

OUT OF CULTURE, SOCIETY THROUGH ITS WASTES

WORKSHOP - May 13 th and 14 th 2013
10h - 17h

Centre Norbert Elias
EHESS Marseille
Centre de la Vieille Charité



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Meeting Room 3rd floor

MONDAY, MAY 13

F. Jouliau, A. Jeanjean

10 – 10h30 – An introduction.

Frédéric Jouliau (Ehess)

10h30 - 11h30 – Could we get to a “non-culture” from our societies’refuse ?

Olivier Gosselain (Univ. Libre de Bruxelles)

11h30 – 12h30 – Ashes and cement: technical memory of indigo dying in North Benin.

Nathalie Ortar (LET-ENTPE, Lyon)

14 – 15 h – To keep, to give, to sell or how to deal with objects in the Silicon Valley (USA).

Morie Kaneko (Kyoto Univ.)

15 – 16 h – Non-waste in a non-Western society: the Aari of southwestern Ethiopia.

Pierre Lemonnier (CREDO-AMU Marseille)

16 – 17 h – Noise, traces or useful dross? Dead parts and living parts in action and in the imaginary ritual.

TUESDAY, MAY 14

Agnès Jeanjean (Univ. Nice)

9 – 10 h - No waste? Garbage and the market.

Jamie Furniss (Univ. of Edinburgh)

10 – 11 h – The Centrality of marginality in the global economy of recycling: Cairo waste collectors during the 2008 crisis.

Valérie Guillard, (CNRS-Paris Dauphine), Anne Monjaret, (CNRS-IIAC)

11 – 12 h – Going astray: When our objects deviate from the path between workplace and home.

Yann-Philippe Tastevin (LISST-CAS – Université de Toulouse)

14 – 15 h – Out of use: Lead, batteries, lead and rickshaws.

Lucie Smolderen (Univ. Libre de Bruxelles)

15 – 16 h - The Remains of a Bygone Technical Activity: the Case of Spinning and Weaving in the Dendi (Benin).

Salvatore D’Onofrio (Univ de Palerme)

16 – 17h – Back to tools. What was at stake in the anthropology of techniques in Italy at the end of the seventies ?

17 h – General debate with Suzanne de Cheveigné (CNRS, Director of the Centre Norbert Elias)

If one considers the phenomenon of culture in all its acceptions, and indeed contradictions (a set of objects and practices versus the way to do things), what is then crucial is to attempt to grasp what escapes culture or is excluded from our normative and material sphere. Whether it be “non-human primates”, which today we regard as having objects and traditions, “pre-cultural” prehistoric humans, or forms of “nature” considered to be outside the anthropic sphere, numerous phenomenon, tackled genealogically or through comparison, can instruct us on topics that are “non-thinkable” or illegitimate in the human sciences.

The main focus of our seminar and conference is the question of wastes, excreta, surpluses, which in an inductive manner (archaeologically), allow us to understand behavioural, psychological and social determinants, and ultimately to propose broader explicative models of social dynamics and logics.

Wastes and their treatment are a useful heuristic within the social sciences — at least that’s the position we defend in the context of this seminar. Waste is envisaged here as the “flipside of production” but also as inexorably exercising symbolic and signifying functions. Wastes will be considered “good to think”, from a variety of angles and approaches. We will raise anthropological, psychoanalytic, and economic theories to understand the meaning of refuse in our societies, the questions it raises, and the ways in which it is thought about — or not.

Through the examination of practices observed by ethnologists in their respective fieldwork sites, we will examine what is at stake symbolically, socially, politically and economically in activities such as waste collection, bricolage, repair, rejection, destruction, the second-hand economy, memory and commemoration, etc. We will place particular emphasis on one possible destiny for “leftovers”: waste, and its corollary, impurity. Through different fieldwork examples we will examine the articulation between social position and impurity, work activities that place people in contact with waste, and the effects these substances and objects can have on people.

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