

Conceptual (Re)Locations of the 'Global South'

Global South Studies Center, University of Cologne
Patrizia-Tower, Venloer Str. 151-153, 8th Floor, Room 818

Organizer: Dr. Sinah Kloß (s.kloss@uni-koeln.de)

Monday, 20.06.2016	
14.15 – 15.00	<p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <p>Sinah Kloß, Thomas Widlok</p>
15.00-16.30	<p>Panel 1: The 'Global South' as Heuristic Concept: Development Theory and Epistemic Inequalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cláudio Pinheiro (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) <i>Ontologies of the South: The Heuristic Relevance and Latitudes of the Concept of Global South</i> Marcin W. Solarz (University of Warsaw, Poland) <i>The Social Contract Theories, Human Development and the North-South Divide in the Second Decade of the 21st Century</i> Syed Farid Alatas (National University of Singapore, Singapore)
16.30 - 17.00	<p>Coffee Break</p>
17.00 – 18.00	<p>Panel 2: The 'Global South' in Social Sciences and Humanities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marcelo C. Rosa (Universidade de Brasilia, Brazil) <i>The South as a Non-Exemplary Turn: Methodological and Empirical Challenges</i> Nina Schneider (University of Cologne, Germany) <i>The "Global South" Concept and Our Role as Engaged Intellectuals: About the Use and Abuse of a Heuristic Concept</i>
19.00	<p>Dinner at Restaurant Belgischer Hof, Brüsseler Straße 54</p>

Tuesday, 21.06.2016	
9.00 – 10.30	<p>Panel 3: The Global South in the North?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roberto M. Dainotto (Duke University, USA) <i>South by Chance. Southern Question and Global South</i> Madina Tlostanova (Linköping University, Sweden) <i>The post-Socialist world vis-à-vis the global South and the global North</i> Ipek Demir (University of Leicester, UK) <i>A View from the Global South in Europe: Diasporic Cosmopolitanism of European Kurds</i>
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee Break
11.00 – 12.00	<p>Panel 4: (Re)Creating the 'Global South'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leon Wainwright (Open University, UK) <i>Political Geographies of Art in the Global South: Caribbean Materiality and Mobility</i> Alexandra Ortiz Wallner (Humboldt Universität Berlin, Germany) <i>Latin American Literatures and South-South Relations: Trajectories and Resonances</i>
12.00 – 13.30	General Discussion
13.30	Reception

Panel 1 - The 'Global South' as Heuristic Concept: Development Theory and Epistemic Inequalities

Cláudio Pinheiro (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

Ontologies of the South: The Heuristic Relevance and Latitudes of the Concept of Global South

Global South is a polysemic concept. The term has many origins, related meanings, and developments. Correspondingly, it has to be understood in relation to its distinct, and very often unrelated, semantic contexts. *South* has generally been identified to *territories of non-development* through post-2ndWW debates on Theories of Development and to Narratives of Modernity. Those debates have otherwise helped to frame specific vocabularies largely identified with the rhetoric of *progress* and *wealth* and, simultaneously, to its *absence*, *decay* and *collapse*. Ultimately, this discussion impacted on geopolitical and geographic perceptions of the world and affected exercises of place-imagining, facilitating the construction of a *semantics of inequality* largely referred to economic, political and social dimensions.

This circumstance is mostly visible in the wide variety of expressions used to frame development in terms of spatiality – poor and rich *countries*, developed and underdeveloped *regions*, peripheral or semi-peripheral *areas* etc. Those lexicons refer to Modernity as a *condition to imagine development* (framed as wealth and progress, so as poverty and loss) *in terms of geographies associated to regimes of time*. Quite often, these vocabularies oscillate and some terms become popular while others fall in disuse – First, Second and Third Worlds (Alfred Sauvy, 1952), Non-Aligned Countries (Krishna Menon, 1953), Peripheral Countries (Immanuel Wallerstein, 1974) etc. Though the term *South* did not originate with the post-1945, discussions on development these debates ultimately defined the ways the concept was to be taken since then. Accordingly, the term gained substance in debates concerning global geopolitics, human rights, decolonization, economic autonomy, and on the association of progress and prosperity as conditions for addressing sustainable political stability in peripheral countries. Through these debates and political initiatives, **South** (then synonyms to *Third World*) has been related to **Geographies of Economic Inequality**.

