

ariel

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a review of international english literature

**articles on žižek and postcolonialism,
pakistani 9/11 fiction, and more**

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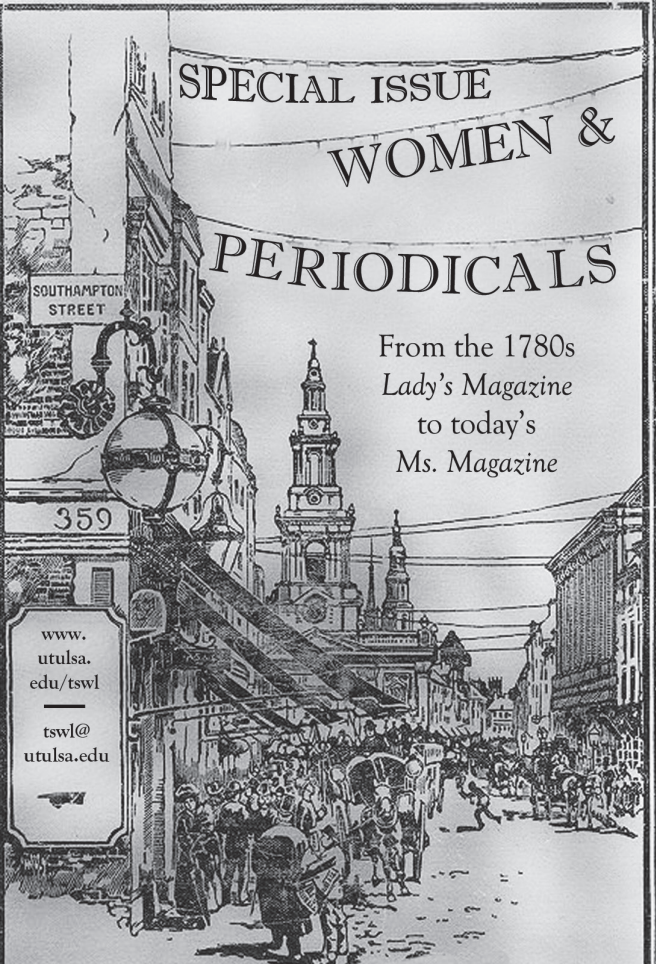
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Workshop

GLOBAL THOUGHT, LOCAL LIVES

CULTURAL POLITICS OF MULTICULTURALISMS, COSMOPOLITANISMS, AND SECULARISMS

Vytautas Magnus University
Kaunas, Lithuania
April 18-20, 2013

What is multiculturalism? What is secularism? What is cosmopolitanism? These concepts are often used by politicians, journalists and academics, even more often misused and misunderstood. Too often the ownership of multiculturalism, secularism and cosmopolitanism is claimed by the West, thereby forging its Other as the exact opposite of these arguably noble ideas, excluding it, marginalizing it, demonizing it. When thinking of multiculturalism one often thinks of contemporary Europe; likewise, cosmopolitanism is often seen as a privilege of a Westerner; and secularism, another purportedly righteous idea closely tied in its perceived origins to the Northern Hemisphere, becomes problematic in the face of religious exclusion and marginalization both in the West and all over the world. But is that really so? Maybe these notions have long existed locally, in different forms, contexts and times outside Western modernity?

One of the markers of the global postcolonial condition is the migration of people from outside of Europe but also internally into the former colonial centers and new centers of attraction. This forces one to rethink the binaries of center/periphery, to rethink what Europe is, where are the European borders (physical as well as cultural and mental), what does it mean to be a European as well as the European Other. These questions have to be freed from their spatiotemporal limitations if one is thinking about the global and the local. Can one think of multiculturalism before globalization? Can one see cosmopolitanism both locally and globally, decolonized from its Eurocentric notions? Can one think of it not as a marker of modern life, but unattached to Western modernity?

The organizers of the workshop invite scholars to challenge the claims that multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, and secularism are inherent to and ultimately owned by the West, and as such are by default modern products. Prospective participants of the workshop are urged to explore these notions both in the context of contemporary movement of people and ideas across borders, and to seek understanding by exploring these themes in local contexts anywhere and in any historic period.

The workshop seeks to explore theoretical issues in multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism and secularism, to de-colonize these concepts in looking at its many faces and many expressions locally from all historical periods in any region of the world (Asia, Africa, Middle East, the Americas, Europe), to understand its contemporary position vis-à-vis migration and diasporas, both internal European and external to it. In addition, the representation of all the above in literature, cinema and other art forms is also a welcome topic.

The workshop is interdisciplinary and welcomes contributions on different topics and from different scholars working in all kinds of disciplines of humanities and social sciences.

The workshop is divided into three broad sections:

- Theoretical considerations: who owns multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism and secularism? Can we think of these notions in plural, unattached to the Western project of modernity?
- Local histories: what can be learnt about these issues historically both within and without Europe?
- Global histories of the present: diasporas, migration, cultural hybridity, center and periphery

The deadline for abstract submission is **November 15, 2012** (300 words max.)

Selected authors will be informed by **December 1, 2012**.

Full papers are expected by **April 1, 2013**.

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS

African Americans, 'Race' and Diaspora

13-15 June 2013

University Paul-Valéry, Montpellier 3, France

Deadline for proposals: 15 November 2012

Specifically dedicated to the interlocking issues of "race" and the Black Diaspora, this event is the third in the "Diasporas, Cultures of Mobilities, 'Race'" Conference series, organized by the research center EMMA (University Paul-Valéry, Montpellier 3, France) in partnership with CAAR, CRILOHI (Université de la Réunion), MIGRINTER (Université de Poitiers), Department of Continuing Education (Oxford University, UK), Wake Forest University (NC, USA)

<http://www.wfu.edu/romancelanguages/Diasporas%20and%20Race/archive.html>

The 4th International Conference on Multicultural Discourses

October 23-26, 2013

Hangzhou, China

Deadline for abstract submission: 31 December 2012

AIMS OF THE CONFERENCE

- 1) To bring together scholars, researchers, and practitioners from around the globe to contribute to a stimulating and rewarding exchange of ideas and techniques regarding discourse studies;
- 2) To enhance cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and research innovation in discourse studies;
- 3) To facilitate the formation of collaborative research networks among conference participants.