

# Call for Papers

## International Conference on

### *“Resistances: Between Theories and the Field”*

14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of December 2016

Center for the Study of International Cooperation and Development (CECID),

Free University of Brussels (Université Libre de Bruxelles – ULB), Belgium

Deadline for the submission of abstracts (in English or French):

➡ **15<sup>th</sup> of October 2016**

Confirmed Keynote speakers:

➡ James C. Scott (Yale University)

➡ Stellan Vinthagen (UMass, Amherst)

### **Rationale:**

This conference is intended to stir an international debate on the concept and understanding of “resistance” in its various meanings. In this respect, the use of the word resistance in its plural form for the title of this conference is not incidental. It emphasizes our will to explore the complexity and multi-faceted forms, locations, aims, and outcomes inherent to the concept of resistance. We see resistance(s) not only as a concept that can be engaged with from various angles. It is also an approach that can help a dialogue between academia and other sectors, a thing that this conference seeks to explore in broad temporal and geographical perspectives.

From mass public protests during the Arab Springs and the Indignados and Occupy movements, to individual disobedience from whistle blowers (Assange, Snowden), resistance (to domination, oppression, or simply mainstream political power) has been manifesting itself in a variety of modes. This newly available empirical evidence rapidly generated numerous, rich accounts and encountered studies of social movements and contentious politics. What have remained largely understudied are the accounts of non-

politicised or non-overtly politicised movements, the transformation of informal resistance into movements, their politicisation, and the relationship between informal resistance and political change.

Some recent works have, however, addressed this lack in the field (see, for instance, Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works*, Schock, *Civil Resistance Today*, Vinthagen, *A Theory of Nonviolent Action: How Civil Resistance Works*). We would thus like to encourage emerging research on this subject.

We welcome empirically-grounded case studies as well as theoretical (and/or) epistemological reflections on topics related (but not limited) to:

- Silent and “loud” resistances as case study (nonviolent, violent, public and hidden, individual or collective...)
- Resistance and social change
- Informal networks, practices, and their significance in policy making
- Globalised vs localised resistance
- Vulnerability and resistance (gender, minorities, marginalised communities)
- Economic or financial resistance
- Everyday struggle and resistance vs more organised and long-term forms of resistance
- Methodological approaches and consideration for the study of resistance
- Ethics and resistance (how to deal with the publication of cases where resistance is secret, or needs to escape the radar of authorities)

We are keen to promote an interdisciplinary reflection on the concept of resistance and a broad theoretical and methodological understanding of the issue. Accordingly, we would like to open participation to activists who would like to present an analytical reflection based on their work.

In addition, willing to challenge past and present understandings of the concept, and to bring about new perspectives, we welcome contributions from both experienced and early career researchers.

### **Practical information:**

If interested send a 3-500 word abstract (in English or French) by the **15<sup>th</sup> of October 2016** to [resistancesULB@gmail.com](mailto:resistancesULB@gmail.com) including a short biographical statement.

Applicants will be notified by the 5<sup>th</sup> of November about their acceptance.

We might be able to provide some financial support to researchers (especially early career researchers) who have no sponsorship from their own institute. We can't guarantee full sponsorship for everyone but we will try to offer a contribution in the region of 250 EUR for participants from Europe and 500 for participants from outside of Europe. If you would like to be considered please mention, below your abstract, what kind of support you would need (travel, accommodation, etc.).

## **About our Keynote Speakers:**

- James C. Scott:

James C. Scott challenged traditional understandings of resistance by analyzing everyday forms of resistance and conceptualizing of “infrapolitics” (see, *Weapons of the Week*, 1985, *Domination and the Art of Resistance*, 1991). His research concerns political economy, comparative agrarian societies, theories of hegemony and resistance, peasant politics, revolution, Southeast Asia, theories of class relations and anarchism.

His recent publications include *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (1997), and *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (2009).

He will be presenting results and reflections from his latest research.

- Stellan Vinthagen:

Stellan Vinthagen is the Inaugural *Endowed Chair in the Study of Nonviolent Direct Action and Civil Resistance* at The University of Massachusetts, Amherst. He is also a researcher in his native Sweden at The Department of Social and Behavioral Studies, University West, and at The School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg, where he is leading the *Resistance Studies Program*. Vinthagen researches resistance, power, social movements, nonviolent action and social change. His latest publications include *A Theory of Nonviolent Action – How Civil Resistance Works* (2015).

Having been active in many different social movements since 1980 (environmental, migrant rights, anti-arms trade, peace, Palestine solidarity, etc.), he has participated in more than 30 nonviolent civil disobedience actions. He has been an educator, organizer and activist in several countries, and will be presenting his intake on nonviolent resistance and its ability to bring about social change.