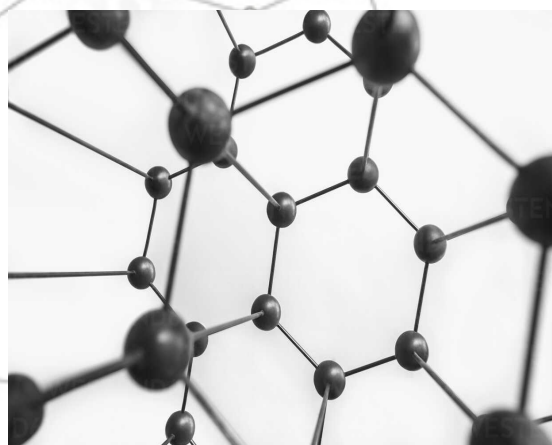


Call for Papers:
International Conference

**Immunity and Contagion:
Philosophical and Biopolitical Approaches
Toward the Pandemic**

**29-30 September, 2022
Vilnius**



The conference “Immunity and Contagion: Philosophical Approaches toward the Pandemic” will seek to reconceptualize the notions of immunity and contagion and redefine the concept of biopolitics in the current crisis caused by the COVID-19. We invite scholars from different philosophical backgrounds to consider key questions that constitute and are constituted by the concepts of immunity and contagion.

Immunity and contagion are increasingly important themes in contemporary philosophy. Michel Foucault located the origins of biopolitics in the regulation and control of contagious diseases. Jacques Derrida theorized the notions of immunity and autoimmunity to examine the contradictory and aporetic nature of democracy. Roberto Esposito examined immunity in relation to community, trying to imagine an immunization that might lead to “common immunity.” Other theoreticians, such as Donna J. Haraway, Alfred I. Tauber, and Ed Cohen, have highlighted the relationships between biomedical and philosophical notions of immunity. In this context, immunity and contagion are conceived of as philosophical categories that allow us to imagine new forms of common existence.

Immunity and contagion are hybrid categories that refer to philosophy, jurisprudence, medicine, and biology. As Esposito explains, “where the term ‘immunity’ for the biomedical sphere refers to a condition of natural or induced refractoriness on the part of a living organism when faced with a given disease, immunity in political-juridical language alludes to a temporary or definitive exemption on the part of subject with regard to concrete obligations or responsibilities that under normal circumstances would bind one to others” (2008: 45). In a similar way, in modern philosophy immunity is linked with the concept of a self-reflective individual who seems to be exempt from the demands of the other.

However, more recent philosophical and biomedical research brings the self into question and regards it not as an individual, but rather as an interactive assemblage related to human and non-human others. The emerging health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic signals the need to reconsider, modify, and even transform the notion of biopolitics.

Key areas of inquiry could include but are not limited to:

- Immunity and virality as philosophical paradigms;
- ethical, political, social and ecological implications of a pandemic;
- the notions of the self and the other in the times of pandemic;
- “herd immunity”, “common immunity”, and new forms of community;
- pandemics, neoliberalism, “neoviralism”;
- pandemic and new paradigms of biopolitics;
- surveillance and control VS responsibility;
- pandemic and the Anthropocene.

Keynote speakers:

Prof. Sergei Prozorov, Professor of Political Sciences, University of Jyväskylä, Finland.

Dr. Kiarina Kordela, Professor and Chair of German Studies, founding Director of the Critical Theory Program, Macalester College, U.S.A.

Submission guidelines:

Deadline for abstract submission: **30 June 2022**

Notification of acceptance: **15 July 2022**

Conference dates: **29-30 September 2022**

An abstract (300 words) with a short biography should be sent to the organizers:

denis.petrina@lkti.lt

Organizing committee:

Conference directors: *J.D. Mininger* (LCC International University), *Denis Petrina*, *Aistis Žekevičius*, *Audronė Žukauskaitė* (Lithuanian Culture Research Institute).

The conference is organized by *the Lithuanian Culture Research Institute*, *the Contemporary Art Centre*, and *the Research Council of Lithuania*. The conference will take place in *Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius*.