



Call for communications

When fieldwork challenges categories

The purpose of this conference is to question how young researchers who investigate in every part of the world, adapt and invent categories of analysis.

The notion of “the South”, like the term of “cultural areas”, made interdisciplinary dialogue possible, and helped the researchers make major progress. Moreover, these concepts played a key role in the division of academic institutions and in the mobility of researchers. Yet, these terms, as any category, are historically meaningful. Even if the terms “North” and “South” refer to neutral cardinal points, these categories have replaced former dichotomies such as “West/East”, “the West/the Third World”, “developed countries/developing countries”, “colonizers/colonized”; as such, they risk ethnocentrism. Similar questions can be studied through the scope of “cultural areas”: for instance, Asian studies, or Latin American studies. Indeed, by linking territories and cultures in a globalized world, the category “cultural area” limits the analysis of circulations and social hybridizations.

Do these divisions in the research landscape still correspond to contemporary realities of our fieldwork? Are they still relevant, given that in some laboratories (including F3S), many young researchers come from the “South”? Are they still “operative” when researchers study social phenomena in the “North” and the “South” with new concepts that enrich the social sciences all around the world? In social and human sciences research on cultural and geographical areas which are often separate, is it possible to avoid these categories to study human culture in their entirety and their plurality?

As an ongoing process of challenging standard knowledge, the scientific process constructs, deconstructs and reconstructs new categories [1]. This construction work is also an issue of words’ meanings [2, 3]. The scientific and academic traditions, as well as the practical difficulties of a fieldwork, often lead young scientists to play and work with social realities [4]. The increasing number of scientists from countries of the so-called “South” has had a gradual impact on research

questions and problematics. Their shifted point of view on the same fields make them redesign the analytical categories of their colleagues.

The young scientists who would like to participate in this conference are invited to consider their research practices, to explain how they adapt and interpret existing categories of analysis, how they get inspired by investigation methods and research theories (for example, using intersdisciplinarity, comparatism, “studies” - *global studies, urban studies...* - or concepts such as *intersectionlity, transnationalism, circulations...*) and even how they suggest new categories.

1. How have categories of analysis had an impact on the design of your research project?
2. To which extent have categories of analysis had an impact on the preparation of your fieldwork and the design of your investigation tools and methods?
3. How has your fieldwork modified the categories you initially considered?
4. To which extent have you twisted your data so that they fit the categories you initially considered?

Any topic is welcome. We will be especially interested in papers that precisely describe the processes of such operations and that highlight practical difficulties - scientific, professional, political, semantic, personal - that these operations can produce.

[1] Florence Delmotte et Denis Duez (dir.), *Les frontières et la communauté politique. Faire, défaire et penser les frontières*, Bruxelles, Presses de l'Université Saint-Louis, 2016, 252 pages.

[2] Ludwig von Bertalanffy, *Théorie générale des systèmes*, Chap. 10 - La relativité des catégories, Paris, Ed. Dunod, 1973 (1968), pp. 227-254

[3] Louis Quéré, *La valeur opératoire des catégories*, Cahiers de l'URMIS, n°1, 1995

[4] Roger Bastide, “Mémoire collective et sociologie du bricolage”, *L'Année sociologique*, vol. 21, 1970, pp. 65-108

Practical information

This conference, conceived and prepared by Ph.D. students of the F3S, is thought to be an opportunity for young researchers (PhD students, Post-Docs, young doctors) from any field of research to exchange and share experiences. A cocktail party will be organized at the end of the conference.

Authors should provide a short abstract of their paper (500 words max. - excluding bibliography) to codofe2016@gmail.com, indicating the topic, the field of research, the methods and the theoretical framework. Once selected, authors should provide the final paper, between 4000 and 8000 words.

Important dates:

- 15/07/2016: Submission deadline for abstracts (500 words)
- 15/09/2016: Authors receive notification of the acceptance of their paper
- 30/10/2016: Deadline for sending papers (4000 to 8000 words)
- 17-18/10/2016: Conference date

Abstracts and papers should include:

- Your name
- Your status (Ph.D. students, Post-Docs, young doctors)
- Your research center and/or university
- The title of your paper

Social Sciences Souths Federation (F3S)

Created in the frame of PRES Sorbonne Paris Cité, the Social Sciences Souths Federation (F3S) gathers four interdisciplinary laboratories dedicated to studies on problematics specific to countries from the “South”: CEPED (center population and development, Université Paris Descartes - IRD), CESSMA (center for studies in social sciences on African, American and Asian worlds, Université Paris Diderot - INALCO - IRD), CREDA (research and documentation center on Americas, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle) and URMIS (research unit on migrations on societies, Université Paris Diderot – Université Sophia Antipolis - CNRS, IRD).

Organizing committee

Eliza Benites, Sociology, CREDA, Université Sorbonne - Nouvelle

Marine Bismuth, Anthropology, URMIS, Université Paris Diderot

Giulia Breda, Sociology, URMIS, Université Sophia Antipolis

Nicolas Fayette, Sociology, CREDA, Université Sorbonne - Nouvelle

Elodie Gamache, Political science, CREDA, Université Sorbonne - Nouvelle

Ludovic Joxe, Sociology, CEPED, Université Paris Descartes

Tatiana Medvedeva, Anthropology, URMIS, Université Paris Diderot

Elsa Paris, History, CESSMA, Université Paris Diderot

Joseph Désiré Som I, Sociology, CEPED, Université Paris Descartes

Charlotte Vampo, Anthropology, CEPED, Université Paris Descartes

Scientific committee

David Dumoulin, MCF, Sociology, CREDA, Université Sorbonne - Nouvelle

Véronique Dupont, DR, Demographics, CESSMA, IRD

Laurent Faret, PR, Geography, CESSMA, Université Paris Diderot

Etienne Gérard, DR, Sociology, CEPED, IRD

Gilles Guiheux, PR, Sociology, CESSMA, Université Paris Diderot

Nolwen Henaff, CR, Economics, CEPED, IRD

Odile Hoffmann, DR, Geography, URMIS, IRD

François-Michel Le Tourneau, DR, Geography, CREDA, Université Sorbonne - Nouvelle

Nicolas Puig, CR, Anthropology, URMIS, IRD

Dominique Vidal, PR, Sociology, URMIS, Université Paris Diderot



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