

CALL FOR PAPERS
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
BORDEAUX
16TH-18TH SEPTEMBER 2010

***Masculine/Feminine : new issues for
geography***

UMR ADES (Bordeaux/CNRS)
Maison des Suds
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CALL FOR PAPERS

While publications on gender issues are ever more common in social sciences, it seems important to focus specifically on what they contribute to geography, understood as a social science that deals with human societies' spatialities. How can a gender approach challenge our understandings of spatial organizations, and agents' spatial experiences? Can geography still be seen as reflecting an androcentric viewpoint and naturalizing sexual divisions of space? How can we reflect critically on gender relationships, in the light of other approaches which emphasize the postcolonial, the effects of globalisation, and migrations?

The aim of our conference is to bring out the epistemic dimension of gender, and the ways in which it can challenge geographical knowledge generally, whether produced by spatial analysis, a study of social practices, regional science, cultural studies, etc. Papers from a variety of horizons will be united by their concern with gender as a "geographical object", that is, as a "cognitive construct that enables the understanding of a spatial phenomenon" (Lévy et Lussault, 2003).

Papers are expected around three broad themes :

1. The first theme has to do with the way knowledge, and geographical knowledge in particular, has been shaped by an essentialist vision of sexual difference, a belief in its immutability and the "natural" complementarity of gendered social roles. Possible themes are geography's androcentric constructs in historical perspective, gendered spatial descriptions, the exoticism/eroticism/power/sex nexus in relation to the production of a (masculine) scientific knowledge. To what extent does the "production of geography" as it takes place today (in academic spheres for instance) reflect the "differential valence of sexes" as defined by Héritier (1996), with specific areas of knowledge being dealt with mostly by men, and others by women, as a result of the competences conventionally attached to each sex?

2. The second theme builds on relational approaches (Goffman, 1977) of sexes as socially constructed in opposition to each other, and emphasizes spatial arrangements : co-ed or single-sex spaces, masculine or feminine ones, with varying tendencies to prescribe gendered codes. A generally heteronormative space is declined differently in different cultural contexts, allowing for transitional or transgressive spaces. Reading gender relations as power relations also implies interpretations of space as socially imbued with implicit and explicit messages which reproduce structures of domination, other conversely as making place for alternatives, "heterotopias", where norms are challenged. Beyond the aspects above, there are many ways in which gender as a variable can displace traditional interpretative models in geography and planning.
3. A third theme has to do with "intersectionality", the interaction between gender and other forms of domination to do with age, class or race, and their spatial dimensions: have gendered codes established in richer countries been unduly presented as universal? How are feminine and masculine identities experienced in the cities and countries of the global South? What is to be said of the age, the sex, and skin colour of prison inmates or inhabitants of retirement homes? Of the gender of migrants, and their countries of destination? Whilst domination is often multilayered, it is also contextual and shifting, which in turn can transform spaces.

PAPERS PROPOSALS: please send a one-page abstract (300 words at most) along with a brief resume specifying your institution and position, and mentioning any recent publications in relation with the theme of the conference and an e-mail address before **April 15th, 2010**; the full papers should arrive no later than **August 30th, 2010** and be sent both to k.marius-gnanou@ades.cnrs.fr and y.raibaud@ades.cnrs.fr.

REGISTRATION FEES:

Fees include lunches and coffee breaks.

Basic fee : 90 €

Fee for graduate students, post-doctoral and free-lance researchers: 20 €