ESF Exploratory Workshop on

Imagining Chaos: State of Exception in Law and Fiction

Copenhagen, 7-10 December 2011

Convened by:
Henrik Palmer Olsen ©, Isak Winkel Holm ©, and Kristian Lauta ©

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Main Objectives of the Workshop:

In recent years, the collapse of legal structures has been a prominent theme in legal studies as well as in cultural studies. Until now, however, there have been few attempts to unite the legal and the cultural studies approach to the state of emergency – and none on the field of disaster research.

The legal and the cultural studies approaches to the state of emergency converge on the level of social imaginaries rather than that of academic vocabularies. We suggest the concept of social imaginary—partly overlapping with the concepts of ideology, myth, phantasm, political theology etc. – as a name for the repertoire of cognitive schemes that structure our perception of and orientation in a given social order. In the case of the state of emergency, the underlying cultural assumptions about order and disorder, about security and violence, about predictability and contingency are vital to any assessment of the quantity and quality of the disaster.

However, the social imagination of disaster is not homogenous. At the one end of the spectrum, 'exceptionalists' perceive the state of emergency as a total breakdown of the social order; at the other end pole, 'non-exceptionalists' imagine the same kind of human tumult as a peripheral phenomenon only lightly touching a resilient social order. The task of the conference Imagining Chaos: States of Emergency in Law and Fiction is to explore how law and fiction negotiate the various ways of conceiving disorder on the following three levels:

Additional Information:

The conference is interdisciplinary in its essence. Not only does it bring together papers from different academic disciplines (legal studies, cultural studies, sociology, political science, etc.), the individual papers themselves will also make an attempt at crossing the borders between law and fiction in order to explore the deep grammar of disaster imagination.
PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

Wednesday, December 7th, 2011

Afternoon  Arrival day
            No scheduled plans for the evening

Thursday, December 8th, 2011 - State of Chaos

09.00-09.20  Registration and coffee
09.20-09.40  Presentation of the European Science Foundation (ESF)
             Algis Krupavicius (Standing Committee for Social Sciences - SCSS)
09.40-10.00  Welcome and introducing remarks
             Isak Winkel Holm
10.00-10.45  Oren Gross: Words as Power – The Rhetoric of War
             Director of the Institute for International Legal & Security Studies,
             University of Minnesota Law School, US
10.45-11.15  Discussion
11.15-12.00  Manfred Schneider: In the Aftermaths of Disaster – The Last Man in
             Literature and Cinema
             German Institute, Ruhr University, DE
12.00-12.30  Discussion
12.30-13.30  Lunch
13.30-14.15  Jörg Trempler: Presentation title tba
             University of Greifswald, DE
14.15-14.45  Discussion
14.45-15.30  Gerrit Jasper Schenk: Presentation title tba
             Darmstadt University of Technology, DE
15.30-16.00  Discussion
16.00-17.00  Parallel Sessions:
             Track 1: Rights  Track 2: Breakdowns
             Moderator: Henrik Palmer Olsen  Moderator: Isak Winkel Holm
             
Track 1: Rights

Stefanie Jansen:  Derogation of Human Rights Obligations During the
State of Emergency – Comparing the ICCPR and ICESCR

Kristian Cedervall Lauta: The emergence of Disaster Law – Refuting the
State of Emergency

Track 2: Breakdowns

Jakob Ladegaard:  Spaces of Exception: Political Images of Eastern
Europe in Contemporary Western Film

Luigi Corrias:  Disordering the Law: Inhuman Suffering and the Legal
Imagination of Disaster

18.00  Conference dinner
Friday, December 9th, 2011 - Chaos of the State

10.00-10.45  **Eyal Weizman**: Presentation title tba
Director of the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmith’s College, University of London, UK

10.45-11.15  Discussion

11.15-12.00  **Leonard Feldman**: The Culture of Law and the Doctrine of Police Emergency
Hunter College, The City University of New York, US

12.00-12.30  Discussion

12.30-13.30  Lunch

13.30-14.15  **Lisa Grow Sun & RonNell Jones**: Presentation title tba
Brigham Young University (BYU), Utah, US

14.15-14.45  Discussion

14.45-16.00  Coffee break

16.00-17.00  Parallel sessions:

Track 1: Radical Measures

**Ellen Turner**: Agatha Christie and Justice Outside Law: Legalised Murder and the Second World War

**Isak Winkel Holm**: Disaster Fiction and Foundation of Justice: Social Imagination of Order from Kleist to Zombies

**Susanne Krasmann and Karin Loevy**: Imaging the Unknown Threat: the Case of Targeted Killing

**Track 2: Injustice**

**Karen Margrethe Simonsen**: Presentation title tba

**Silvia Chirila**: The Representation of Chaos in Toni Morrison’s Novels

**Alice Brown**: Moliere: The Social Order Adapted to Circumstances

17.00-18.30  Concluding Remarks and follow-up activities
Henrik Palmer Olsen

18.30  End of workshop

19.00  Conference dinner

Saturday, November 10th, 2011

Morning  Departure day
Objectives of the ESF Standing Committee for Social Sciences (SCSS)

The mission of the **ESF Standing Committee for Social Sciences (SCSS)** is as follows:

- to promote high quality social science research at the European level;
- to bring 'added value' to nationally funded research through European collaboration between ESF Member Organisations;
- to help support innovative research ideas and approaches emanating from the scientific community, and
- to play an institutional role in strengthening European social science research infrastructure.

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ESF SCSS Exploratory Workshop: 
Imagining Chaos – States of Emergency in Law and Fiction 
Copenhagen (Denmark), 7-10 December 2011

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