

Alterity and the Research Imagination (Lisbon, 25–26 Jan 18)

Universidade Católica Portuguesa, School of Human Sciences, Lisbon,
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Gregor Taul, Kondas Centre of Naive and Outsider Art

Alterity and the Research Imagination
VII Graduate Conference in Culture Studies
25–26 January 2018
School of Human Sciences ? Universidade Católica Portuguesa in Lisbon

Keynote Speakers:

Jess Auerbach, Assistant Professor of Social Science, African Leadership University
Jeremy Gilbert, Professor of Cultural and Political Theory, School of Arts and Digital Industries,
University of East London
Margherita Laera, Lecturer in Drama and Theater, School of Arts, University of Kent
Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius, Associate Lecturer, Department of History of Art, Birkbeck
College, University of London

Preoccupation with theories and practices of representation and othering, across the breadth of various genres and disciplines, has moved forward debates about positioning in research and modes of constructing and producing knowledge. In *Meatless Days* (1989), a vivid memoir of her girlhood in postcolonial Pakistan, Sara Suleri Goodyear deplores being regarded as an “otherness machine”—a concern Kwame Anthony Appiah (1991) shares in his famous critique of postcolonial literature, culture and critical studies. A host of scholars who tend to conflate the post-isms as such contend that postcolonial theory and praxis are embedded in Western institutions that shape the field. Aijaz Ahmad (1992) and Arif Dirlik (1994) have argued that, owing to its reliance on poststructuralist approaches, postcolonial thought excludes questions of economic and political power structures. A staunch Derridean who uses deconstruction to uncover and disrupt such inevitable hegemonic relations of power in the academy or elsewhere, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1999) has likewise dissociated herself from the postcolonial mainstream. Edward Said (1983), whose groundbreaking book *Orientalism* (1978) sets out a toolbox for colonial discourse analysis, has grown more and more dissatisfied with the untenable apolitical nature of the theoretical insights of Derrida, Foucault and others.

Yet, some scholars, and Said himself, have pointed to the geocultural limitations of his theoretical model. In considering discourses of orientalism and balkanism, for instance, Maria Todorova (1997) argues that, unlike the Orient, the Balkans is a concrete entity that is peripheral, but not

completely other, to Europe. Paul Gilroy has challenged the racial and ethnocentric biases inherent within British cultural studies in his first major work *There Ain't no Black in the Union Jack* (1987). His discussion of diasporic hybridity (1993), however, has been censured for being gender-neutral. In his seminal essay *The New Cultural Politics of Difference* (1990), Cornel West locates his polemic on the emergence of the new black (or African-American) cultural worker in a critical historical juncture that might be comparable to what Stuart Hall calls "the end of the innocent notion of the essential black subject" (1988). More recently, Arjun Appadurai (2006) has made the case for research as a human right—an exercise of the imagination that is intrinsic to knowledge citizenship in the era of globalization.

This conference considers the theoretical and methodological conundrums researchers and practitioners in the humanities, arts and social sciences face when encountering sites of alterity. We invite proposals that engage with the concept of alterity and subject it to a searching critique through the lenses of multiple disciplines. Themes of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

Representations of alterity in film, literature, architecture, the visual and performing arts, etc.
Alternative media, politics and creativity
Multicultural, intercultural and transcultural communication
Critical human geography
The everyday—its antecedents and simulacra
Sociality and the ethics of care
Hybrid modalities of identity and difference
Ethnographic translations of radical alterity

The working language of the conference is English.

Individual paper presentations will be allocated 20 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for questions. Proposals for panels of 3 papers (90 minutes) or roundtables of 3–5 participants (60 minutes) related to the theme of the conference are welcome. We aim to integrate an ambitious range of perspectives. Proposals incorporating practice as research, or other creative work, are encouraged.

Please send an abstract (250 words) and a brief biographical note (150 words) to alterityresearchimagination@gmail.com. All proposals should include a title, your name(s), contact details and, if relevant, institutional affiliation(s).

The deadline for submission of proposals is 31 August 2017. Notifications of acceptance or rejection will be sent on 1 October 2017. The deadline for registration is 15 November 2017.

Registration Fee

€50 (includes admission to all keynotes and plenary sessions and refreshments and lunch breaks during the conference)

Organizing Committee

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Quellennachweis:

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