Europe, Migration and Culture (Copenhagen, 24-25 Oct 13)

Copenhagen, Oct 24–25, 2013
Deadline: Jan 31, 2013

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CALL FOR PAPERS

Crossroads: Europe, Migration and Culture

Two-day conference at The University of Copenhagen
October 24-25, 2013.

“Migration throws objects, identities and ideas into flux” (Kobena Mercer: Exiles, Diasporas & Strangers, 2008).
“The migrant is not on the margin of modern experience – he is absolutely central to it” (John Berger: A Seventh Man, 1975/2010).

Willingly or unwillingly, people have migrated to, from and within Europe for centuries, but with the downfall of empires and the rise of the European welfare states in the second half of the 20th century, migration to Europe – especially from the former colonies – reached an unprecedented scale. In addition, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the subsequent dismantling of communism, and the enlargement of the European Union have also led to a significant increase in intra-European migration – a phenomenon that the current economic crisis is likely to intensify even further. Meanwhile, refugees from the world’s conflict zones and destitute areas are continually setting out on journeys of hope to what they imagine to be a European Eden, only to discover that contemporary Europe is in many ways more of a well guarded fortress.

These different kinds of migratory movements have thrown European culture(s) into flux. A variety of cultures which previously had little or no contact with each other are brought together on European soil where they intersect, confront each other, ‘cross-polinate’, and/or live entirely parallel, separate lives right next to each other.

Under the heading Crossroads the conference wishes to address this cultural flux. The emphasis is on the aesthetic expressions of the migrant experience as such as well as on the consequences of migration for European cultures and identities at large. While contributions may, of course, take their cue from sociological and anthropological research, the focus of the conference is distinctly cultural and aesthetic. Not only because these aspects seem to be somewhat under-investigated, but also because cultural artefacts have the potential to make visible what is otherwise largely hidden, even to thorough sociological analyses – aspects such as emotions, attitudes, hope, resentment, longing, etc.

We invite both theoretical contributions and analytical papers addressing singular or comparative case studies of the cultural and aesthetic dimensions of migration to and within Europe. The conference is cross-disciplinary and includes both literature, theatre, cinema, music, the visual arts, electronic and digital media, etc.

Proposals may include, but are not limited to the following topics:

- The journey to and arrival in 'Fortress Europe' as represented in cultural artefacts.

- Aesthetic expressions of the diversity of the migrant experience: gender and generational differences as well as differences pertaining to diverse countries of origin and host countries, differences in religion, education, and socio-economic status, etc.

- Aesthetic hybridity, mixedness, cross-polinations, etc. in European cultural artefacts.

- The representation of women with migrant background – by themselves and by others.

- Post-migrant, European youth cultures: hip-hop, bhangra, Kanak, beur, etc.

- The position of Islam in recent European culture.

- The changing physical aspect of Europe's urban centres and peripheries, including possible cultural exchanges within Europe's 'global cities', between immigrants and 'original' European citizens as well as among immigrants with different cultural backgrounds.

- The presence and reception of elements of the migrants' original cultures in Europe – 'multicultural chic' or genuine cultural eye-openers?

- Discussion of the concept of 'multiculturalism' in a European context.

- Discussion of what it means to be European today, based on cultural and aesthetic expressions by persons with migrant background as well as by 'old' Europeans who, at one end of the spectrum, may embrace multiculturalism or, at the other end, turn to radical nationalism.

We welcome proposals of no more than 300 words. Please include a one-page CV with contact details (mail, email and telephone) and information regarding institutional affiliation. All files must be submitted in .pdf format to evaj@hum.ku.dk no later than January 31, 2013. Approved participants will be notified by early March, 2013.

The conference is organised by the Network for Migration and Culture (http://migrationandculture.ku.dk/)which is funded by the Danish Research Council.

For more info contact Frauke under nmc@hum.ku.dk

Reference:

CFP: Europe, Migration and Culture (Copenhagen, 24-25 Oct 13). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 18, 2012 (accessed Nov 20, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/3838>.