

Call for Papers

VEERING SOUTH: PLACE, CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Edited by Prof Ruth Simbao, Rhodes University, South Africa

Veering South is a proposed peer reviewed edited volume that seeks to generate inter-disciplinary scholarship on society, culture and the arts that does not simply exist in the global south, but rigorously analyses the ways in which scholars, artists and cultural producers in the south are uniquely positioned to provide “insight into the workings of the world at large” and “prefigure the future of the global north” (Comaroff and Comaroff 2012).

While scholars, writers, curators, filmmakers and artists in the north have long looked to places in the south as “reservoirs of raw fact...from which Euromodernity might fashion its...axioms and certitudes, its premises, postulates, and principles” (Comaroff and Comaroff 2012), the term ‘veering south’ suggests a turn in the *conceptualisation* and *production* of knowledge, with new south-south relations fast emerging, and contemporary cutting-edge scholarship stemming from the south.

Challenging the assumption that art and various forms of popular culture in the south are merely inferior copies of the north (Hassan 1996), and moving beyond a bemoaning of so-called cultural belatedness (Papastergiadis 2010), popular culture and the creative arts in the south often disclose that groundbreaking work veers from what the north has positioned as the standard, creating new axes of geopolitical creativity, critique and production. While much global south scholarship concentrates on socio-economic issues, this volume focuses on analyses of culture and art (including fine art, performance, music, heritage, photography, film, architecture, spatial planning, advertising, literature, festivals, rituals, comics, parades, etc) that engage with issues of place in the south. As Arturo Escobar (2001) suggests, revived consideration of place-based (as opposed to place-bound) imperatives is a useful way of addressing the asymmetrical invisibility of place evident in most discourses of globalisation and of “rethinking and reworking eurocentric forms of analysis”.

This volume frames the global south as a term of perpetual slippage, for the current ‘veering’ that is taking place alludes to the nautical notion of ‘veering out a rope to let run’; changing course, departing, or training off. Importantly, continued movement follows this variation of direction. As such, rather than generating new forms of homogenous geographies that simply re-place old geo-social myths, this volume seeks to offer innovative ways of keeping theory moving; of taking the placed-ness of experience seriously without getting stuck, and of acknowledging the rhizomorphic and subversive splits within the global south that allow for a variety of stories within this contemporary impulse.

Veering South is an inter-disciplinary project that draws from, but is not limited to Cultural Studies, Art History, Visual Culture, Communications, Performance Studies, Film Theory, Photography, Human and Cultural Geography, History, Politics, Sociology, Anthropology, Post-Colonial Studies, Heritage Studies, Museology, Curatorial Studies, City Studies, Global Studies, and Diaspora & Migration Studies. Importantly it emphasises scholarship about the south, which is produced *within* the south.

Sub-themes include but are not limited to the following:

GEOPOLITICS AND CULTURAL THEORY

Geopolitics in Action
Dismantling Power and Territory
Theorising Geographic Myths and the Global South
'Placing' the South
Generating Knowledge in the South
Turns in Human and Cultural Geography
Geographic Self-Identification

GLOBALISATION AND PLACE

Globalisation, Place and Culture
Deterritorialisation of Culture
Mutable Cultural Specificities
Commodification, Banality and Non-Places
Denials of Localisation
Reframing the Local and the Parochial
Post-Geographies and Critiques
Self-Identification and New Forms of Strategic Affiliation

CONTEMPORARY MOBILITIES

South-South Movement
New Spatial Shifts and Revived Xenophobias
New Diasporas, New Directions
Site-Specific Art on the Move
Itinerant Artists and Engagements with Place

PERFORMANCE AND PERFORMATIVE PLACE

The Agency of Performative Place
Contemporary Rituals in Relation to Mobility
Culture and Activism in the Global South
Subversive Possibilities of Performance
Alternative Sites of Performance

VISUAL GEOGRAPHIES

Art, Culture and Human Geography
Collaborations between Geographers and Artists
Visualising Imaginary Places
Blind Spots and Geographies of Invisibility
Subaltern Visibilities
New Politics: Changing Places, Changing Names
Visual Nostalgias
Visions of Dystopias
Shifting Landscapes