In recent decades, *South* re-emerged as a resource concept in discussions concerning the international political economy of knowledge production. It then mostly refers to the lack of control of epistemic tools for producing knowledge, affecting both societies at the center and at the periphery (Mignolo, 2000; Souza Santos & Madeira, 2009; Raewyn Connell, 2007; Comaroff & Comaroff, 2013). Those views played a key-role for readdressing the importance of questions as academic dependency, associated to an international structure of intellectual labour division impacting the global economy of knowledge. More importantly, some works that incorporated theories and epistemes of South, also concurred to renovate the challenge to the legitimacy of social sciences (along lines with the postcolonial critique) as universally valid.

Contemporary social sciences have benefited significantly from this debate, but the approach is still very much oriented to a spatial dimension, and though South became somehow disassociated from wealth, it is still oriented towards inequality. Some of this literature departs from the economic aspects of this *semantics of inequality* and the derivations of *South* as a loci of dependency (not only political and economic, but also intellectual). In these circumstances, it appears related to epistemic spaces that, though not replicating the geographies of economic exclusion, again and once more,

associate *South* to a territory of absence and dispossession. Under those circumstances, South appears related to **Geographies of Epistemic Inequality**.

The present paper recognizes the benefits and achievements of both approaches to disciplines like Economics, Politics, History or Sociology, influenced by the perception of *Geographies of Inequality* addressed through wealth or epistemology, that made the concept of South (e.g. Global South) heuristically relevant. Conversely, it tries to explore another aspect, trying to stretch the latitude of Global South yet not very visible in this debate: the **ontological condition**. It is relevant to talk about an Ontology (or Ontologies) of the South? Is (or are) there an ontological dimension particular to this geography? So, can *South* (as a political, economic and epistemic concept), also resonate diversity, and then, Ontology? This initially naive question, is taken as the entry point for a twofold discussion: a) if ontology(ies) constitutes as a derivative discourse of history (i.e. if ontologies of the South constitute a side effect of the expansion of colonialism and capitalism, and in relation to it); b) if ontology(ies) ignore history (i.e. ontologies of the South exist in *spite of* or disconnected to the expansion of the West as a civilizational and ontological model).

Marcin W. Solarz (University of Warsaw, Poland)

The Social Contract Theories, Human Development and the North-South Divide in the Second Decade of the 21st Century

Our imagination was captured by the Brandt line created 35 years ago in 1980. It was strongly criticized from the moment of its creation and the world in which it was born was radically different from ours. Nevertheless it is still reproduced in its 1980 form (sometimes with some minor changes) in handbooks and atlases all around the world and it is still a reference point for discussions and disputes on development and structure of the contemporary world. However, the geographical shape of the North-South divide, and therefore the borders of the global South, in fact strongly depends on the adopted definition of development. There is, however, no consensus as to its understanding. If development can be simultaneously understood and defined in many ways, there can be in parallel many global Souths and global Norths reflecting these different perspectives. The understanding of development is determined i.a. by philosophical views. The paper discusses three basic concepts of social contract (developed by T. Hobbes, J. Locke and J.J. Rousseau) and the UNDP human development concept in the context of the division of the world into highly developed and underdeveloped countries. Each of these four concepts understands differently the ultimate goal of development (i.e. state of high development). The paper assumes that development process implies moving from the state of nature to its opposite, which in the light of the social contract theory should be understood as equal to a state of high development (people gave up living in a state of nature building society and state and therefore the ideal society and state should eliminate all the weaknesses of the state of nature which contributed to its abandonment). The author proposes and analyzes different political, economic, social and environmental indicators that can be considered to measure the stages of development in the light of the social contract theories according to Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. He draws four maps showing different images of the contemporary North-South divide according to Hobbes', Locke's, Rousseau's and UNDP philosophy of development. Finally the author compares them with each other.

Syed Farid Alatas (National University of Singapore, Singapore)

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Panel 2 - The 'Global South' in Social Sciences and Humanities

Marcelo C. Rosa (Universidade de Brasilia, Brazil)

The South as a Non-Exemplary Turn: Methodological and Empirical Challenges

The paper briefly addresses some potentials and limitations of the theories from and of the south incorporated into the contemporary debates in sociology. The central question is to stimulate a possible debate considering: i) methodological challenges for the writings aiming to speak of the South, particularly comparison and exemplarity; ii) possible empirical subjects from the South that lead to conceptual relocations in the social sciences, such as land and women studies.

