

Fellows

Novina Göhlsdorf

IFK_Research Fellow

Duration of fellowship

01. March 2020 bis 30. June 2020

Novina Göhlsdorf

PROJECT TITLE

Total Strangers? The Autistic as Key Figure of Our Times

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Novina Göhlsdorf investigates the autistic as a discursive figure in science, literature, popular and everyday culture. Since its first appearance around 1900, the concept of autism has played a constitutive role in descriptions of the modern subject, defined in terms of its relations to self and other. Concepts of autism have been central to reflections on the nature of relationships. Discourses surrounding autism, e.g., develop models of interpersonal communication, normalize the maternal bond, and problematize attachments to machines. They test the risks of a profound type of alterity and even the limits of humankind as such.

Far from a “deficient” and “pathological” being, the autistic has in recent years almost become a sort of superhero of the new millennium. Some regard people with autism as avant-gardes, capable of establishing new sorts of relations—to technologies, animals, objects, and to the environment. Autism, the history of which is entangled with the genealogy of modern subjectivity, is today emblematic of the transition to a widely discussed end of the modern period.

CV

Novina Göhlsdorf studied cultural history and theory, as well as Romance languages and literatures and theater studies, in Berlin. She was a research fellow at Leuphana University in Lüneburg, at the Leibniz-Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung and in the department of Cultural History and Theory at the Humboldt University in Berlin, where she is working on a dissertation on the discursive history of autism. Her research interests include the emergence of psychiatric and psychological knowledge, the history and theory of affect and emotions, and the intersections of science and literature.

Publications

„Glossar der Seelenkunde: Empathie“, in: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung*, 17. Mai 2020, Nr. 20, S. 38; „The Magical Device. Temple Grandin’s Hug Machine“, in: Monika Ankele und Benoît Majerus (Hg.), *Material Cultures of Psychiatry*, Bielefeld (im Erscheinen); „Autismus. Diagnose der Gegenwart“, in: *Kinder- und Jugendlichen-Psychotherapie. Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse und Tiefenpsychologie*, Heft 182, 50. Jg., 2/2019, S. 277–303; „Empathie“, in: Falko Schmieder und Georg Töpfer (Hg.), *Wörter aus der Fremde. Begriffsgeschichte als Übersetzungsgeschichte*, Berlin 2018, S. 88–95.