



Wholes are said to be more than the sum of their parts. This 'more' contains both a promise and a threat. When different elements – which might also be individuals, cultures, disciplines or methods – form a whole, they not only join forces, but also generate a surplus from which the parts can also benefit. Being part of a whole is a way to acquire meaning and to extend beyond one's limited existence; and having a part in the whole is to have an enlarged agency. But wholes are also more powerful than the sum of their parts. Wholes constitute their parts, they determine what is a part and what is apart, what can become a part and which parts have no part. Even if parts therefore may not be said to pre-exist the whole, there may still be something in them that exceeds being a part – if only the possibility of being part of a different whole.

While a desire for being whole or part of a whole seems all-too natural, organic metaphors – which are often used to think part-whole relationships – have been criticized precisely for naturalizing relations of hierarchy and power. Yet, entirely abandoning the whole in favour of the part(icular) is also problematic. After the disenchantments of the postmodern, post-cold-war period and in the face of global crises – be they financial, economic, political, or ecological – the critical need of including a holistic perspective is felt with renewed urgency. At the same time, there is a growing concern that the 'situatedness' of any such perspective and the multiple, incommensurable ways of constituting wholes may be forgotten.

The ICI Lecture Series explores the double, both active and passive, aspect of "Constituting Wholes" within the framework of the multi-disciplinary ICI Research Focus **Complementarity and Wholes Which Are Not One**.

All talks start at 7:30 pm and are in English.

# Constituting Wholes

**Daniel Boyarin**  
Monday, 29 October 2012

**Frank Ankersmit**  
Tuesday, 13 November 2012

**Judith Halberstam**  
Monday, 28 January 2013

**Boris Groys**  
Friday, 15 February 2013

**Mark Bedau**  
Thursday, 28 February 2013

**Rey Chow**  
Monday, 13 May 2013

**Asef Bayat**  
Monday, 27 May 2013

**Penelope Deutscher**  
Tuesday, 11 June 2013

**Vivian Liska**  
Monday, 24 June 2013