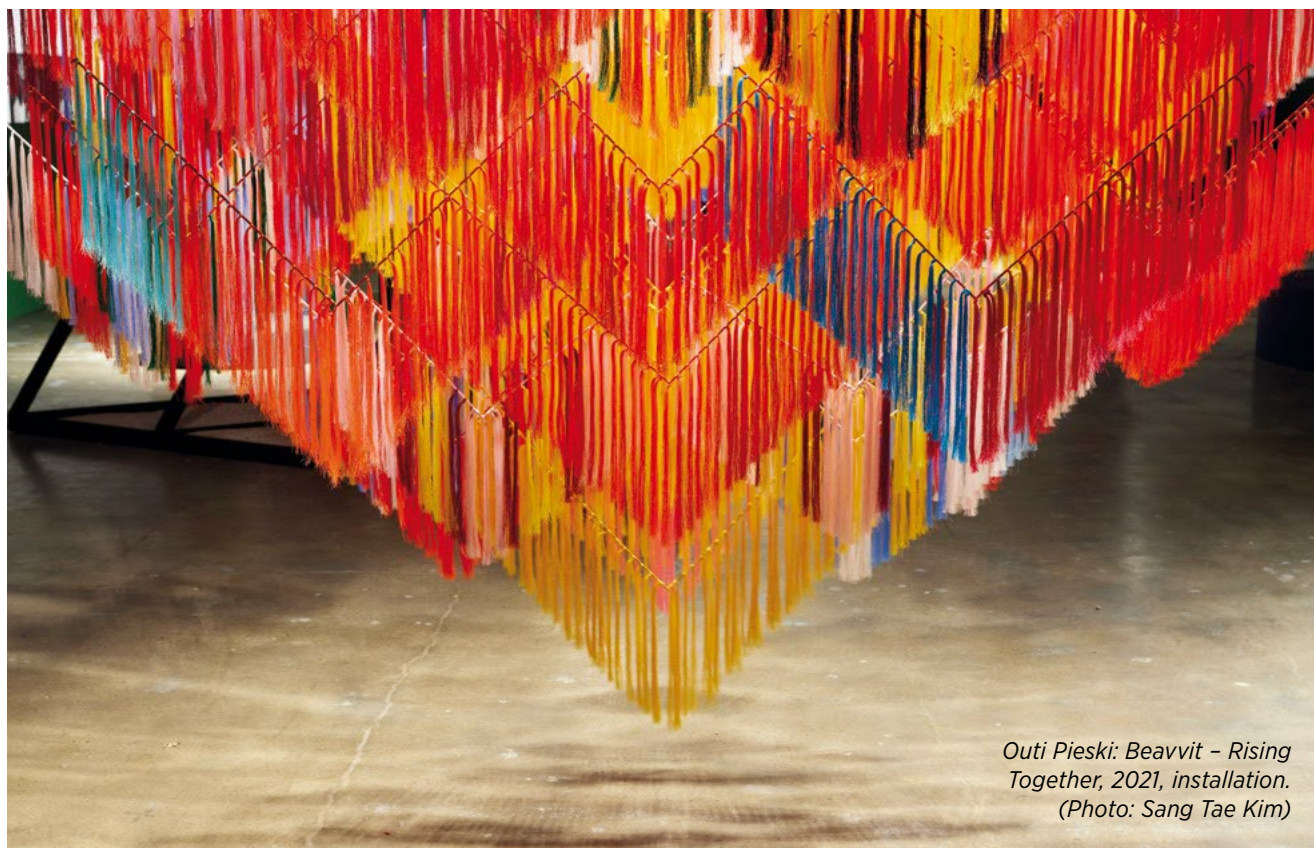
The event began with Professor Valverde’s talk about chronotopes of law and how to theorize multi-scalar governance, followed by a discussion with three University of Helsinki professors, **Jeremy Gould** (Social Anthropology, Helsinki), **Jan Klabbers** (Faculty of Law, Helsinki) and **Karen Knop** (HCAS), who brought Prof. Valverde’s ideas to bear on new contexts: postcolonialism, international organizations and transnational justice.



