



CHARLES UNIVERSITY  
Protestant Theological Faculty

Theology & Contemporary Culture research group  
Protestant Theological Faculty  
Charles University

Friday/2/July/2021/9:00 AM (CEST, UTC/GMT +2 hours)

Theology & Contemporary Culture research group

presents

on-line guest lecture of

Johannes Bennke, M.A.

(University of Weimar)

***Iconic Method in Art Criticism? Testimonial Image Epistemology and the Eschatology of Images in Contemporary Documentary Film***

Recently, art criticism has been getting more attention. This comes as to no surprise, since artistic research and new methods of art criticism contribute to the knowledge of artworks we perceive, analyze, and interpret. But what remains to be reflected are forms of art criticism that go beyond hermeneutics and focus on epistemological questions. How can we gain access to images, film and other audio-visual material using language? How can this fissure between image and language be addressed without ignoring the media characteristics specific to images? I propose to think of this media gap in terms of an iconic method I call testimonial image epistemology. With this methodology I want to show that a philosophical art criticism allows to think art by addressing the logic of images and their respective vitalism or for that matter utopian or eschatological dimension. I will introduce three key concepts in how to think images (time, showing, testimony) by relating not only to current image philosophy or Bildwissenschaft but also to an aesthetic reading of the work by French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas. I will show that these concepts allow for an eschatological dimension in film by analyzing a contemporary body of documentary films called Sensory Ethnography.

**Johannes Bennke, M.A.** submitted his dissertation entitled *Obliterations*. For a Particular Media Philosophy in January 2021 at the Bauhaus-University Weimar (Germany) on image and media philosophy after Emmanuel Levinas. In his dissertation by way of an aesthetic theory he develops ›obliteration‹ as a media philosophical concept that allows to think media practices in terms of their eschatology. Johannes Bennke received several scholarships among them by the Evang. Studienwerk Villigst (2009-2014), a PhD scholarship at the Center of Excellence Media Anthropology, Weimar (2015-2019), Ursula-Lachnit-Fixson scholarship (2020). Currently he is a PhD fellow at the doctoral study program “Philosophy of Religion” in the Theology and Contemporary Culture research group at the Protestant Theological Faculty at Charles University Prague. Contact: johannes.bennke@uni-weimar.de

Link to the lecture room:

<https://cuni-cz.zoom.us/j/94716466294?pwd=cm9CSy9yelpNNkV4VUNXN2xmTURLQT09>