SENSING THE SOUTH

Blindness and Limitations of the Visual
Multi-Sensual Creation
Senses of Healing

Subversion and the Senses

SOUTH—SOUTH CURATING

Beyond the Dichotomy of Curating/Curated Cultures
Curating (in) 'Odd' Places
Alternative Art Spaces
Art Biennales in the South
The Place of Museums (and Beyond) in the South
Beyond the Mega-Exhibition: The Power of the Small

SPACE AND COSMOPOLITANISM

Cosmopolitanisms in the South
Global South City Spaces
Public Art/Public Festivals
Beyond Rural Stereotypes
Cosmopolitanism in 'Parochial' Places

References:

Comaroff, Jean and John. 2012. *Theory from the South. Or, How Euro-America is Evolving Toward Africa*. London: Paradigm Publishers.

Escobar, Arturo. 2001. "Culture Sits in Places: Reflections on Globalism and Subaltern Strategies of Localization". *Political Geography* 20: 139-174.

Hassan, Salah. 1996. "The Modernist Experience in African Art: Towards a critical understanding" in *The Muse of Modernity* edited by Philip Atbach and Salah Hassan. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press.

Papastergiadis, Nikos. 2010. "What is the South?" *Thesis Eleven* 100: 141-156.

~~~~ ~~~~ ~~~~ ~~~~

#### **Paper Formats:**

***Veering South*** calls for three types of contributions:

- 1) Substantial scholarly essays (5000 to 7000 words), to be peer reviewed
- 2) Shorter 'think pieces' (2000 to 3000 words), to be peer reviewed
- 3) A limited number of artists' 'image essays'

#### **Submissions:**

Please submit an expression of interest in the form of a paper abstract (about 400 to 600 words) clearly stating the proposed format (scholarly essay, 'think piece' or 'image essay'); the proposed title of the paper; the proposed idea and scope of the paper, and proposed images to accompany the paper. (Authors will be responsible for obtaining permission to use images).

Deadline for abstract: **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2013**

Email abstracts to: [veeringsouth@gmail.com](mailto:veeringsouth@gmail.com) with the subject heading "**Abstract:** Surname"

Please include the following details:

Full Name  
Contact Details  
Current Affiliation

~~~ ~~~ ~~~ ~~~

Editor's Biography:

Ruth Simbao is an Associate Professor of Art History & Visual Culture at Rhodes University. She completed three Master's degrees (Worldview Studies, MPhil and AM) and received a PhD from the Department of Art and Architecture at Harvard University. Before she began her PhD, she worked as a freelance curator and arts writer in Toronto, Canada, and participated in two curatorial internships at the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) and the National Gallery of Canada (NGC). In 1998 she was a Research Fellow at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa.

From 2004 to 2006 Simbao lived in Zambia and conducted fieldwork research on performance and contemporary cultural festivals. Her interests were performative aspects of heritagisation, the relationship between performance and art objects, and the subversive edge of performance in relation to culture, politics and society. Her current research is on issues of 'place', space, new site-specificities, diaspora, xenophobia, the Global South and cosmopolitanism in relation to contemporary art and performance in South Africa, Zambia and China. She curated the exhibition *Making Way: Contemporary Art from South Africa and China* (www.makingway.co.za) at the National Arts Festival (2012) and the Standard Bank Gallery (2013) in South Africa.

Simbao has published in various journals including *Third Text*, *Parachute: Revue d'art contemporain/contemporary art magazine*, *African Arts*, *Mix*, *Lola*, *Art South Africa*, *De Arte*, *NKA: Journal for Contemporary African Art*, *The International Journal for African Historical Studies*, *Kronos* and the *Journal of the Contemporary African Art: New Approaches (JACANA)*. She has written essays for various national and international exhibitions, and her work has been translated into Portuguese, Spanish and Danish. She has presented her work in academic conferences in South Africa, the USA, Jamaica, Hong Kong, Australia and Canada, and was a keynote speaker at the Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, Portugal (2010).

Simbao was the recipient of the Rhodes University Vice Chancellor's Distinguished Research Award (2009), and founded the Humanities Focus Area, *Visual and Performing Arts of Africa* (www.research-africa-arts.com) in 2011.

~~~ ~~~ ~~~ ~~~

Email [veeringsouth@gmail.com](mailto:veeringsouth@gmail.com) for further information.