Original by August Schwerdfeger, <https://flic.kr/p/2jhUf4v>, and Andrew Malone, <https://flic.kr/p/Nv9px>, CC BY 2.0 licensed, modified into a 'tiny planet' by HCAS.



## “TRUTH, INJUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE: FINLAND, CANADA, UNITED STATES”, PUBLIC ONLINE EVENT ON MAY 25, 2021



*Outi Pieski: Beavvit – Rising Together, 2021, installation.  
(Photo: Sang Tae Kim)*

In anticipation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Concerning the Sámi People that the Government of Finland will appoint in 2021, this event brought together political scientist **Rauna Kuokkanen** (University of Lapland) with legal scholar **Mayo Moran** (University of Toronto) and historian **David Collins** (HCAS) to discuss historical injustice and reconciliation in comparative perspective.

All three speakers have played leadership roles in reconciliation processes at the national, regional or institutional level and brought those perspectives to bear in the discussion, as well as those of their different scholarly disciplines. The discussion was moderated by international lawyer **Karen Knop** and international relations expert **Tuomas Forsberg** (both HCAS), whose research on these issues offers international and transnational perspectives.

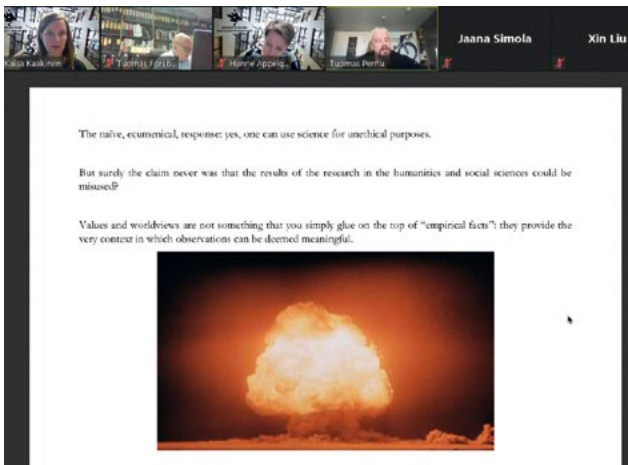
Professor Kuokkanen spoke about the prospects for a truth and reconciliation process in Finland. Professor Moran considered what might be learned from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, the best-known truth and reconciliation commission (TRC)

that directly concerns Indigenous peoples and led the Sámi people to consider the need for a similar process in Finland, Norway and Sweden. The Canadian TRC's national calls to action extend to goals for institutions such as universities. Professor Collins approached the topic from this angle, based on his experience as chair of Georgetown University's Working Group on Slavery, Memory and Reconciliation ([www.georgetown.edu/slavery](http://www.georgetown.edu/slavery)), which was established to address the history that in 1838 the University's Jesuit leadership sold 272 slaves to save Georgetown from financial distress. A number of universities in the United States and elsewhere are undertaking similar efforts regarding the legacy of slavery for their institutions, and a recent outgrowth of the Georgetown initiative has been the pledge of the Jesuit conference of Catholic priests to raise \$100 million (US) to benefit the descendants of the enslaved people once owned by the Jesuit order and to promote racial reconciliation initiatives.

Read more about the event on the HCAS blog: [blogs.helsinki.fi/hcasblog](https://blogs.helsinki.fi/hcasblog)

## IDEOLOGY IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, HCAS SUMMER COLLOQUIUM, JUNE 1, 2021

The in-house seminar on COVID-19 at HCAS in June 2020 began what might become a tradition of summer seminars in which HCAS fellows discuss a chosen topic drawing on multidisciplinary perspectives. In 2021, we decided to focus on the role of ideology in the humanities and social sciences. The choice of topic was sparked by a heated debate in the Finnish media after an editorial in the newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* touched upon the issue in April 2021. We wanted to create a space for a discussion among HCAS fellows to reflect on the broader societal and scholarly context of such contemporary debates and tensions. The colloquium consisted of short presentations proposed by individual fellows and an open discussion, followed by a social gathering outdoors.



