

# Altonaer Stiftung für philosophische Grundlagenforschung

## ARCHIVING SOVEREIGNTY

### Invitation

The Centre for Legal Theory of the ASFPG invites you to attend a workshop on Stewart Motha's book manuscript 'Archiving Sovereignty'. The workshop will take place at the Stiftung's premises in Hamburg, Germany on **21st–23rd October, 2016** beginning at 3.15 pm on Friday and ending about 1.00 pm on Sunday.

### The Stiftung

The Stiftung is an independent foundation with legal capacity under the German Civil Code. Its commitment is to interdisciplinary work aimed at basic conceptual issues and practical problems in the areas of logic and metaphysics, legal theory and applied ethics of science and technology. It is organized accordingly into three centres. Further information regarding the Stiftung can be found at its web-site: [www.asfpg.de](http://www.asfpg.de).

### The Workshop

*Archiving Sovereignty* examines the problem of law's foundation through two related conceptual notions: the *archive*, and the *as if*. While the centrality of each has already been discussed in legal and political theory (Kant, Kelsen, Benjamin, Derrida, Vismann, Meister, Minkinen, Agamben, Nancy), their relation to each other has not been fully explored. *Archiving Sovereignty* asserts that law functions as an archive of sovereign violence. This is a function that — whether through 'fabulous retroactivity' or 'extravagant pretention' — is inscribed and sustained by recourse to the fictive in law.

The material for this book has been gathered from the Indian Ocean region. Multiple forms and instances of sovereign violence are considered from the Chagos Archipelago, Australia's offshore border security zones, Australian native title and stolen generation jurisprudence, and South African post-apartheid jurisprudence. This oceanic archive is itself a metaphor: the ocean as site of sovereign excess and memorial space extends discussions of the space/time of

law beyond constitutions, truth commissions, jurisdiction, and justiciability. The Indian Ocean is then not a space distinct from islands and adjacent land-masses, but the 'grey vault' (Derek Walcott) of persistent colonial violence.

*Archiving Sovereignty* thus seeks to extend the understanding of law's complicity in sovereign violence, and the sites of its investigation. Each chapter of the book develops a distinct aspect of what is involved in archiving violence: the fiction of sovereign solitude; ethics and politics in relation to the enisled other; the dialectic of memory and forgetting; and the relation between historical truth and narrative fiction.

The draft manuscript will be circulated to all workshop participants by the end of September, 2016. We ask that you read the full text. This will form the basis of a structured discussion of each chapter. ASFPG workshops are relatively informal. Further information on how we will structure the discussion will be sent out later.

The contact group for this workshop is Stewart Motha (Birkbeck) and myself. The Administrative Assistant of the ASFPG is Ulrike Horway.

### **Travel and Accommodation**

The Stiftung will pay all travel costs within Europe (economy air/rail fares including costs to and from home/hotel and airports). For those coming from outside Europe, travel costs are capped to 500 Euros. Invited participants are asked to access other research funds to cover the excess. The Stiftung will arrange and pay accommodation for two or three nights at a nearby hotel. (We can arrange further nights at the hotel at your expense should you wish to extend your stay in Hamburg.) It also provides a workshop dinner, an opening reception and light lunches and refreshments during the workshop.

### **Invited Participants**

Emilios Christodoulidis (Glasgow)	Jennifer Culbert (Johns Hopkins)
Avery Gordon (UC, Santa Barbara)	Stephanie Jones (Southampton)
Valerie Kerruish (ASFPG)	Tarik Kochi (Sussex)
Dan Matthews (Hong Kong)	Stewart Motha (Birkbeck)
Karin van Marle (Pretoria)	

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### **Further Planning and Questions**

Please respond as soon as possible and at latest by **5th June, 2016** to **valerie.kerruish@asfpg.de** cc. Ulrike Horway **ulrike.horway@asfpg.de**

We look forward to hearing from you.

Valerie Kerruish  
ASFPG  
Hamburg.