Nina Schneider (University of Cologne, Germany)

The "Global South" Concept and Our Role as Engaged Intellectuals: About the Use and Abuse of a Heuristic Concept

Focusing on the benefits and limitations of the Global South concept, this paper seeks to problematize our own role when using the term; both as scholars and engaged intellectuals. Historically, the concept of the Global South has been invoked by scholars and intellectuals from the so-called developed and undeveloped world alike. The term has also been used for a variety of purposes and led to different consequences. While on one hand it has been serving as a tool to denounce conditions of "subalternity" and to support struggles for a more egalitarian social and economic global system, it has, on the other hand, led to the opposite result: it helped to reify problematic North-South dichotomies that have entrenched rather than overcome practices of political, socio-economic, and epistemic domination. Given its relational and contextualized meaning, I propose, there cannot be a simple yes-and-no answer to the heuristic and intellectual value of the concept; the Global South concept can always cut both ways. It is therefore indispensable, this paper concludes, to provide a clear definition of the term, to denounce the concept's misappropriation, and to clearly spell out one's entrepreneurship when using the term. I argue that it is precisely the Global South concept's Janus-faced nature that has led to its stubborn survival; while we cannot fully endorse it (given the danger of its misappropriation), we can neither completely abandon it given its interventionist potential.

Panel 3 - The Global South in the North?

Roberto Dainotto (Duke University, USA)

South by Chance. Southern Question and Global South

To avoid ambiguities or misunderstanding, I warn the reader that, just as the protagonist of these “Conversations” is not the author, so the Sicily in which his story takes place is Sicily only by chance—only because the word “Sicily” sounds better to me than “Persia” or “Venezuela.”
— Elio Vittorini, “Conversation in Sicily”

With the end of the Cold War, the locutions “Global South” and “Global North” are proposed from many fronts—for instance the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, the African Renaissance, and the World Social Forum—as conceptual alternatives to the “new world order” otherwise known as globalization. The idea of Global South, developed among others by Anibal Quijano (“Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America”, 2000), Raewyn Connell (“Southern Theory”, 2007), and Boaventura de Sousa Santos (“Conocer desde el Sur”, 2008), re-deploys the typical (and topical) tropes of the south—first of all a lack of modernization and the laziness of the southerner—in a new positive (and propositive) key: as resistance, namely, to the progressive homogenization of cultures and societies according to a normative model—Schmitt’s “nomos”—roughly identifiable with the Global North.

The paper looks at the rich Italian reflections on the southern question—from Antonio Gramsci (“Alcuni appunti sulla questione meridionale”), through Franco Piperno’s autonomist “refusal to work” (“Elogio dello spirito meridionale”), to Franco Cassano’s “de-acceleration” (“Il pensiero meridiano”)—not in the spirit of a national celebration, but rather, quite the contrary, to investigate the possible points of contact between European Marxism and global post-colonial and de-colonial movements.

Madina Tlostanova (Linköping University, Sweden)

The Post-Socialist World vis-à-vis the Global South and the Global North

The postsocialist world has disappeared in its entirety as a geopolitical concept, and cannot find a place for itself neither in the global North nor in the global South. The ideological axis which previously used to hold together quite different actors, is gone. While the external imperial difference characteristic of the secondary empires of modernity, still holds together. The postsocialist may be just an indication of time for the Western subjects, but it is much more than a temporal succession for the postsocialist people themselves who still inhabit their forgotten spaces carefully ignored by the architects of the world. Today different parts of the ex-socialist system drift in often opposite directions, both heading for the global South in economic and social but not yet in cultural terms, and aspiring for, yet never reaching the global North. The new North/South dichotomy does not leave many options for the vanished second world. One of them is a postcolonial analogizing and peripheralization which is typical for a number of Eastern South-Eastern European countries. Another is a shift from the honorary second world position to a clearly subaltern belonging to the global South, alas, without the benefit of its decolonial sensibilities and drives which is the case of the non-European postsocialist spaces of the Caucasus and Central Asia. As for Russia itself, it represents the most doomed case of the imperial

ressentiment whose negative energy is about to end very soon, when the (empty) refrigerator wins over the TV set. However the looming specter of a civil war, a revolution or a final quiet partition, would not make the inhabitants of the collapsed empire happy. In my talk I will reflect on the paradoxes of the present South-North dichotomy, on the dangerous revival of the old fashioned geopolitics, and the possible ways out of the postsocialist condition as a void between the North and the South.

