



Cultural Difference and Social Solidarity

A CULTURAL DIFFERENCE AND SOCIAL SOLIDARITY NETWORK WORKSHOP

CROSSING BOUNDARIES:

INCLUSION, EXCLUSION, MARGINALIZATION AND THE HEGEMONIC MAKING OF SOCIETIES OF DIFFERENCE

Hosted by

Masaryk University, Department of English and American Studies
Brno, Czech Republic

13th September – 14th September 2014

In what ways can cultural and political, social and economic strategies encourage solidarity in the context of respect and recognition for difference in 21st Century societies? This is a central question for those who have concerns about building societies that balance inclusive solidarities around a framework of common principles, values and political positions that include recognition of difference as a characterising feature of social and cultural life. Notwithstanding the national and supranational spread of human rights discourse from the West to global contexts, even those societies who rhetorically subscribe unequivocally to equality and diversity are beset by conflicts, tensions and exclusions and marginalisation's that reflect prejudices, pathologies and cultural, religious, ethnic, identity and interest differences. These characteristics often reflect historical, cultural and political hegemonies by which the powerful maintain their position, interests and ideologies. The task of engaging change might equally be regarded as making new hegemonies from counter-hegemonic struggles against exclusion and marginalisation. Particularly given the limits to legal change and the failures of policy-oriented strategies since the emergence of multi-culturalism, it is important to rethink how these hegemonies can be made.

As a central feature of making hegemonies, crossing boundaries is important in two respects. First, it identifies the strategic need to cross strong and durable discourses of exclusion, marginalisation and domination that characterise cultural, religious, ethnic, identity and interest differences, and explore both extant and new ways of doing so and making connections, synergies and conjoining. Secondly, in exploring possibilities for making new hegemonies, the opportunities by crossing disciplines and fields seems a fertile ground,

particularly in looking at how cultural possibilities of representational practices in culture, art, film, literature, performance and philosophical ideas can map onto social, political, economic and spatial analyses to produce new articulations and applications for effective solidarity in difference – both respecting but also crossing boundaries - in the age of information, mass media and cultural politics. Such potential for transgressive, critical and deconstructive politics may provide a potent opposition to the constitution of existing hegemonies through ‘othering’, normalisation, pathologies and prejudices.

This workshop – occupying the weekend of the 13th and 14th September - invites papers from both within and across disciplinary divides in the humanities and social sciences that extend the analyses of existing hegemonies or explore how they can be destabilised and replaced by new hegemonies that balance the contours of solidarity and difference. Papers might focus on the following, although the list is not exclusive:

- issues of hegemony, domination and power and its different articulation in different cultures/literatures/politics
- Critical interrogations of the terms of exclusion and marginalization of the ‘Other’ (based on issues of ethnicity, religion, class, gender, ...) marginalization through language practices, cultural representations and media strategies
- The creation, preservation and deconstruction of identities and social values through language and literature
- Crossing boundaries (literary, linguistic, cultural, geographical, political, social...) and its role on the formation of new identities, politics and counter-hegemonies (individual, national, global)
- Cultural diversity and how it is ingrained and sustained in a healthy and sustainable society
- Strategic politics and new formulations and articulations of counter discourse and transgressive discourse

Other related topics discussing cultural difference and social solidarity are welcome. Panel suggestions, alternate forms of intellectual presentation and papers (both polished and in progress), which should be aimed at 20 minutes maximum presentation or can be shorter presentations and contributions, are welcomed. The workshop will be organised around paper presentations that allow for discussion as well as exposition and roundtable plenary consolidation of the paper themes and discussions. We expect to publish from the workshop in both an established book series and a special issue of a journal.

Cultural Difference and Social Solidarity Network (CDSS) is an international organisation focused broadly on fostering collaboration and debate around the broad issues of difference and solidarity in human societies. The network organizes an annual conferences, as well as periodic seminars and collaborative projects (see www.differencesolidarity.org). It has a particular interest in supporting international research collaboration and younger researchers entering the international stage. The network works towards the development of trans-disciplinary and trans-national understandings of and interventions in questions of solidarity and difference. This event is the first collaboration between the network and the Department of English and American Studies at Masaryk University, in Brno, the Czech Republic.

Prospective participants should send an abstract within an Abstract Submission Form (found on: <http://www.phil.muni.cz/wkaa/home/conference/cdssworkshop/>) of no more than 200 words by email to Zuzana Klimova: **145169@mail.muni.cz**, with the heading CDSS Brno conference, by **July 18, 2014**. We operate a rolling programme of considering and accepting paper proposals as they are submitted so as to facilitate those who need to apply for funding.

The workshop fees, which include workshop packs and administrative organisation, refreshments, and an evening reception on the evening of the 13th September, are:

Waged/Full time Faculty – 180 Euros

Postgraduates/Part-time Faculty – 100 Euros

Workshop organisers:

Zuzana Klimova, Department of English and American Studies, Masaryk University, Czech Republic

Paul Reynolds, Reader in Sociology and Social Philosophy, Edge Hill University, UK (and co-director, CDSS)

You may follow us on the Department of English and American Studies MU:

<http://www.phil.muni.cz/wkaa/home/conference/cdssworkshop/>

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<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Cultural-Difference-and-Social-Solidarity-Network/624218300958957>

or on CDSS webpage:

http://differenceandsolidarity.org/cdss_seminars



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