



## NICA Winter School 2016:

# Night Cultures: (il)legalities and the politics of life after dark

Orgs: Prof. Frans-Willem Korsten (Leiden), Drs. Ana Paula Cardozo de Souza (Leiden)  
and Dr. Sara Brandellero (Leiden)

For: PhD and Master Students

Type: Winter School

ECTS: 3

Dates: Wed. 20-Fri. 22 January 2016

Time: 9:30-17:00

Place: Room 1, Academieggebouw, Rapenburg 73, 2311 GJ Leiden.

**Registration:** send in a short bio-sketch (50-100 words) and a title and abstract (250 word max) for a 15-minute presentation related to the theme. This might be on research already underway or on an object of analysis (literary, filmic etc.) inspired by this call for participation.

International postgraduates wishing to participate are also welcome.

**Send to:** [s.l.a.brandellero@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:s.l.a.brandellero@hum.leidenuniv.nl)

**Deadline: 1 December 2015.**

Following registration, full reading material and final programme details will be provided.

## Night Cultures

The study of culture has in recent decades productively devoted attention to the importance of space and spatial production. Notwithstanding the value of the so-called 'spatial turn' in the humanities and social sciences, some scholars have rightly noted how this has somewhat eclipsed the importance of time as a fruitful critical and analytical framework for the study of cultural dynamics. Among these, a small but increasing number of scholars has homed in on an important blind spot: the night and life after dark, which, in its social and symbolic constructions, is the focus of this seminar.

Henri Lefebvre's classic work on spatial politics, *The Production of Space* (1974), drew attention to the existence of 'nighttime spaces', where different social and cultural dynamics emerge, as daytime prohibitions 'give way to profitable pseudotransgressions' (Lefebvre, 1974, 1991a, pp. 319-320). Building on Lefebvre's spatialization of the night, cultural historian Amy Chazkel (2013), writing in relation to her project on the social history of Rio de Janeiro in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, aptly noted how a neglected feature has been how people's everyday lives were defined not simply by spatial but also by temporal boundaries. Significantly, when the question of time is of concern, it has mostly been considered either from a micro-perspective (minutes; hours) or macro (sweeping over entire periods), an example of this being, Chazkel reminds us, Foucault's formulations in *Discipline and Punish*. Yet, the legal, political, economic, ecological, psychological, cultural thresholds that mark the transition between night and day provide instigating new perspectives on human social and community life and psychological and emotional experiences.

On a macro perspective, the focus on the night has traditionally produced studies focused on cultures of early modern times, or post-industrial urban spatial practices, and generally European. Of these, Bryan Palmer's *Cultures of Darkness: Night Travels in the Histories of Transgression* (2000) takes a breathtaking view of the night as manifestation of different forms of transgression from mediaeval to modern times. Within this growing field of inquiry, historical, anthropological or geographical perspectives have prevailed, but increasingly scholars within literary and cultural studies have been drawn to the theme. We will thus aim to delve into this exciting multidisciplinary field of research as we reflect on human experiences after nightfall, proposing, moreover, to consider the night beyond the Eurocentric remit that has so far prevailed.

As such, we take our cue from Chazkel's trailblazing research on the interconnections of legal, social history of the city of Rio de Janeiro, a city which, as the capital of the recently independent Brazil, spent much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century under a regime of night curfew – a measure which heavily impacted on the freedom and mobility of the city's population of non-European descent. We will thus consider a selection of critical and theoretical texts related to the theme and look at a number of case studies from cultural studies, literature, film, human geography, law, politics and anthropology.

### **Organisation**

The seminar will take place on three consecutive days, in order to create a multidisciplinary forum for the exploration of this largely untapped field of analysis. Through a combination of three guest lectures, close reading sessions and graduate presentations and discussions on pre-selected bibliography, film screenings etc, some of the topics we will cover include: night movements and surveillance/illegality; nightlife: pleasure, indulgence and repression; the post-colonial night; night and haunting; aesthetics of the night; transnational nightscapes.

Each day is organized as follows:

- 09.30-11.30 Lecture and debate**
- 11.30-12.00 coffee**
- 12.00-13.00 Close reading**
- 13.00-14.00 lunch**
- 14.00-17.00 presentations and debates**

### **Programme**

#### **January 20<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday – 1. The urban nightwalker: night creatures and criminality**

Guest lecture: Prof. Matthew Beaumont, Dept. of English, UCL - London

Object of analysis: E.A. Poe 'The Man in the Crowd'

Readings:

Baldwin, Peter, *In the watches of the night: life in the nocturnal city, 1820–1930*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012

Edenson, Tim, 'The gloomy city: Rethinking the relationship between light and dark' *Urban Studies*, 52(3) February 2015, 422–438.

Chapter: Matthew Beaumont, 'Conclusion: The Urban Nightwalker', *Nightwalking: A Nocturnal History of London. Chaucer to Dickens* (New York/London: Verso, 2015).

### **January 21<sup>st</sup>, Thursday – 2. The night: conceptualizations, spaces and practices**

Guest lecture:

Prof. Irina van Aalst, Dep. Human Geography & Planning, Utrecht

Readings:

Van Liempt, Ilse; Irina van Aalst & Tim Schwanen 'Introduction: Geographies of the urban night', *Urban Studies* 53.2 (feb. 2015).

Cresswell, T. (1998). Night discourse: Producing/consuming meaning on the street. In N. R. Fyfe (Ed.), *Images of the city: Identity and control in public space* (pp. 268-279). London: Routledge;

Melbin, Murray, *Night as frontier : colonizing the world after dark* (Free Press: 1987).

William, Robert, 'Night Spaces: Darkness, Deterritorialization, and Social Control', *Space and Culture* vol. 11 no. 4, november 2008 (514-532).

[extra: Pile, S., & Keith, M. (Eds.). (1997). *Geographies of resistance*. London: Routledge.]

### **January 22<sup>nd</sup>, Friday – 3. De-colonizing the night**

Lecture: Prof. Amy Chazkel, Associate Professor of History, City University of New York, Queens College and the CUNY Graduate Center

Object of analysis: writings by Brazilian author João do Rio

Readings:

María De Guzmán, *Buenas noches American culture: Latina/o Aesthetics of Night* (Bloomington: Indiana Uni Press, 2012) (excerpts).

**Further info contact:** [s.l.a.brandellero@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:s.l.a.brandellero@hum.leidenuniv.nl)

This seminar is the result of collaboration between NICA (Netherlands Institute for Cultural Analysis) and LUCAS (Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society)