*Tuomas Pernu giving his presentation "Science and ideology: what is the question?" (Image source: U.S. Department of Energy)*

## SEMINAR: PARENTS IN ACADEMIA, JUNE 4, 2021

This seminar focused on work-family balance in academia and discussed good strategies and potential difficulties related to combining parenthood and academia. The discussions dealt with strategies to overcome these difficulties, support and opportunities provided for (young) parents by the University of Helsinki, parents' needs and wishes, and how to make the University of Helsinki even more family friendly.



Karolina Grabowska from Pexels

Speakers: **Hanna Snellman** (Professor and Vice Rector, University of Helsinki), **Anna Rotkirch** (Research Professor and Director of the Population Research Institute, Väestöliitto), **Tuomas Forsberg** (Professor and Director of the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies), **Veronica Walker Vadillo** (Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Helsinki), **Christian Hakulinen** (University Lecturer, University of Helsinki).

Organizer and moderator: HCAS Fellow Kateryna Savelieva

Event page: [www2.helsinki.fi/en/node/107513](http://www2.helsinki.fi/en/node/107513)

## THE LOST PUBLIC SIDE OF PUBLIC INTERNATIONAL LAW, JUNE 15–16, 2021

**WORKSHOP ORGANIZED BY PROF. KAREN KNOP AND PROF. MARTTI KOSKENNIEMI**

Public international law has a neglected and troubled history with the outward-facing aspects of domestic public law: those aspects of a state's law concerned with the distribution of powers over foreign relations between different branches and levels of government and treated together in a few legal systems as a distinct field of "foreign relations law." Which branch of government can commit the state to a treaty or declare war, for example?

The story of twentieth-century public international law is often told as one of breaking away from analogies with property, contract and other domestic private law concepts to become meaningfully public at the international level – perhaps even a global constitutional order or rudimentary federation. This story effectively erases international law's

relationship to the norms that constitute the state as a foreign relations actor or collection of actors – provinces, colonies, territories, legislatures, protesters, corporations – under the public law of that state.

Designed as a small “ideas incubation” event with a view to a larger co-sponsored conference and publication in 2-3 years, this informal workshop organized by Erkko Professor Karen Knop (HCAS / Professor of Law, University of Toronto and Professor Martti Koskenniemi (Faculty of Law) brings together researchers centered at the University of Helsinki to discuss the contours of this missing history and its implications. The lost public side of public international law to be examined includes external public law in the German and French lineages, colonial law in British legal history, foreign relations law “exceptionalism” in the United States and EU external relations law.

The populist backlash against international law is an important reason why this workshop is so timely. Efforts to resist withdrawal from multilateral treaties and institutions have led public international lawyers to look for pressure points in the foreign relations law architecture of states. This also leads them into new and potentially uneasy relationships with public law for which international lawyers are surprisingly lacking in history and ready tools for analysis and critique.

[blogs.helsinki.fi/publicinternationallaw2021](https://blogs.helsinki.fi/publicinternationallaw2021)

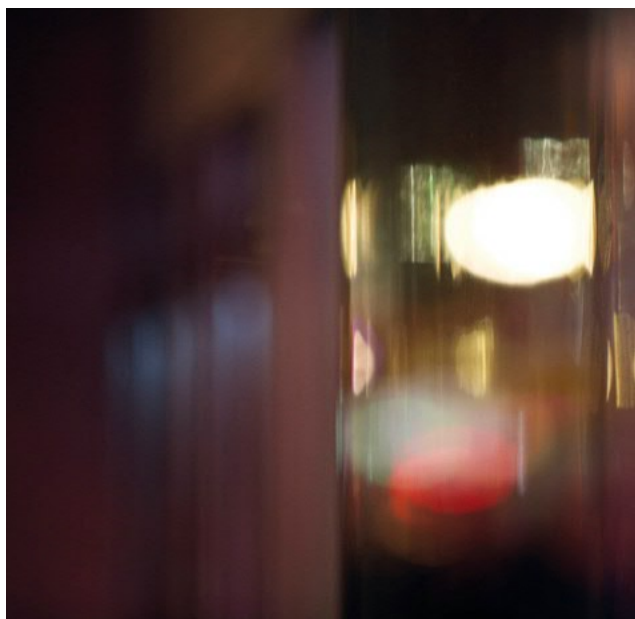


Photo: Ea Vasko: #6 from the series REFLECTIONS OF THE EVER-CHANGING (THE SHORT HISTORY OF NOW), 2009