Ipek Demir (Leicester University, UK)

A View from the Global South in Europe: Diasporic Cosmopolitanism of European Kurds

Cosmopolitanism is often associated with Enlightenment ideals and European elites who saw themselves as citizens of the world, opening up to the world, ready to traverse and go beyond the cultural borders of what their nation-states offered or dictated. Cosmopolitanism was thus typically conceived and read as a critique of nationalism, as a sign of openness and thus the normative defence of the idea of human capacity to expand the sphere of identification and belonging beyond national boundaries. Cosmopolitan perspectives, as discussed in the work of Ulrich Beck and others, however, have very little to offer to cultural minorities within Europe. Perspectives from the Global South as articulated within non-Eurocentric cosmopolitan approaches, on the other hand, have highlighted the need to go beyond typically European tropes and have turned attention to openness towards those living outside of Europe. Whilst this aspect of cosmopolitanism brings into our sphere of knowledge the experiences of those outside of Europe, openness to, and cosmopolitanism of, Europe's 'European others', namely Europe's diasporic communities, have received much less attention. My paper will aim to fill this lacuna by taking Kurdish diaspora as a case study and examine the 'diasporic cosmopolitanism' of Kurds living in multicultural cities of Europe. The paper will also aim to conceptually enrich our understandings of cosmopolitanism through re-defining it via three central notions: the establishment and continuation of justice-based transnational solidarities; foreignization through translation; and unlearning. I will make the case that it is possible to find cosmopolitan engagement and sociability where we expect it the least, as we have looked for it the least, amongst diasporic communities. Such a conceptualization will also help recognize the openness, tolerance and justice oriented solidarities diasporic communities bring to, and demand from, Europe and thus contribute to the literature on the Global South.

Panel 4 - (Re)Creating the 'Global South'

Leon Wainwright (Open University, UK)

Political Geographies of Art in the Global South: Caribbean Materiality and Mobility

The Caribbean offers a useful vantage point onto current attempts to understand the conditions and positions of the 'Global South', with regard to the materiality of culture and the geography of movement. Where the rhetoric of globalisation has taken hold in the public funding and exhibiting of contemporary art, artists have come to experience a mixed picture of the opportunities that are posed by global flows of money, artworks and the ideas about them. This presentation will examine multiple sites in this changing political geography, drawing out some patterns of 'South-South' and 'South-North'

connection, between Suriname, the Netherlands, Barbados and the wider Atlantic. Based on fieldwork conducted since 2004 (funded by the Leverhulme Trust and the European Science Foundation), it will suggest that the ground level perspectives of artists – formed from their efforts to make art, to make a living, and to create community – are a political, emotional and ultimately historical field where the imagination confronts social imaginaries. The presentation will show the impact of ideas of creativity as a means of exchange and the terms of art's contemporaneity; illuminating what happens when academic discourse makes its way in the wider world of practices in the visual arts and changing geographies of the 'Global South'.

Alexandra Ortiz Wallner (Humboldt Universität Berlin, Germany)

Latin American Literatures and South-South Relations: Trajectories and Resonances

The emergent category of the Global South includes a series of theorizations and perspectives that share their engagement with a critical position towards Eurocentrism and homogenizing global designs. Within the plurality of theories, disciplines and geo-cultural spaces from where the Global South is thought, emerges a diversified understanding of this general category. Thus are the loci of enunciation a key component of the trajectories of construction of sites of critical imagination and for the articulations of a southern perspective. Latin American Literatures provide us with distinct cases of these articulations, not in form of abstract conceptualizations but as materiality and as a series of cultural representations that give form to a genealogy of connected histories within the South. The aim of my communication is to present exemplary literary cases from Latin America that overcome the transatlantic paradigm in favor of the logic and dynamic of South-South relations.