



PhD-Position “Aesthetics from the Margins” (60%)

Date of employment: 1. September 2018

The Center for African Studies at the University of Basel invites applications for a PhD position (Humanities and Social Sciences) as part of the research project *Aesthetics from the Margins*.

Project description

Aesthetics from the Margins explores social and cultural ways of world-making in the colony and postcolony. The project proceeds on the assumption that while “the world” is economically and politically produced it nevertheless needs to be perceived, sensed, comprehended and made sense of. The world is, in other words, more than a mere reality, fact or given, but the result of continuous making and remaking. The ability to imagine and experience the world and one’s own place within it – individually and collectively – rests upon diverse repertoires of images, signs and symbols, idioms and narratives, media and social practices. We hence need to understand how precisely people make world(s), and how experiencing the world is linked to ideation, knowledge production, subjectivity and consciousness. In the so-called “age of globalisation” and “media society”, and in the context of a growing preoccupation with the world’s complexity and opacity, its political, economic and ecological fragility, the question of world-making is of particular importance to both the humanities and social sciences, and society at large. Studying colonial and postcolonial aesthetics/aesthesis against the backdrop of an ongoing debate on globalization, the media and world-making cannot forebear to speak from a position of marginality: The colony and postcolony are often considered historical and contemporary “recipients” of globalization and modernisation, as opposed to their metropolitan initiators. Against such persistent prejudice and simplification, *Aesthetics from the Margins* argues that inhabiting marginality, what Franz Fanon called a “zone of non-being”, clears a space for a postcolonial, critical reassessment of how we ground our thinking about sense perception and mediation, history and world-making.

PhD position

This is a 60% research position, whereby the salary enables the candidate to fully concentrate on his/her research project. The PhD project can focus on any colonial or postcolonial area and period, as long as it focuses on *Aesthetics from the Margins* as conceptual linchpin. Preferably, the project explores aesthetic forms and practices through which people sense and make sense of the world, including e.g. the visual and performing arts, language and literature, material objects or (technological) media.

We offer the successful candidate to be part of an interdisciplinary research group that shares a common interest in questions of aesthetics and (post)coloniality. The Center for African Studies at the University of Basel provides a vibrant and collegial research, teaching and study environment, which supports emerging scholars in connecting with academic colleagues and institutions across the world.

The position is funded for four years, including a 1-year probation period, and scheduled to start on 1 September 2018.

Your profile

Candidates hold a Master’s degree in any discipline in the humanities or social sciences. They have some experience in archival work and research in postcolonial contexts in Africa, Asia or Latin America. Proficiency in English is required, and desirable in German, French, Portuguese or Spanish. The candidate has to fulfil the conditions for admission as a PhD student in the faculty of the Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Basel.



Application and contact

Your application includes the following documents:

1. A letter of motivation, with a short description of the proposed PhD research project
2. Two academic references, one of which by the supervisor of the Master's thesis
3. Curriculum Vitae
4. Copies of Master's diploma and transcripts
5. Copies of Bachelor's diploma and transcripts
6. A copy of your Master's thesis and a writing sample (an article or a seminar paper)

The documents listed under 1-5 are to be submitted in a consolidated PDF file. The Master's thesis and writing samples shall be submitted as separate files. Send all materials electronically via email to Dr

Lorena Rizzo, Center for African Studies, University of Basel: lorena.rizzo@unibas.ch

Reference: Application for PhD-Position "Aesthetics from the Margins"

Deadline for submission: **15. June 2018**