## IAS COLLABORATIONS IN 2020–2021

The physical meetings of international networks of institutes of advanced study had to be canceled or postponed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the need to exchange ideas on how to best manage the institutes during the pandemic created new and even more intense forms of collaboration, for instance in the form of several ad hoc online meetings of the European Network of Institutes of Advanced Study (NetIAS). HCAS representatives also participated in the **NetIAS Annual Business meeting on April 20–21, 2021**, organized by the Netherlands Institute of Advanced Study, and the **University-Based Institutes of Advanced Study (UBIAS) Directors' Conference on April 12–14, 2021**, held virtually under the organization of IMéRA in Marseille, France.

Furthermore, HCAS collaborated with other NetIAS members in the European Netias online lecture series in spring and fall 2020 under the thematic heading “Borders.” On June 18, 2020, Professor **Molly Andrews** (Erkko Professor at HCAS in 2019–2020) gave a talk titled “The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Failure of Narrative Imagination,” and on October 8, Professor **Niko Besnier** (HCAS Core Fellow 2019–2020) presented on the topic of “Borders, Youth, Neoliberalism: How Global Sport Undermines and Strengthens National Borders.”



# UPCOMING HCAS EVENTS IN 2021-2022

HCAS will celebrate its 20th anniversary during the academic year 2021-2022 – fashionably late due to the coronavirus restrictions that affected events in the first half of 2021. This is a preview of the upcoming anniversary year events; further events will be announced next academic year on the HCAS website as well as on Twitter (@HCollegium) and Facebook.



**SEPTEMBER 15, 2021**

## **HCAS COMMON ROOM & ONLINE**

Anniversary panel on the very idea of an Institute for Advanced Study (in Finnish)

### **Speakers:**

**Docent Hanne Appelqvist**

(Deputy Director 2019–)

**Professor Sari Kivistö**

(HCAS Director 2015–2016)

**Professor Sami Pihlström**

(HCAS Director 2009–2015)

**Chancellor Emeritus Kari Raivio**

(Rector 1996–2003)

**Professor Emeritus Raimo Väyrynen**

(HCAS Director 2002–2004)

**Moderator: Director Tuomas Forsberg**

## **KOLLEGIUM TALKS**

FALL 2021: 29.11., 9.12., 13.12. at 5:00 pm,  
Think Corner Stage

SPRING 2022: Dates TBA



Introducing the public to research conducted at HCAS, the Kollegium Talks events in 2021–2022 will have the format of a dialogue between two HCAS fellows. The fellows will engage in a conversation on a topic that they have chosen themselves and that connects their research interests and passions. The discussions will take place at University of Helsinki's event space Think Corner, and they will be live streamed and published as recordings on the HCAS Youtube channel. The speakers and topics will be announced in fall 2021.

**JANUARY 20, 2022:**

## **TIETEIDEN YÖ – THE NIGHT OF SCIENCE**

HCAS will participate in the Night of Science, a block party for science and research celebrated annually in Helsinki. The Collegium will welcome the Night of Science audiences to its premises for a program planned by HCAS fellows. The program details will be announced in fall 2021.

**JUNE 15, 2022 AT 2:15 PM**

## **ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

The Great Hall, University of Helsinki Main Building

**JUNE 16-17, 2022**

## **HCAS ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE: COSMOPOLITAN KNOWLEDGE**

**JUNE 20-21, 2022**

## **“STILL I RISE”: POLITICAL NARRATIVES IN A RAGING WORLD**

Conference organized by Molly Andrews (Jane and Aatos Erkkö Professor in 2019–2020)



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**HCAS blog Freedom to Think:** [blogs.helsinki.fi/hcasblog](https://blogs.helsinki.fi/hcasblog)

[WWW2.HELSENKI.FI/EN/HELSINKI-COLLEGIUM-FOR-ADVANCED-STUDIES](http://WWW2.HELSENKI.FI/EN/HELSINKI-COLLEGIUM-FOR-ADVANCED-STUDIES)